



Community Agriculture  
in Columbia County  
**Preorder Cooperative**  
1997



How much of our diet  
can we obtain  
**LOCALLY?**



**Roxbury Farm / Claverack • Hawthorne Valley Farm  
/ Ghent • Hollow Road Farms / Stuyvesant • Maple  
Leaf Sugaring / Hillsdale • Camphill Village / Copake  
• High Falls Garden / Philmont • The Berry Farm /  
Chatham • Earth Foods / Hudson • Hollyrock Farm /  
Kinderhook • Love Apple Farm / West Ghent  
• Thompson-Finch Orchard / Ancram • Ronnybrook  
Farm Dairy / Ancramdale • and more  
as the seasons progress!**

# What is the Preorder?



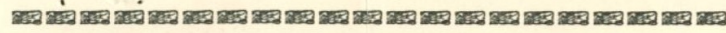
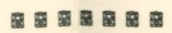
This season, Community Agriculture in Columbia County is continuing the cooperative buying project initiated in 1995 by members of the Roxbury Farm CSA, a community that now numbers about 120 households.

By buying together in quantity and directly from producers, and with volunteer help at distribution, we reduce our food costs while supporting local, ecologically sustainable food production. Through the preorder coop, Roxbury CSA members have convenient access to foods, and local growers have access to a local market in the form of an organized consumer group.

To date, products from eighteen local growers and producers have been offered on the Preorder Cooperative's weekly form. We hope through this project to foster the connection between growers and consumers that has nourished us all in the Roxbury CSA.

In time, the Preorder Cooperative could expand to serve other local organized consumer groups in addition to the members of the Roxbury Farm CSA. And a further expansion could serve locally owned stores and institutions, providing an increasing local outlet for local producers, and encouraging small-scale farming and local food processing.

It is only by consumers and producers working together as directly as possible, and by producers cooperating with each other, that small-scale ecologically sustainable local production and distribution can become economically viable. Hence we are moving toward a form that brings together customers and suppliers in a context dedicated to a larger good. In a small way, we are strengthening the local food system and local food security. We are also helping to protect our agricultural land and preserve the rural community character of our county.



## A cooperative association

As we begin the 1997 season, membership in the Community Agriculture in Columbia County Preorder Cooperative is open to all members of the Roxbury Farm CSA. You become a member of the Preorder Cooperative when you place your first weekly order. There is an annual \$10 membership fee, payable with the first order.

The Preorder Cooperative is now being directed by a group of eight Roxbury CSA members. Together we will be working on the weekly order form, processing the orders on computer and calling them in, coordinating pickups and deliveries with various farms around the county, working with distribution at the Roxbury barn, and handling bookkeeping, bill paying, etc. In recognition of the hours put in, these members receive a credit toward their preorder purchases. If you are interested in participating in the organization of the Preorder Cooperative, please get in touch with one of the coordinators.

## The new Berry Share

This year, in addition to the products available on a weekly basis, the Preorder Cooperative will be offering — through the same order-form system — a **berry share** from Joe Gilbert's Berry Farm in Chatham. The share will begin in mid July (after the Roxbury Farm strawberry season) and run through the fall, delivering a pint of berries each week. This will be similar to your Roxbury Farm CSA share in that you will be purchasing the entire share (12 weeks) of berries **in advance**. You may purchase as many shares as you like. The option for purchasing a berry share will be on the regular Preorder form for the weeks immediately prior to berry season.


## Roxbury Farm beef and bulk vegetables

This season, Preorder Cooperative members will have the opportunity at various times to buy Roxbury Farm **beef and bulk quantities of vegetables** for canning, freezing, etc. They will be listed on the order form when available. (These were formerly available to Roxbury Farm CSA members as the Beef Share and SharePlus.)





# How to order

- 
- Fill out order form at the Preorder Cooperative table in the Roxbury barn at the Friday CSA pickup.
  - Please include payment with order, or maintain a positive balance.
  - Checks payable to: **Community Agriculture in Columbia County (CACC)**.  
If cash, and not exact change, we can credit your account.
  - Put (1) payment and (2) completed order form into your ordering envelope, which you can find filed alphabetically in the envelope box.
  - **Put ordering envelope into the box marked "On Order."**
  - The food you order will be ready for you at the next Roxbury Farm CSA pickup, in a box with your name on it. Take the food; leave the box!
  - If you miss the Friday afternoon pickup, your order will be stored for you in the Roxbury Farm cooler. But you must claim it by the following Monday evening.
  - **NOTE:** Some prices are approximate, due to weight variations (eg cheese), and sometimes ordered items are not available. We adjust your account each week to reflect accurate billing. Your account balance will be listed on the "Member Accounts" list at the Preorder Cooperative table. Please check it to find your balance or credit due. We are asking this season that neither balances nor credits exceed \$30.

## Preorder coordinators:

Marcie Shemaria 392 3494

Paul Israel 329 7483

Edward Maher 822 8701



## The Cost & the Payments

This season, the Columbia County group will offer one basic membership: **the single share**. Given an average harvest, the share yields produce sufficient to feed two adults eating a standard American diet. Over the last three years, the share has varied in amount between 250 and 300 pounds of produce.

The cost of production reflects the true cost of enabling the farmer to apply methods that are not just sustainable but re-invigorating to the earth.

Two factors are involved in the determination of the share cost: 1) the farmer's total budget for production, buildings, and equipment; and 2) an estimation of the expenses connected with distribution and other processes administered by the group.

For the Columbia County community in the 1997/98 season, **the cost of a share is \$263**. Any number of shares may be purchased by a household to accommodate their needs. Members have the option of paying the total in installments, with the final installment expected by the time of the first distribution in June.

This year, we will have a "**Harvester's Share**" option. This would enable members to reduce their share cost by helping in the fields with harvesting the labor intensive crops - strawberries and snap peas.

**Beef Shares** will be available at \$65 each.

The membership is currently negotiating a **Berry Share**, in association with the Berry Farm in Chatham. This will be at an additional cost. Further information will be available to members as the details are worked out.

## The Vision

With the industrialization of agriculture and the globalization of our food supply (NAFTA and GATT) we risk the loss of a local agricultural base.

Community agriculture offers a means of empowering ourselves to maintain control of our own food supply. This comes about by transforming our relationship to food and land--emancipating ourselves beyond the concept of food as a commodity, and elevating our view to a recognition of food as a basic component of our health, and a gift of nature, in return for good stewardship of the earth which nourishes us.

Roxbury Farm brings together people who are making this conscious transformation in attitude, and who are developing a common vision and working to move it toward reality. We strengthen our connection with the farm and each other through Farm Festivals, working days at the farm, potluck dinners, invited guest speakers, a weekly farmer's letter, and a monthly newsletter, and by creating an organization which allows all of this to come about.... Members are invited to participate in any or all of these activities as their interest and time allow -- through them we provide a strong basis for an agriculture that can be truly nourishing to both the people and the land.

## For more information

**Columbia County Community**  
Ed Fallon (518) 392 4737  
Marcie Shemaria (518) 392 3494

**Roxbury Farm**  
124 Roxbury Road, Hudson, NY 12534  
Barn Phone: (518) 851 3809



## Would you like to....

- ENJOY NOURISHING, SEASONAL PRODUCE, FRESHLY PICKED AND CHEMICAL-FREE;
- CHANNEL FOOD DOLLARS INTO THE LOCAL, ENVIRONMENTALLY AWARE ECONOMY;
- CONSERVE AND ENRICH THE SOIL FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS;
- RESTORE FARMING AS A VIABLE AND SATISFYING VOCATION?



Then come and share the Harvest with us this Season.

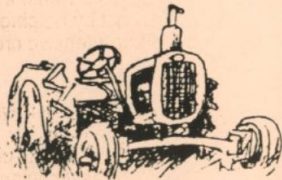


## What is Community Agriculture?

Community agriculture involves a partnership between a group of people (a community) and one or more farmers. The farmers are committed to growing healthful food for the community. The members of the community become shareholders in the farmer's harvest, buying shares before the start of the growing season. The paid shares provide funds for procuring seeds, tools, and supplies, and for assuring a just wage for the farmer's expertise, labor, and investment. Thus the farmer(s) have support for growing food in a way that is healthful and truly nourishing.

The farmer delivers the harvested food to central locations where the shareholders then assume responsibility for distribution. Conventionally, the harvest is shared out over a period of about thirty-two deliveries, from June through February.

Again, the chief principle of community agriculture is that the community is sharing with the farmer--sharing the risks of agricultural production, and the bounty or the insufficiency of the harvests.



## The Farm

One Hudson Valley farm now committed to involvement with community agriculture groups is Roxbury Farm in Claverack, Columbia County. The farm operates on land that has been in the Cashen family for 50 years. It is managed and owned by a partnership consisting of Jean Paul and Kelly Courtens and Elizabeth Cashen.



Roxbury Farm works 145 acres of which 35 acres are dedicated to vegetable, fruit, and grain production. Each season, a rotation is practiced which rests and regenerates a third of this acreage. One hundred ten acres are used for hay and pasture to feed the farm's small herd of cattle. The cattle provide the fertilizer necessary for the vegetable production. As a by-product, this cycle provides beef shares for those members who contract for it.

In 1997, the farm will be growing about thirty-five varieties of organic and biodynamic vegetables, sweet corn, melons, strawberries, herbs, and flowers. A chart is available with a complete listing of the season's varieties, and when they will be harvested.

Two seasons ago, our association through Roxbury Farm enabled the Columbia County membership to initiate a **preorder buying option** for food products from other local farms, including maple syrup from Camphill Village and Maple Leaf Sugaring, dairy from Ronnybrook Farm, dairy and bread from Hawthorne Valley Farm, apples and stonefruit from Loveapple Farm, berries from the Berry Farm, cider from Samascott Orchard, eggs from Sweet Meadow Farm and Hollyrock Farm, and prepared foods from Earth Foods, all Columbia County producers. We also enjoyed Roxbury Farm's processed product, sauerkraut, made from our own cabbage.

Roxbury Farm is also involved in working with other organic or biodynamic farms in the areas of education and crop production. This season, Martin and Christa Stosiek of Markristo Farms in Hillsdale are providing Roxbury shareholders with green beans.

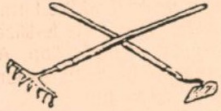
## APPRENTICE TRAINING

An apprentice program has been developed at Roxbury in conjunction with twelve other organic/biodynamic farms. This program exposes young people to work experience on the farm, classroom training, and visits to other farming operations.

## CURRENT COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE GROUPS

Roxbury Farm is currently associated with three community agriculture groups: the New York City group (in its seventh season), the Capital District group (in its sixth season), and the Columbia County group (in its fifth season). Between these groups, there are some 500 households involved as members of Roxbury.

## How it Works



The members of each of the three groups have established distribution sites in convenient locations. This year there are four sites in the Capital District. The New York City group has one site on the upper West Side. There is one site this year for the Columbia County community, right at Roxbury Farm.

The distributions occur once a week, from June through November, and then biweekly from December through February. Currently, the distribution day for Columbia County is Friday.

In each of the groups, a few members coordinate the various functions, such as scheduling volunteers for setting up and closing down the distribution sites each week, collecting initial and final membership payments, planning special events, communicating information from the farm to the members, and arranging for the donation of surplus food to food pantries or outlets.

These members also participate, as "core groups", in annual "summit" meetings, with representatives from each site, to help set the farm budget, to plan coordination of festivals, and to work with the farm on long-range planning.