



Bertrand Farm

(Niles, Michigan)



Bertrand Farm is an educational farm. Our mission is to connect people with their food and nature in the hope of promoting ethical and environmentally sound agriculture practices. We run several programs to include all ages: Farm Camps for youth 4-10, a CSA cooperative for adults and Family fun at our pumpkin patch in October. Bertrand Farm also partners with Good Shepherd Montessori School, South bend, to offer a Farm to School program. Our programs also include cooking and preserving classes.

Bertrand Farm offers two different CSA membership programs. The non-working membership is a 15 week minimum starting early June and has an option for delivery. Our working CSA is a not for profit educational program. It works like a cooperative. We start in Feb. and March with a planning meeting to order seed and create calendars of work for the season. At this time a commitment is made for three hours of work per week on Wednesday or Saturday mornings. The farm is divided into 10 working areas, by crop. At least two memberships care for each area, one on Wednesdays and one on Saturday. All produce harvested is divided equally among workers on their work day.

Contact Information:

Therese Zimmerman-Niemier
 (269) 695-3306

CSA Details:

Season:	April through October
Type:	single farm
Since:	2001
# of Shares:	75
Full Share:	\$250./per season 2010/plus 3 hours work per week. Non-work membership for season june - October1, \$400. add \$100 for delivery
1/2 Share:	\$180 working/ \$225. for non-working
Work Req?	Yes: 3

Pick Up/Drop Off Points:

■ **Bertrand Farm** (Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat)

Non-working members can pick up their share at the farm or can opt for delivery service within our delivery area.

Contact:	Therese Zimmerman-Niemier
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Address:	3575 W Bertrand Rd Niles, MI 49120

CSA Producer Response

Theri Niemier

04/14/2009

1. What farming method do you use? For example: certified organic, organic (not certified), bio-intensive, or conventional (~ use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers).

Organic, not certified. Low-till. Started CSA in 2001.

2. How many hours per week do you typically work during the growing season?

15-25 hours per week just for the CSA.

3. How many hours per week do you typically work during the off-season?

10 – 20 hours per week just for the CSA.

4. How many full-time and/or part-time employees are needed to run the CSA?

1 full-time + other seasonal part-time depending upon CSA work contract.

5. How many acres are currently in vegetable and/or fruit production?

3 -5 acres are currently in production.

6. What is the maximum number of acres you might commit to vegetable and fruit production in a given year?

4 acres.

7. What is the maximum number of acres you might commit to livestock grazing?

.5 acre -- just enough for chicken pens.

8. What aspects of operating a CSA do you enjoy most and why?

Education, community, produce. I have a passion for sustainable farming. My father had cancer and began a nutritional cleansing program which got me really interested in organic produce.

9. What aspects of operating a CSA do you enjoy least and why?

Irresponsibility of some members who don't show up to work on scheduled days. *No Shows* tend to upset all of the CSA members.

10. Has your CSA been profitable for the past three years? (Yes/No)

No, the CSA has not been profitable during the past three years. Off-farm income and other farm program and events are needed to break-even.

11. If “Yes” to Question 10, then what specific factors do you attribute your success to?

N/A.

12. If “No” to Question 10, then what have been your biggest marketing and/or operational challenges?

We’re still growing and acquiring needed skills and equipment.

13. Which of your marketing approaches have been most successful and why?

Word-of- mouth and our website: www.bertrandfarm.org

14. Can you briefly describe your CSA membership pricing model?

\$200 per share + 3 hours of farm work per week.

15. How many CSA members do you currently have?

45 CSA members, which represents up to 90 families.

16. How many potential CSA members (if any) are currently wait-listed?

5-10.

17. Has your CSA membership level increased or decreased during the past 3 years? (Yes/No) (Increased/Decreased) Yes, we’ve increased each of the past 3 years.

18. How many CSA memberships would you need to break-even?

45 will produce a profit when the soil is in balance and the materials/machinery is adequate.

19. What do you consider to be an ideal number of CSA memberships for your farm?

45 given the current model.

20. How much income would you like to see your CSA produce annually?

\$4,000.