

## Prairie Winds Farm

### Lakeville, Indiana



We raise heritage livestock breeds and host visitors to the farm, nature area, and 150 year old barn. Livestock are pastured on prairie grasses and there are mowed trails through restored wetland, native prairie, and woodlands. Cotswold sheep, Milking Devon cattle, Nigerian Dwarf goats, Tamworth hogs, Dominique chickens, and Bourbon Red turkeys call Prairie Winds Farm home. There are beehives, a vegetable garden, and berries in season. We believe in the value of connecting people both to nature and to the sources of their food.

Nature and the farm operate hand in hand to create a sustainable source of meat, eggs, vegetables, and wool. Some of the activities we have offered include: holding newborn lambs & kids, gathering eggs and holding baby chicks, playing in a real hayloft, milking a goat or cow, fishing in a pond, birdwatching, horseback riding, gardening, beekeeping, horse drawn wagon, sleigh, & pony rides. Get REAL! = Respect the Earth And Life.

### Location

21439 Osborne Rd.  
Lakeville, IN 46536

### Contact Information

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## CSA Producer Questionnaire

Charlotte Wolfe

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) although I will resort to strong herbicides to combat thistles and other noxious perennial weeds.
2. How many hours per week do you typically work during the growing season?  

15 hrs/week on the CSA portion of the farm.
3. How many hours per week do you typically work during the off-season?  

1-2, I regularly haul manure in to amend the garden beds, also spend time looking at seed catalogs! I keep connected with my CSA partners throughout the non-growing season. They are customers for my meat & eggs.
4. How many full-time and/or part-time employees are needed to run the CSA?  

none.
5. How many acres are currently in vegetable and/or fruit production?  

1/3 acre.
6. What is the maximum number of acres you might commit to vegetable and fruit production in a given year?  

1/2 acre.
7. What is the maximum number of acres you might commit to livestock grazing?  

20 acres are committed and that is all I have available.
8. What aspects of operating a CSA do you enjoy most and why?  

Enjoy the camaraderie of my fellow gardeners. They are my personal friends and really believe in what I am doing with my farm. They are interested in seeing the farm succeed and are willing to trade their labor for the benefits they and their children receive at the farm. Some of the

benefits are tangible such as the vegetables but they receive intangibles such as horseback riding for the kids, nature walks, community.

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

Sometimes the gardens get away from me in terms of weeds. If one of my families doesn't show up it really shows with such a small CSA. I am requiring them to come 2 times per week this year.

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

no.

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?

Getting the volume up to where we could sell a few things to friends of my CSA partners. If we could get better weed control I think we could up the production. All of my connections in terms of people who are friends with my CSA partners, want vegetables & fruits. Especially raspberries and strawberries, if I could up my production of those I could sell the surplus easily.

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

Word of mouth marketing, I have a flyer and a website. I also go around to various events with a display table. But most of my marketing is for the farm in general not just the CSA. For the CSA I basically choose who I want to work with and ask them. I know enough gardening types that I can easily recruit as many as I want.

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

Last year it was \$50/year and this year it is \$75/year for all members except for 1 family. That family is economically challenged and I don't charge them. They often provide extra labor in exchange.

15. How many CSA members do you currently have?

We have 5 families who commit 1 morning a week. (somewhat confusing with question 4). My family is one of the families. Also, I use the surplus for my family since I put in more hours than anyone else. Often I will give the surplus to friends or agritourism customers that visit; or to a certain needy family that has health issues and needs the healthy food.

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

none but again, I haven't asked anyone else because I think I have enough.

17. Has your CSA membership level increased or decreased during the past 3 years? (Yes/No) (Increased/Decreased)

stayed the same.

By what percentage ( + / -- ) during each of the past 3 years?

2006:

2007:

2008:

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

I have the right amount to break even if you just separate the CSA costs from the rest of the farm.

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

I would like to expand to 8-9 families but I think I would have to increase the garden beds to do that . Maybe not. If I could expand the families without expanding the area gardened, that would be great. That would mean getting better production out of the existing garden beds. I would prefer to expand production and have each family get more so we can do more canning, preserving, and root crops/winter squash for winter use. As it is, we really didn't have a whole lot for winter use.

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

I would like to see the CSA produce any income at all. It would be great to be able to have the CSA help pay for the farm infrastructure but right now it barely pays for itself.