

**Even' Star Organic Farm (certified organic since 1997)
Brett Grohsgal and Christine Bergmark
48322 Far Cry Road, Lexington Park, MD 20653
evenstarfarm@evenstarfarm.org
Farmer cell: 301-481-6832**

Welcome to the Even' Star Organic Farm Summer Subscription Service (CSA)! If you decide to sign up, please save this information packet. Here nearly all key CSA questions are answered.

This information packet contains:

A summary of the CSA options and the summer foods and services that we offer, the registration form and subscription contract, history of our farm, and a description of typical community-supported agriculture (CSA) and farm subscriptions.

If, after reading all this, you decide to join our High Summer Delivered CSA or our Farmers' Market Option CSA, we urge you to send us your signed contract, filled-out registration form, and check soon. PLEASE BE AWARE THAT MOST CHOICES FOR OUR WARM-SEASON CSA HAVE NO SIGN-UP DEADLINE. WE ARE A LARGE FARM AND CAN ACCEPT NEW MEMBERS EASILY DURING THE WARMER MONTHS. Only the yes-egg option and the winter produce CSA are limited in membership.

HOW TO GET STARTED AS AN EVEN' STAR CSA MEMBER

read and save this document; it answers most questions that new subscribers have in their first season with us.

choose whether you want the traditional Thursday delivered-box option (early July-late September) or the Farmers' Market Option (Chevy Chase: late April-late October; St. Mary's County: April-December).

answer the simple questions in the appropriate registration form.

read the contract and sign it. It obligates the farm much more than it does our CSA members.

Then **write "returning CSA member" or "new CSA member" on an envelope**, and **send** the registration form, the check for the season's payment (made out to Even' Star Organic Farm), and the signed contract to:

Even' Star Organic Farm
48322 Far Cry Road
Lexington Park, MD 20653

If you would prefer to pay for the foods on-line, our website will have the updated forms and payment link by March 24, 2020 (price will be slightly higher there, since the credit card companies and website charge, as well as the new Maryland 6% state tax on on-line purchasing). OR, for using PayPal directly but with no service charges to you or the farm,

this should work: 1) Log into PayPal and select **Send** icon on the right side of the screen (or choose Send & Request from the menu at the top of the screen). 2) In the **Send Money** box enter HYPERLINK "mailto:payment@evenstarfarm.org" payment@evenstarfarm.org and hit **Next**. 3) Enter the payment amount, then, in the box directly below, next to **Paying for an item or service** select **CHANGE**. 4) Select **Sending to a Friend** and select **Continue**. * 5) You will see a summary of the transaction, and when you hit **Send Payment Now**, your transaction is complete. 6) If you do NOT have funds in your PayPal account and/or have NOT linked your account to your bank account, you may still pay using PayPal, however a fee will be added to your cost. *PLEASE NOTE: If you do not change from **Paying for an item or service** to **Sending to a Friend**, both parties will be assessed a fee. Not good, since the farm's labor costs are high and our profit margins very thin.*

THE CSA OPTIONS

CHOICE #1: TRADITIONAL BOXED AND DELIVERED CSA MEMBERSHIP. In this option, the farm chooses the foods that members get each week based on heavy harvests and food diversity; typically 6-8 items per delivery. The seasonal cost for receiving this is \$384 (\$32 per week) for the full share. This covers 12 weeks of peak-summer harvests. We strive to bring you foods mostly during the gloriously generous harvest period of early July through early October. This gives members the best shares. This is a shorter time span than most delivered CSAs, but our winter CSA has 18-20 weeks of deliveries. The same microclimate that lets us grow and harvest for our winter CSA nearly always deprives us of good diverse yields in May and June. **This summer you can also choose the partial share: the 3/5 share, with about 3/5 the weight and sometimes a little less diversity in each week's box, @ \$232 (we recommend this for single people, or those who dine out a lot).**

CHOICE #2: THE FARMERS' MARKET OPTION. Excellent for people who vacation extensively in the summer months, for single people, for families, or for pickier eaters. With this option, CSA members get near total choice of their foods but have to go to either the Chevy Chase Farmers' Market (at Lafayette Public School, on Broad Branch Ave. in the Chevy Chase part of DC, Saturdays from April 11 until late October) or the farm itself (Fridays 12 noon to 4:00 sharp, May-September, exact dates TBD by late March) or to the Homegrown Farm Market in St. Mary's County (Saturdays, 9 am to 1 pm, April 4 thru mid-Dec.).

You may choose your own foods, quantities, and even which weeks during all those months to get our foods. This option's flexibility makes it extremely popular with the 35% of members that choose this option. For all details please see that dedicated section (pp. 9-10). Costs for this are \$200, \$300, \$400, or \$500 (your choice). No other farmers' market sites will be added this year.

Important CSA dates: the Boxed Delivered CSA: July 9 through Sept. 24 (12 weeks of deliveries)

**Farmers' Market Option, Washington, DC: nearly all Saturdays, April 11-Oct. 31
Farmers' Market Option, Lexington Park, Fridays at the farm itself: May- Sept.**

Farmers' Market Option, Lexington Park, Saturdays at the public Homegrown Farm Market: April-Dec. (April 4 thru mid-Dec.)

EXCELLENT VACATION FLEXIBILITY FOR OUR MEMBERS

If you know of travel plans 3 days or more before a delivery, you can get a credit and not have your share delivered. You need to both A) CALL THE FARM CELL AND SPEAK DIRECTLY TO BRETT, and also B) EMAIL US WITH "CSA DELIVERY AND VACATION" in the subject line. Give us your name, exact pick up site, and dates of travel. We will email you back with a credit, redeemable by (your choice):

printing out our email and bringing that to a farmers' market we service, for foods of your choosing. OR

printing out the email and sending it back to us when we offer optional foods for purchase, most years, near Thanksgiving and Christmas. OR

printing out the email and sending it back to us with registration form and an adjusted check for a future Even' Star CSA membership.

We ask you to tell us 2 ways because it is easy for CSA adjustments to slip through the cracks when we are so busy with the crops. And the "3 or more days before a delivery" above is important; we harvest and plan for x number of members the six days before each delivery. Please call the farm cell if you would like clarification on how the vacation credit works.

Active-duty military have even more flexibility, should they be redeployed or stationed out of our region. Please call the farmer cell for details. We greatly appreciate how many sacrifices military families must make, and Navy and NATO CSA members in St. Mary's County have helped our farm immeasurably.

DETAILS OF THE FOODS AND SERVICES OF THE EVEN' STAR ORGANIC FARM CSA

We offer three subscriptions annually. See the CHOICE section above for dates and costs. The "*Orion Rising*" *Winter Share* is *not* covered in detail here.

Our summer share is about the diverse bounty of choice crops grown in the warmer months. You need to be aware that certain summer crops are either extremely hard or impossible to grow in this region without constant pesticide spraying (especially cherries, peaches, plums, apples, and sweet corn). As certified organic growers, we cannot offer these. The crops that we do grow and harvest and that you may expect at varying times during the summer are:

sweet onions and scallions

6 kinds of cherry and teardrop tomatoes

currant tomatoes

5 varieties of heirloom beefsteak and plum tomatoes

Tomatillos, most years

3 varieties of cucumbers

3 types of new potatoes

Genoa basil, Thai basil, and lemon basil

other fresh herbs such as parsley, mint, and our Provençal herb blend

3 varieties of summer squash and edible squash flowers

1-2 types of baking ("winter") squash
tender okra
great petite strawberries, but only in May & early June; timing wrong for the boxed CSA
French sorrel
blackberries and figs (typically no more than 2 deliveries per season)
2 varieties of superb fragrant cantaloupes
4 varieties of premium sweet potatoes, by late September
greens, radishes, and baby turnips, October to May
4 varieties of watermelons
red and green bell peppers, plus 3 other mild peppers
semi-spicy peppers (these will very rarely be packed for the delivered CSA)
Four types of mild and tender eggplant
Many types of flowers for bouquets (for farmers' market members only)
Shitake mushrooms when the weather is kind (2 pints each for all members last summer)

THE TRADITIONAL BOXED AND DELIVERED CSA OPTION

We provide the above diversity as much as possible, but in the summer we are passionately committed to great tomatoes. New members need to know that typically 60% (by weight) of all high-summer harvests are our diverse tomatoes, melons, and cucumbers, so if you don't like these, you should instead choose the Farmers' Market Option (detailed later). Bouquets are provided only to farmers' market patrons, not to the summer boxed delivered CSA. We try new crops every season and are planting a few crops not listed above. You also need to know that our summer CSA members may on rare occasions get specialty products from us like our Provençal or Thai seasoning salts, or our Fire Sauce (similar to Tabasco). Our winter CSA members get these more often. We prepare the specialty products primarily from what we grow here, and hoard these nonperishables for delivery weeks when we want to add value to your CSA box because the harvest of fresh foods wasn't big enough.

We strive for six CSA items per week. So what might some typical subscription boxes contain?

early July:

three to four pounds of new potatoes
blackberries
Genoa basil
5 cucumbers
5 yellow and green summer squash
2 pounds of cherry, Roma, or heirloom tomatoes

late July:

two pints of rainbow cherry tomatoes
2 pounds of heirloom slicing/salad tomatoes (e.g., Cherokee Purple, Rutgers, etc.)
5 cucumbers

Plum tomatoes
Sweet heirloom cooking peppers
four medium eggplant
large watermelon or cantaloupe

or late September:

two pints of rainbow cherry tomatoes
4 pounds of first-of -the season Beauregard sweet potatoes
cantaloupe
Butternut squash
Provençal herb blend
One quart of heirloom tomatoes
sweet red bell and green bell peppers

The **average** weight per week of the summer delivered CSA full share has been 11 to 11.75 lbs., 2010 through 2019. The **average** value of each weekly delivery for our boxed summer subscription service is \$32, either picked up at the farm or delivered to neighborhood coordinators in St. Mary's County, in Chevy Chase, in NW DC, in Bethesda, in Takoma Park, in University Park, in Gaithersburg, in Rockville, in Alexandria, in Waldorf, and in Arlington. We typically underprice compared to other organic farms that sell in the Beltway, and our produce costs less than organic produce sold in most supermarkets. But our produce does cost more than do the crops of conventional farmers in rural areas like St. Mary's county. We calculate the values based on what it costs to grow each crop organically and what customers have happily paid for our foods at the farmers' markets. The average value per week is important because weather variations give farmers highly bountiful harvests in some weeks and lower yields in other weeks. We and the subscribers must adapt to these seasonal variations.

We co-wrote two really useful cookbooks, *The Farmer's Kitchen* and *The Farmers Market Cookbook*, to help CSA members easily and deliciously prepare the diverse foods we grow. They are very well-reviewed and is available from Amazon. We urge returning CSA members who don't already own a copy to consider getting one, and all new people really should. The cookbooks were prepared by this farmer and an old chef friend of mine; together our total restaurant cooking experience tops 35 years.

There is NO delivery fee or fuel surcharge, and any increases in fuel or production costs are always absorbed by the farm. This means that our CSA members are protected from nationwide inflation in food costs. If a hurricane or similar emergency forces us to cancel a delivery, we will extend the delivery span into October. We have always given full value for what members paid for their shares, so we reserve the right to extend the delivery schedule well into October should the upcoming hurricane season be really bad. The cost of the 2020 Boxed-Delivered Summer Subscription is 12 times \$32, for a total of \$384. Our summer subscription period is shorter than that of many other CSAs because we have so many weeks of deliveries in the cold season, which lasts from late October to April. The many families who subscribe for deliveries in both periods get 30-32 weeks annually of our farm's vegetables; the Farmer's Market Option people can

get nearly the whole year if they are also winter subscribers. This is the most offered by any farm in the DC area that grows all of the foods their CSA members receive.

The contents of the boxes are designed to feed a couple or small family with a lot of seasonal, diverse options. **We know that the quantities may be too much for single people and strongly encourage these folks to split a full share with a friend or close colleague. If splitting, it will be your responsibility to divide the contents, but we want to add both box partners to our email list such that all will be notified of box contents and delivery times. If you opt for a split subscription, please list both names and emails on one registration form. THIS YEAR WE ARE ALSO OFFERING THE 3/5 SHARE (SEE ABOVE, “PARTIAL SHARES . .”).**

Customer and farm recycling saves all of us money and is the right approach for our environment. All subscribers are expected to return the empty delivery boxes to their pick-up site when they come to get the next week’s delivery.

PARTIAL SHARES ALSO AVAILABLE FOR THE SUMMER BOXED-DELIVERED MEMBERS

This summer we offer 3/5-sized shares, 60% of the cost and about 3/5 the weight of the traditional full share. Crop diversity will be slightly lower than in the main share, but we will strive to simply shrink the portion (eg., a smaller cantaloupe, slightly fewer heirloom tomatoes, etc. relative to what we pack each week for the full-share). We use shallower boxes for members who choose the 3/5 share, and will now include 3/5 members initials in each harvest email so no 3/5 member mistakenly takes a full share (taller) box. If you want this option, be sure to check it off on the registration form! If it goes well, we will offer part-shares for the winter 2020-21 CSA members.

HOW THURSDAY DELIVERIES WORK: EMAILS AND NEIGHBORHOOD COORDINATORS

We organize the deliveries with the neighborhood system. In this kind of subscription service, the customer can stay close to home by picking up their pre-assembled case of goodies at the house of a neighborhood coordinator (plus six businesses sites in 2020). The total list of pick-up sites appears on the registration forms. The farmer does not have to travel every week to the home of each and every subscriber, keeping fuel costs lower. This method also lets us avoid charging subscribers a delivery surcharge. The responsibilities of each neighborhood coordinator include a) having a space available that is protected from direct sun (e.g., in a closed-in porch, etc.) into which we can place their neighbors' boxes; b) reliably being home or otherwise letting us access that drop-off space on delivery days, typically Thursdays; c) letting neighbors pick up their food conveniently on Thursday or Friday; d) keeping subscribers' empty, folded-up boxes from the prior week's delivery in a convenient place, such that we may re-use efficiently; and e) helping us to communicate with customers if traffic or weather problems threaten timely deliveries. Pleasant and reliable neighborhood coordinators are absolutely central to this approach and save time and money for everyone. We greatly appreciate such community spirit and need all subscribers to respect the space, time, and need for porch neatness of the coordinators. Each coordinator should expect to be the drop-off for at least 8-10 subscribers.

If you are a potential new member that wants to start a pick-up site right in your neighborhood, due to COVID we are willing to add sites. A new drop-off site will be welcomed if all of the following occur: a) the new site is on our delivery route (St. Mary's County to Waldorf to Alexandria to Arlington to Chevy Chase to Bethesda to Rockville to Gaithersburg to University Park); b) the new site signs up a minimum of 6 full memberships and four 3/5 shares, or just 8 full memberships (so contact your neighbors about potential deliveries); c) the new site is at least 6 blocks from one of our existing sites; and d) the new site is outdoors at a member's home, or (best yet) on a shady porch.

Deliveries occur Thursdays any time between 3:30 AM (our local sites) and 2 PM, and the single biggest glitch is Beltway traffic. When one side of the Beltway snarls, we are delayed but then re-route to still get to our other 18 stops.

Each week, we email the traditional packed-box subscribers with the delivery day and box contents by the evening before the delivery day. It is really important that you read this harvest email each week to best store and enjoy your foods. If you do not get an email from us by delivery day, please call the farm cell! The farmer cell phone and your coordinator's name and contact info are provided to you in every email we send once we've recorded you in our ledger. The coordinators are our surrogates in responsibility level. We deliver on Thursdays 96% of the time, with plenty of notice when this isn't the case.

Subscribers are strongly encouraged to pick up their boxes by the evening of delivery day or by the following morning in order to keep the foods in peak form. But you are all busy people, and hence you have until Friday evening to pick up. After that the coordinators should dispose of the foods as they see fit. If you know you'll be delayed, you need to call your coordinator beforehand to request that they delay giving away your box. Or better yet, have a friend pick up for you once you've thoroughly told them of how the pick-ups work. Please don't expect the coordinators to let your box sit on a porch, with the untended food suffering, after Friday evening.

FREE RANGE EGGS AND THE CSA SUBSCRIPTIONS

The main produce share (\$384 for 12 delivery weeks) does not include eggs during the warmer months. The optional yes-egg add-on is available each season on a first come, first served basis only for the regular boxed and delivered CSA. To receive a dozen of our great free-range eggs every delivery week, please make out a second check for \$78 (12 dozen x \$6.50). These delicious eggs will also often be available for the Farmers' Market Option members. What drives this pricing are predators: true free-range leads to happier and healthier chickens, but with periodic loss of some hens to hawks, coyotes, foxes, etc.

THE "FARMERS' MARKET OPTION"

An option, not a requirement. The traditional neighborhood delivery system will not change for the many members who are used to it and prefer it. The Farmers' Market Option is excellent for people who will be vacationing or out of town during long periods of the summer. This is the second of two warm-season CSA choices. The Farmers' Market Option starts much earlier and ends later than the delivered box option; see the dates above.

In 2010 we tried something new that proved to be wildly popular with the many CSA members that choose it. Beside the above delivered option, CSA members could elect the following (i.e., members can choose this or the delivered option, but not both within one CSA share). Unlike the neighborhood deliveries above, CSA members can come to either:

the farm itself, May-September, Fridays between 12:00 noon and 4:00 pm sharp, or to the Homegrown Farm Market in southern Lexington Park, April 4th thru mid-Dec., Saturdays, 9 am to 1 pm,
OR the Chevy Chase Farmers' Market, April 11-late October, Saturdays, opening at 9:00 am and closing at 1:00 pm

No delivery to your neighborhood, but instead you come in weeks of your choosing to either of the two sites above during market hours, tell us which foods you want and in what quantities, we total the amount that would be due, you initial (sign) the tab, and that amount is subtracted out of what you have in your account. You choose an initial value level (\$200, \$300, \$400, or \$500). This check is sent to us with the registration form and contract in the spring, as per traditional delivered CSA memberships. We add 5% to the amount you send us as a joining bonus, so (for example) a \$300 check is worth \$315 in goods and a \$500 check is worth \$525. **Most important, you can miss weeks of market days and your balance will not change!** Your account is like running a tab: we keep track of how much food you've gotten to date on a spreadsheet and subtract out each week's foods from your previous balance. You can check your balance any week you come to get foods. Mid-summer, we send an email to all Farmers' Market Option members to remind you of your current balance. You will have the option of adding to your account if you decide you would like more if and when your initial investment has run out.

We tried this in 2010 because surveys of CSA members have shown many want more choices: members don't agree on what is too many or too few summer squash, or watermelons, or cukes or basil. We also found out that this option increased the flexibility of the farm in terms of harvesting. We bring the greatest diversity of foods to the Farmers' Market, as many of the foods have too small a harvest for all of the delivered-box CSA members to get that item. The Farmers' Market Option brings great choice to those members who really want it. Members who receive the traditional boxed Thursday deliveries may choose to augment their boxes by coming to the farm market on Fridays or the Chevy Chase market on Saturdays. We encourage this, most especially in the May through June period before High Summer deliveries begin.

Other advantages to the CSA members in the Farmers' Market Option are that many crops picked each Friday are too perishable to last until the following Thursday (e.g. blackberries in August), or on a hot day at a delivery site (e.g., arugula in May or figs in September), and hence CSA members rather than anonymous farmers' market customers can now get these. Further, in all weeks we'll email you by Friday morning with a list of what we'll be harvesting, especially when we have unique or scarce-quantity foods. **To encourage people to use this option, we add 5% to the initial value level you choose (i.e., the check you send to us before the summer season starts) to your balance in our ledger. A \$300 initial value check is therefore recorded as \$315**

worth of goods, a \$400 check is worth \$420 in goods, and a \$500 check is valued at \$525. Any further \$100 addition to their balance that a member may choose also gets the 5% bonus. Any and all of our CSA members who come to the farmers' market have the same rights to get scarce foods that we reserve for members, e.g. first of the season May strawberries, or Cherokee Purple heirloom tomatoes, or porcini mushrooms.

Some farmers' market items must be strictly limited to one per customer per week, like very scarce first-of-the-season tomato baskets or baskets of figs. Also, we'll strongly encourage any unused balance left in the member's account be used up by you with non-perishables such as October sweet potatoes or our superb seasoning salts, but **balances left by end of market season can only be rolled into the 2020 part of the boxed-delivered winter CSA or will be donated as food to our local soup kitchen (member's choice).** Leftover balances for 2020 cannot be rolled into 2021, as the farm would be taxed absurdly and prohibitively as "agricultural futures" traders.

THE WEEKLY HARVEST EMAILS

As many of our crops are heirlooms, unique to this farm, and/or may cook differently from supermarket produce, our weekly CSA harvest emails and cookbooks are very useful. The emails give you storage advice and simple cooking suggestions for new items. In the cookbooks (available from Amazon), the recipes are well tested and straightforward: the farm owner/manager Brett was the chef in 11 restaurants and a cook in another 6 over a 20-year span before we began Even' Star in 1997. *The Farmers' Kitchen* cookbook has been extremely popular with our CSA patrons, and the 2016 edition, *The Farmers' Market Cookbook*, is beautifully done and has received excellent new reviews. The produce storage chapters in both books are prime.

SIMPLE REGISTRATION FORMS FOR BOTH OPTIONS ON NEXT PAGES:

**EVEN' STAR ORGANIC FARM CSA REGISTRATION FORM:
BOXED THURSDAY DELIVERIES**

If you want to use the high-choice "Farmers' Market Option", use the SECOND registration form, not this one! And if splitting a share with a friend, please supply both emails on this one form

Name(s)

—

Address

Phone

#

—

Email address(es)

(Our own email address is [HYPERLINK "mailto:evenstarfarm@evenstarfarm.org" evenstarfarm@evenstarfarm.org](mailto:evenstarfarm@evenstarfarm.org). **Call Brett's cell if urgent problems arise: (301) 481-6832, and if leaving a phone message after signing up be sure to tell us your pick-up site address!**

Circle and prioritize two pick-up sites most convenient for you ("#1" for your first choice, "#2" for your second). If only one site will work, please tell us. All subscribers will be notified of their one site by us. To preserve the privacy of coordinators and current subscribers, precise home locations are sent only once we receive your paperwork. We assign people to sites appropriately to avoid overcrowding coordinators' porches, and 99% of people get their first choice:

Arlington, south (1500 block of South Nelson St., close to Glebe Rd.)

Arlington, north (5800 block of 19th St. North, close to Washington Blvd.;
tentative: needs 4+ members to be a delivery site)

Arlington, north (the MOM Organic Market, 1901 N. Veitch St., zip 22201)

Alexandria, the MOM Organic Market

Bethesda (on Chestnut St., near the NIH)

Chevy Chase, D.C. (on Jocelyn St. near Connecticut)

Gaithersburg, MD, the MOM Organic Market

Rockville/North Bethesda, the MOM Organic Market

Gaithersburg, the MOM Organic Market

St. Mary's County (Town Creek; *tentative: needs 4+ members to be a delivery site*)

St. Mary's County (the natural foods store The Good Earth, 41675 Park Ave.,

Leonardtown)

St. Mary's County (the farm itself, between Lexington Park and Dameron)

University Park (near Queens Chapel Rd. and Rt. 410)
Waldorf, the MOM Organic Market

Note: On the extraordinarily small chance that some future government decree closes our CSA sites like 4 MOM supermarkets or the Good Earth Natural Foods Store, we will keep the neighborhood as a drop-off point but we will shift pick-ups to one existing member's home. CSA members only, never the general public, for such pick-ups.

Circle your choice:

TRADITIONAL FULL SHARE (@ \$384) or the **3/5 SHARE (@ \$232)?**

No-Egg membership or **Yes-Egg Membership** (enclose a second check for \$78)

Have you been a winter or summer subscriber with us before? Precisely where did you pick up? _____

Farm use: Payment received?

Please return this form, the following contract (signed) and a check for \$384 or \$232 (made out to Even' Star Organic Farm) to Even' Star Organic Farm, 48322 Far Cry Road, Lexington Park, MD 20653.

DELIVERED BOX SUBSCRIPTION CONTRACT: Terms and Conditions

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EVEN' STAR ORGANIC FARM

We will provide you with weekly goods averaging \$32. These goods will be vegetables, fruits, flowers, or other products of this farm. We will provide you with an assortment of goods in each box. These are of our choosing and we cannot substitute foods for individual subscribers.

The subscription period likely runs from **July 9 through Sept. 24 (12 weeks of deliveries)**. If a serious accident, disastrous weather event, or similar act of God prevents 12 harvest/delivery weeks in the above time span, we may extend the subscription period past early-October, 2020, cancel the service, offer bulk foods of equal value to the missed weeks, or refund the balance of the subscription fees, solely of our choosing.

Deliveries to the Washington, DC area will be on Thursdays whenever possible. If hurricanes or other adverse conditions prevent a Thursday delivery, we will deliver on a different day and will email subscribers of the change as soon as possible. Subscribers have until Friday evening to pick up.

We urge subscribers and the neighborhood coordinators to work together to make pick-ups easy. Should consistent or major conflicts arise between a subscriber and the farm or a coordinator, we reserve the right to change the subscriber's pick-up location or to cancel their subscription altogether.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OUR SUBSCRIBERS

The total cost of the 2020 boxed-delivered full-share summer season is \$384. The cost of the 3/5 share is \$232. Payment in full is due with submission of the registration form and this contract, before deliveries begin. There is no delivery fee, but pick-up of the weekly goods needs to be consistently at a single one of the designated neighborhood drop-off points or from the farm directly. You will be notified of your neighborhood pick-up point. Joining the Even' Star CSA (as formalized by your check and registration forms) also means that you agree to not sue your coordinator, should you have an accident on their property when picking up your box. Responsibilities of the coordinators are detailed elsewhere. The subscription is not refundable except at the sole discretion of Even' Star Organic Farm. You may transfer your share to someone else by coordinating with Farm, and the new subscriber must accept the terms of the CSA contract.

Subscribers have no obligation to work at or for Even' Star Organic Farm.

Subscribers have to return their empty delivery boxes to their neighborhood pick-up point when picking up the following week's delivery. Subscribers need to respect the schedules of their neighborhood coordinators and not attempt pick-ups at really late or really early hours without the prior agreement of the coordinator.

Signed this ____ day of _____ 2020 by _____ Printed Name: _____.

Signed this ____ day of _____ 2020 by _____. Printed Name: Brett Grohsgal.

**EVEN' STAR ORGANIC FARM CSA REGISTRATION FORM:
FARMERS' MARKET OPTION**

*If you want to pick up a pre-packed box at one of our Thursday delivery sites, use the
PREVIOUS registration form, not this one!*

Full Name with Middle Initial of Primary CSA Shareholder:

Please list all household members who you authorize to choose farm foods instead of
you:

Your

Address _____

Phone # _____

Email address(es)

(Our own email address is [HYPERLINK "mailto:evenstarfarm@evenstarfarm.org"](mailto:evenstarfarm@evenstarfarm.org)
evenstarfarm@evenstarfarm.org. **Call your farmer if urgent problems arise: (301)
481-6832**), and if leaving a phone message during the delivery season be sure to tell
us your pick-up site address!

INITIAL VALUE LEVEL (circle one): \$200 \$300 \$400 \$500
**(regardless of \$ level, all members have equal access to any scarce early season
foods)**

COVID update: Should any government close down the Homegrown Farm Market, our St. Mary's farmers' market option CSA members will be given the choice of either a) staying an FMO member, but with the on-farm, CSA-members-only market starting the Friday after the County closes Homegrown. Or b) getting their shares converted at full value to the Boxed Delivered High Summer option, the safest possible way to get food besides growing it yourself. Essentially any closure of Homegrown would trigger our farm to start the on-farm market or to start pre-packaged boxes earlier than normal. Also, the on-farm market will likely be under canopies in the open air, no longer in the packing room.

If WDC closes the Chevy Chase/Lafayette Farmers' Market (already open-air), we would convert Beltway FMO memberships at full value to the Boxed Delivered High Summer option. Since we cannot offer Beltway members an on-farm market, those FMO members could even opt for customized boxes at a slightly higher price (to offset the higher labor cost of making customized boxes; the non-custom regular delivered CSA box price will hold at \$32).

By August, all Farmers' Market option CSA members will be notified by email of their

updated credit balance. Members may also check their balances at the weekly Farmers' Market. Members may add to their balance at any point, and will receive a 5% Market Bonus for any \$100+ balance additions. Balances not used up by Oct. 31, 2020 (November or December in St. Mary's County) will be donated as foods to the St. Mary's soup kitchen or may be rolled into the 2020 part of the Boxed-Delivered Winter CSA.

Have you been a CSA member with us before? If so, where did you pick up?

Please send this form, the following contract (signed) and a check for either \$200, \$300, \$400, OR \$500 to:

Brett Grohsgal, Even' Star Organic Farm, 48322 Far Cry Road, Lexington Park, MD 20653.

Checks need to be made out to Even' Star Organic Farm.

FARMERS' MARKET OPTION CSA CONTRACT: Terms and Conditions

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EVEN' STAR ORGANIC FARM

We will provide you with goods strictly from our farm but chosen by you either at the Lafayette School/ Chevy Chase Farmers' Market, WDC (Saturdays), or at the farm itself (Fridays) or the Homegrown Farm Market in Lexington Park (Saturdays). These goods may be vegetables, fruits, flowers, or other products of this farm. CSA members choosing this option also may choose any Saturdays or Fridays to spend their credit, from April 11 through Oct. 31, 2020 (Chevy Chase) or April 4 through mid-Dec. (St. Mary's County). Some crops in very limited quantities may be limited to one per CSA member per market day.

Initial cost of this option, decided by the CSA member, is \$200, \$300, \$400, or \$500. The Farm further credits each Farmers' Market CSA Member a bonus of 5% of the initial cost to their account. For example, a \$400 initial CSA check will be entered in our ledger and spreadsheets as worth \$420 of our goods.

Even' Star Organic Farm can miss at most 5 farmers' markets per year, due to hurricanes, family emergencies, or late June vacation. Subscribers will be well notified by email in advance of any missed Fridays or Saturdays.

By August all Farmers' Market option CSA members will be notified by email of their up-to-date credit balance. Members may also check their balances at the weekly Farmers' Market. Members may add to their balance at any point, and will receive a 5% Market Bonus for any \$100+ balance additions. Balances of Beltway FMO members not used up by Oct. 31 2020 will be donated as food to the St. Mary's soup kitchen or may be rolled into the 2020 part of the Winter CSA (member's choice). St. Mary's County FMO members will have until at least mid-November to use up the summer's balances.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OUR SUBSCRIBERS

The total cost of the 2020 summer season Farmers' Market Option is \$200, \$300, \$400, or \$500 (member's choice). Payment in full is due with submission of the registration form and this contract. Joining the Even' Star CSA (as formalized by your check and registration forms) also means that you agree to not sue the farm or the Farmers' Market, should you have an accident at the farm or at the market when choosing your foods.

The subscription is not refundable except at the sole discretion of Even' Star Organic Farm.

Each person sending in this registration form and contract becomes the Primary CSA Member. This Primary CSA Member should designate on the registration form and by name which (if any) other household members or family may choose foods and spend the credit at the farm or at the Market.

You may fully transfer your share to someone outside of your family or household by coordinating with the Farm.

Subscribers have no obligation to work at or for Even' Star Organic Farm.

Subscribers need to respect the hours of the Lafayette/Chevy Chase Farmers' Market and not attempt Saturday pick-ups before 9:00 AM or after 1:00 PM. On-farm shopping must occur between 12 noon and 4:00 pm sharp Fridays. Homegrown Farm Market hours are Saturdays 9 am to 1 pm.

COVID update: Should any government close down the Homegrown Farm Market, our St. Mary's farmers' market option CSA members will be given the choice of either a) staying an FMO member, but with the on-farm, CSA-members-only market starting the Friday after the County closes Homegrown. Or b) getting their shares converted at full value to the Boxed Delivered High Summer option, the safest possible way to get food besides growing it yourself. Essentially any closure of Homegrown would trigger our farm to start the on-farm market or to start pre-packaged boxes earlier than normal. Also, the on-farm market will likely

be under canopies in the open air, no longer in the packing room.

If WDC closes the Chevy Chase/Lafayette Farmers' Market (already open-air), we would convert Beltway FMO memberships at full value to the Boxed Delivered High Summer option. Since we cannot offer Beltway members an on-farm market, those FMO members could even opt for customized boxes at a slightly higher price (to offset the higher labor cost of making customized boxes; the non-custom regular delivered CSA box price will hold at \$32).

Signed this ____ day of _____ 2020 by _____ Printed Name: _____.

Signed this ____ day of _____ 2020 by _____ Printed Name: Brett Grohsgal.

NEXT, MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE FARM AND THE CSA. RETURNING MEMBERS MAY SKIP; NEW MEMBERS SHOULD DEFINITELY READ:

THE HISTORY OF EVEN' STAR ORGANIC FARM

Our farm is located in St. Mary's County, Maryland, about 70 miles south of Washington, DC. We bought these 104 acres in 1997 and immediately began working towards becoming organically certified. In 1999, we attained full organic certification for 15 acres of prime cropland and 50 acres of woods. Since 2009, 28 acres of our cropped land and 50 acres of forest are certified organic; the rest is conventional hay acreage, leased to another farmer.

Our market niche is defined by the importance that both wholesale and retail customers place on eating locally grown, superbly flavored, and very safe foods. We grow predominantly great-tasting heirloom tomatoes or tomatoes we've bred ourselves for flavor. Our berries and melons are picked at peak ripeness. We grow our greens and root vegetables primarily in the cold months, not in the summer; frequent frost and the icy winds of winter add great depth and sweetness to greens' flavors. We grow our crops slowly, with minimal certified organic fertilizers or sprays, in order to avoid unhealthy meals for our family and our customers. Our farming ethic is based on a deep respect for the land and an equal respect for the time-proven farming tradition that focuses on crop diversity. These ancient approaches -and not government subsidies, crop insurance policies, or intensive pesticide use-- are how we avoid both the extreme risks and the solvency crisis that are destroying so many farms in America. We manage our soil and water resources with gentle hands such that, through torrid drought or soggy flood or frigid winter, these fields always produce.

When people buy from us, they are supporting these time-honored practices as well as getting foods greatly superior to the junk in the supermarkets.

HOW TYPICAL COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE FARMS (CSAs) WORK

Farm subscriptions and CSAs are relatively new ideas in the US. They are based on our need to know and trust the people that grow and harvest our food. Most foods are grown and handled in unknown places. Corporations and mega-farms rarely tell the public about their pesticide use or labor conditions; their realities would hurt sales. **Delivery services,**

whether Amazon or PeaPod or distant farm cooperatives, that claim “fresh from the farm!” but do not have a farm you can visit and see for yourself are no better than a supermarket. Producer-only CSA farms are much better and fix these problems. Our health matters, as does the fair treatment of our fellow workers. At our annual CSA party, and every Friday afternoon from May until September, our CSA members can walk around unguided and see what and how we grow all of these delicious foods.

In many CSA's, the consumers are expected to periodically work on the farm. Not ours. In many CSA's, the members/consumers also share some of the risks of farming: if horrible droughts, floods, or other disasters hit the farm and yields plummet to zero, the consumer gets neither their food nor money back. Not ours. We do not ask that CSA members work on the farm at all, and we also do not like that last idea of shared risk and exclude it from the Even' Star Organic Farm Subscription Service. We are professional farmers and manage our business risks very differently (please “HOW WE DIVIDE . . .”). Barring a tornado, huge hurricane, accurate lightning strike, or major injury or death, our CSA customers will reliably receive the lion's share of the diverse, lovely, in-season produce that we grow. You deserve such dependability. And we value your loyalty beyond measure.

That said, a negative part of all CSAs that we must emphasize is that weather variability force all CSA farms into *averaging*. This means that not all delivery weeks are created equal, nor do the harvests equal each other in value per week. In some weeks our subscribers get less than we'd like, and other weeks are super-bountiful. Our farm keeps track of these “light weeks” vs. “heavy weeks”, and per subscription season our CSA members have always received a very large amount of diverse foods. But accepting averaging before the season starts will help you adapt to the weather glitches and delayed harvests that frequently occur in the farm world. At Even' Star Organic Farm, we are proud that we have always met or surpassed the value of the shares when added up over the course of an entire season. We also **never** secretly buy someone else's vegetables or fruits to cover for bad planning or disastrous weather. Secret buying and re-packaging is a scary trend among many delivery services and CSAs and often leads to heavily sprayed foods being re-packed for an “organic” CSA. We adamantly reject produce buying and re-selling for our customers.

THE ROLE OF LIVESTOCK ON OUR FARM

We are primarily a vegetable, fruit, and flower farm, and please call the main farmer, Brett, if any of what comes next needs clarifying. We always free-range our 300 laying chickens. We believe that humane treatment of farm animals is the best moral path for people in our profession, and argue that factory livestock production is wrong and should not even be called “farming”. We are much closer in ethics to the animal rights advocates than to those farmers and politicians who defend concentrated animal feedlot operations. But we also strongly respect the ancient agricultural tradition of integrating livestock with many acres of pasture and vegetable production. Our hens eat all the crops that aren't pretty enough or fresh enough for our human customers. Our hens supply small amounts of manure that we spread in the winter to help the next season's tomato plants thrive. Our hens eat lots of insects and grubs, many of which would otherwise eventually find the crops. And our hens provide eggs of the highest quality to our family and to many

customers.

HOW WE DIVIDE OUR CROPS BETWEEN THE CSA, THE FARMERS' MARKET, AND WHOLESALE

We provide this information so that subscribers can understand how we decide who gets what. Please skip this transparency section if how we run our business is not a concern.

We are a large farm and were wholesale-driven for years before we started our CSA. The CSA is now the boss in our decision-making and production. Since starting the CSA in 2003, we have shed ourselves of 8 restaurant buyers, two universities, and one farmers' market. But we still use some wholesale accounts and 2 farmers' markets to keep harvested foods fresh and to minimize risk.

We manage risk carefully to be sure the CSA gets a lot of food and that our farm stays viable. First, we do not assume good weather and thereby over-sell membership in our CSA. This is the dangerous path on which many smaller farms have stumbled, with their CSA members often not getting enough food or (less ethically) the farmer having to cheat by secretly buying and re-packing auction-house produce. Bad. Instead, at Even' Star we invest substantial labor to plant and tend much more acreage than the CSA could use when the growing season normal or outstanding (with 10-15 permanent workers and over 38 cropped acres annually). This way, if the weather or pests turn out badly, the CSA still gets properly taken care of, although our labor costs and crop investments take a pounding, the primary farmer (Brett) gets paid most poorly, and wholesale accounts get no deliveries. But in years of OK to good weather and no major pest outbreaks, this costly and large-scale planting approach obviously generates a lot of surplus. The surplus goes mostly to our wholesale accounts.

In normal summers 75% of all harvests go to the CSA; in most winters, the number is steady at 96%.

The CSA always gets the first big harvests of our main crops, from early July tomatoes to new potatoes to sweet red peppers to watermelons and sweet potatoes.

Nevertheless, some highly perishable items cannot go from our refrigerated space, ride on a delivery run that lasts 11 hours, and then sit on a coordinator's porch for up to 24 hours before a subscriber picks up their box. This includes most bouquets, wild mushrooms, and figs, none of which have been bred for shelf life. As we deliver on Thursdays, these "super perishables" also includes some foods harvested on Fridays (which would be too old for the following Thursday delivery to meet our high quality standards). The Friday harvest mostly goes to the farmers' markets but that and the surplus noted above are also what keep our restaurant accounts loyal.

Potential new members should read the reviews that our farm receives on the Local Harvest website. Those words by our members will inform you better than all this info packet of how reliable we are and how committed to our CSA members.

WILL I GET BETTER FOOD OR SAVE MONEY BY JOINING A CSA?

If you are a skilled home gardener with no history of crop failures, you may do a better job at growing diverse summer foods that exactly fit your needs than can any farm, including Even' Star. Experienced home gardeners bring time and focus to small plots of land and can out-produce any but the most chemical of professional growers.

Farmers tend to be harried managers: we struggle to deal with hordes of insect pests that often alight from neighboring farms, we are often too busy getting the most out of ourselves and our fields to intensively commit to any one crop, and we must often harvest foods a full day before the customers get them. All these things reduce farmers' ability to surpass the top 2% of home growers. Experienced home gardeners can nurture each tomato plant, hand-pick and remove any bad insects that gobble the leaves, and then bring that sun-drenched tomato instantaneously from the field into their kitchen. No commercial farm can do this.

It would be great if there were a huge increase in home gardening in the US, and we urge experienced gardeners to stay away from CSAs. But **unless you or a close friend or family member intensively and always successfully gardens, Even' Star is likely a superior solution**. We can bring you some of the best foods you'll get anywhere. Our professional quality level is among the highest anywhere. Our crop failures are extremely infrequent when compared to the rest of the farm community. Since 1996, we have brought the passion of the home gardener and our graduate training in agricultural and environmental sciences to these hundred acres, and both we and our workers love growing such delicious and safe foods.

If you don't really care whether your food is organically grown or not, maybe you should not subscribe with us. Conventional growers have an array of different chemicals which permit success with even the most pest-vulnerable crops, and usually add fungicides to the vegetables and fruits that prolong shelf life. Our adherence to the stringent US organic regulations sometimes leads some of our vegetables to be more blemished or irregularly shaped than supermarket stuff. These are stewardship and safety choices we make. On average, though, our produce always tastes far better and often looks much better than you'll find in supermarkets.

We price our CSA foods at the same level as we do our farmers' market foods, item by item and volume by volume. We price our foods lower than do many conventional farmers and most certified organic farmers that sell at DC area farmers' markets, and we consistently charge less than do the supermarket chains Giant or Whole Foods, even comparing our certified organic foods against their conventionally grown. And we pay our workers an above-average wage compared to most retail stores and farms. But if you only buy conventional produce, or if you always shop at cheaper grocery stores, or if you live in a rural area dominated by large chemical farms, you may not save money by subscribing with us. The cost of labor and land and the lower yields that come from our not spraying all drive our pricing. The positive aspect of this is that our land grows some crops ---cherry tomatoes, sweet potatoes, blackberries, cucumbers, herbs, winter greens, etc.—wonderfully, and with great efficiency. We price these at below market, year in and year out. And when US market prices climb, we stick to our original pricing to treat our customers better.

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