

Wickham Farms 2016 CSA Handbook



Welcome to the Wickham Farms CSA!

We welcome you to a season of fresh, local produce. We hope that you will find our CSA experience to be fun, healthy and delicious. Meet the “Wickhams” in Wickham Farms:

Bill Wickham grew up on a 1500-acre vegetable farm in Flint, N.Y., Ontario County. His parents, Don and Bev, sold the family farm in 1986. Bill’s love of farming prompted him to earn his bachelor’s degree from the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences at Cornell University.

Debbie Wickham was born and raised in Queens, N.Y., and earned her bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from Cornell. She and Bill met in college, and the rest is history!



Bill and Debbie began growing and selling pumpkins on Route 250 in Penfield in 1986. At the time, it was a pumpkin patch and a red wagon. You may remember seeing their wagons at u-pick pumpkin patches throughout the area. They started the CSA in 2012, and have found it to be a very rewarding part of their growing business.

We aim to start distribution mid-June. If we have a cold, wet spring, we may start a week or two later. We will communicate our “official” start date by email as we get closer to our first harvest. The CSA will end 18 weeks after the first distribution.

Communications *Email is the #1 way we communicate information about the CSA.* Be sure that wickhamfarms.com is on your safe sender list. All membership, pickup change requests, and other CSA questions can be sent to Mary at csa@wickhamfarms.com.

We will send out **one** email per week with CSA info, usually on Friday when our field scouts have an idea of what will be in the next week’s harvest. We call this email our “sneak peak” and it also includes u-pick crops, a field report, and other important farm announcements. **Biweekly** members will only receive a sneak peak email on their pickup week (odd or even). **If you wish to receive every weekly sneak peak, email csa@wickhamfarms.com and let us know.**

We post u-pick info and other important notices on the [Member Resources](#) page on our website. Available u-pick crops for Saturday and the following week will be posted on Friday afternoons. You can also download digital copies of our publications there.

Wickham Farms Contact Info:

Address:

1821 Fairport Nine Mile Pt. Road
Penfield, NY 14526

Phone:

(585) 377-3276

Email:

CSA@WickhamFarms.com



Picking Up On Farm

On-Farm Pickup Process

- You will be assigned a day - either Monday or Thursday - for pickup. Pickup takes place from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.; doors will open at 4 p.m. sharp. Pickup takes place at Wickham Farms on Route 250, in the Events barn, which is the one further from the parking lot, past the farm goats and chickens.
- Choices:** We offer a farmer's market-style setup, which gives you some choices among your produce options. As an example, you may choose a certain number of pounds from three different kinds of potatoes – yellow, red or Adirondack blue. You will usually have a choice among your salad and cooking greens. Some choices are based on the quantities of the crops that are ready for harvest. If we have a limited amount of broccoli and cantaloupe



available for distribution that week, for example, you may have a choice of one or the other.



What to Bring to Pickup.

Please bring bags, such as reusable grocery bags, for your produce. At the beginning of the season, two will be plenty. By late August, you will need several.

As the shares become larger, we will leave carts near the parking lot. Feel free to bring one out to the pickup barn. Please do not take carts that are already near the barn, as those are being used by your fellow CSA members.



CSA Pillow Pass



We are offering a special jumping pillow deal for on-farm CSA members: a CSA Pillow Pass. The pass will be good on your pickup evening only, from 4 p.m. until we close for the evening. The pass costs \$25 per child (full share member) and \$12.50 per child (biweekly share member) for the season.

On your pickup night, come to the CSA barn with your child. When you sign in, alert the Wickham Farms staff that your child has a pillow pass and needs a wrist band. The staff member will sign your child in, put on the wrist band and review the pillow rules.

We ask that all parents keep an eye on their children to ensure they are following our rules (no shoes, no flips or cartwheels, no rough play).

On Farm: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: May I pick up my share earlier than 4 p.m.?

We harvest your share in the morning, then rinse the crops. When that is done, we load the perishable produce in our refrigerated trailer and hold it there until pickup time so that it is as fresh as possible. As a result, we are unable to accommodate early arrivals.

Q: I am going on vacation and can't make it to pickup. What are my options?

A: Your options:

1. Have someone else pick up your share for you. If you are doing this, you do not need to call in advance.
2. Tell us to donate your share to the Penfield Ecumenical Food Shelf.
3. Reschedule your pickup day. If you are going to do this, please contact us at least 24 hours in advance so that we do not harvest your share.



Loading crops on our refrigerated trailer.

Q: If someone is picking up my share for me (such as when I'm on vacation), should I tell you first?

A: That is not necessary. Just have them sign in under your name. We are happy to show them the ropes.

Q: I'm running late at work and can't get there by 7 p.m. What do I do?

A: If you are running late, give the farm a call at (585) 377-3276. Please do not send an email, it may not be viewed in a timely manner. We will bag up your share and hold it in our walk-in cooler. You may pick it up until we close (9 p.m. in the summer, 7 p.m. in the fall), or the next day. We will hold shares for up to 24 hours, after which they will be donated to the food shelf.

Important Information for Biweekly Members

We divide biweekly members into two groups. The **"odd group"** is comprised of biweekly members who pick up on the first week of the CSA, followed by the third week, the fifth week, and so on. The **"even group"** is comprised of biweekly members who pick up on the second, fourth, sixth week, and so on.

You will receive an email with your pickup dates listed. **Please mark your calendar with your dates as soon as you get that email!**

Q: I'm a biweekly member and I don't want to miss out on picking a certain crop in the u-pick fields. May I come on my "off" week to pick?

A: You may pick every Saturday, but you may not pick on a Monday or Thursday unless it is your night to pick up. Most crops are available for at least two weeks, but the only way to truly guarantee that you'll be able to pick every available crop is to purchase a full share.

Q: If I get a biweekly share, will I miss any crops?

In most cases, you will not miss out on any particular vegetable. There may be a few exceptions in terms of items with a short harvest. We make every effort for this not to be the case.

Splitting a CSA Share

Splitting a share with family, a friend, or a neighbor is a great way to experience the CSA. We are happy to have up to two families split a share. Splitting the share can be very difficult with more than two families. Produce quantities do not always divide evenly, and we can face issues with u-pick limits. If you are splitting a share, it's a good idea to have a conversation with your share partner about the following:

1. Are we paid up?

We send invoices to only the first/primary name on the membership form. It is up to that primary member to either collect from the other member, or remind the member to pay their share to our farm. Your account will need to be paid in full to participate in the first harvest distribution.

2. How will we pick up our share?

All shares must be picked up in one visit to the farm. At the farm, you may not take a partial share. There are a couple of ways to handle this:

1. **Pick up your share together** and divvy it up then. We are fine with that happening at the farm, as long as it doesn't hold up the line for our other members.
2. **Alternate pickup weeks.** The advantage of this arrangement is that you only pick up half the time, and you do not have to plan your pickup time around your partner. The pickup person can divide up the share at home.

3. How will we divide our share?

Keep in mind that every share is the same, regardless of whether or not the share is being divided. Some of the contents of the share may not split equally or easily, such as watermelons, garlic heads and cauliflower. You will need to agree on how to divvy them up.

4. Is everyone getting communications?

We are happy to send emails to as many people as you like -- additional members, spouses, etc. If you would like additional email addresses on our distribution list, please email CSA@wickhamfarms.com.



Split shares & u-pick

Early in the season, we set limits at u-pick so every member can enjoy some of the new crops. These limits are per share, not per person. Please observe the limits.

Later in the season, we will not set specific limits or monitor amounts being picked. The premise is that the amount is a **reasonable amount for a family to use** or freeze. Generally, we expect two adults to pick per share. It's fine if there are more every now and then.

Grab & Go Shares

Grab & Go Pickup Process

Grab & Go deliveries are made on Tuesdays, and our intent is to get them to their pickup locations by 4 p.m. If you're early on the route, your delivery may come earlier.

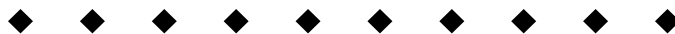
To pick up your produce:

1. Sign your name on the clipboard with the bins. Take any information that we have left for you on the clipboard (flyer, recipe, newsletter).
2. Return your bin from the previous week, and note that you have done so on the clipboard.
3. Grab a bin and go!



A few notes:

- If you are on vacation or have a conflict, your best bet is to have a friend pick up your share for you. Our pickup sites (with the exception of the Wickham Farms site) will not hold Grab & Go shares past 7 p.m.
- If you ever have a week where a different location would work better, we'd be glad to change it for you with 24 hours notice. Just email CSA@wickhamfarms.com to make an arrangement.
- We take great care to make sure every member gets an equivalent share. Please take the contents of an entire bin; do not mix and match items.
- We check and double check the bins. If you feel you are missing an item, or are not happy with an item you receive, please email us: CSA@wickhamfarms.com.



Grab & Go Bin How-To

You are welcome to transfer your produce to your own bag and leave the bin, or take a bin home and return it to your pickup location the following week.

If you choose to take the bins home, please return them to avoid a \$20 fee. The bins fold flat for convenience. Just pinch the tabs on the top of each corner and fold the sides in.



U-Pick Bonuses

Full and biweekly members are given up to two weekly opportunities to pick their own herbs, flowers and additional vegetables at no extra cost. U-pick bonuses are not included with the Grab-and-Go share, but an annual u-pick membership may be added on. The cost is \$80 for the full season of Saturday u-pick or \$40 for four u-pick Saturdays of your choice.

Locations

- Our CSA Member Herb Garden is located on Route 250, near the CSA pickup barn, next to the jumping pillow.
- Our u-pick fields are located on Sweets Corners Rd., across the road from the farm. You will be provided with directions at your first pickup.

When You May Pick

- **Herb garden:** Full and biweekly members may pick herbs from the herb garden on Route 250 on their pickup night from 4 to 7 p.m. Grab & Go members who purchase a u-pick add-on will pick on Saturdays only with herbs limited to the u-pick area on Sweets Corners Rd. The herb garden is not open on Saturdays. Biweekly members may not pick herbs on weeks they are not picking up produce.
- **Sweets Corners:**
Full members may pick on their pickup nights from 4-7pm and on Saturdays from 9am-12pm
Biweekly members may pick on their pickup nights from 4-7pm, and every Saturday that u-pick is open from 9am-12pm. Grab & Go members who purchase a u-pick add-on may pick on Saturdays from 9am-12pm.

The U-Pick Areas Are Closed When...

- Thunder is heard or lightning is spotted; you do not want to be in an open field at those times! We are open during a light rain, though.
- The grounds are extremely muddy, such as when stepping in the ground can cause you to lose a shoe!
- There are insufficient quantities for picking. This can happen early in the season if the crops are not ready, or later in the season, particularly if there has been a frost.

We do not offer make-up dates when circumstances cause us to close the u-pick areas. U-pick herbs, flowers and vegetables are truly a bonus. Our goal is for members to be able to pick once a week; Saturday hours give us a hedge for inclement weather and for people whose work schedules do not allow them to pick on Mondays or Thursdays before 7 p.m.

U-pick closes at 7pm (Monday/Thursday) and 12pm (Saturday) sharp. Please plan your picking accordingly, and do not linger in the fields after closing time.



What to Bring to U-Pick

If you are taking advantage of u-pick, it's a good idea to bring:

- Zip-top bags and Sharpie markers to store and label herbs.
- A cup or damp paper towel for cut flowers.
- Shears (we have some, but we occasionally run out).
- Shoes appropriate for walking in the dirt.
- Sunscreen and a hat/visor.
- Bags or containers for carrying your produce. Shallow containers, such as the boxes shown to the right, are great for fragile produce such as tomatoes.



Children at U-Pick



If you have children, they are absolutely welcome to participate in u-pick; it is a great learning experience for them, and a lot of fun for the family! We have found that our CSA members are conscientious parents who supervise their children and teach them to follow our rules.

By the way, watch Facebook and your email for other children's activities -- we have fantastic Read & Pick story times!



U-Pick Quantities

At times -- usually in the beginning of the season -- we will limit the amount you pick of certain crops to keep things fair to all members as crops are beginning to ripen. Those limits are per share, not per person. Examples:

- When flowers first start to bloom, we will ask that you limit flowers to a bouquet you can fit in one hand, or pick six stems.
- When sugar snap peas and beans start to come on, we may ask that you limit to one gallon-size bag.

If crops become very plentiful, we remove the picking limits. Generally, we expect that each **share** will have up to two adults picking each time they are allowed to do so, and pick an amount that one family can reasonably use or freeze. The intent is not to feed the whole neighborhood!



We don't set hard-and-fast rules about quantities or the number of pickers because some families pick less often, but bring for example, older kids, a visiting friend or someone interested in checking out the CSA. That is fine with us! Examples:

- If two people from each share come to pick twice a week, that is fine.
- If three people come one week, pick a lot of produce, and then not come for a week or so, that is also fine.
- If four adults from each share come twice a week, and pick a LOT of produce while they are there, that becomes unfair to the rest of the members.

Our staff is instructed to record the number of pickers who come to each u-pick, and keep an eye on the quantities picked. If we see that a member or share is picking more than is reasonable throughout the season, we reserve the right to limit quantities and/or number of pickers.

U-Pick Instructions

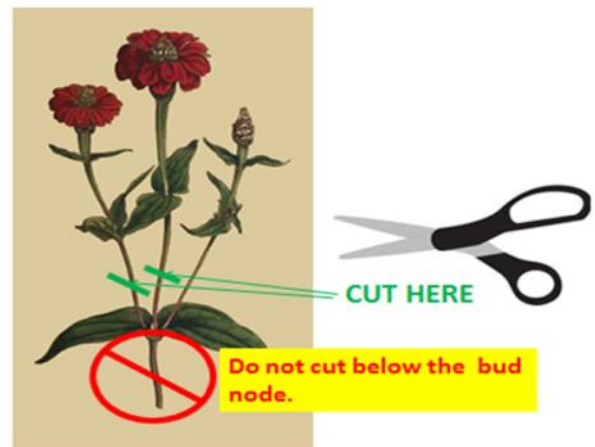
Herbs

- Brightly colored tapes will mark the rows available for picking.
- You may find that some rows that had tapes one week may not be available the next. That happens when plants need a week or two to recover.
- When herbs first come in, we will give you a limit for picking (such as 5 sprigs). That will ensure we have plenty for all of our members.
- Generally, cut no more than one-third of a stem's length; the exception is chives, which you should cut from the bottom.



Flowers

- To cut flowers so that blooms will come back in the future, be sure there is a leaf or stem intersection between your cut and the ground.
- You may wish to bring damp paper towels to wrap around the stems to keep your flowers fresh until you get home. Another alternative is to bring a cup that fits in your car's cup holder, and put a bouquet in that.



Veggies

- Your Wickham Farms staff will give you instructions for what is available to pick and where it is located. Most of the rows will be marked with tall flags -- the kind you may have used on your bike as a child!
- Please be sure you are picking only what is available to pick. You may find that other crops look ready, but we may be saving those crops to harvest for your shares.
- For any vegetable that is pulled off the plant (tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, beans, sugar snap peas, etc.), be sure to support the plant with one hand while you pull with the other. If you yank without supporting the plant, you could rip it right out of the ground!
- For veggies and herbs in which you are cutting leaves, you generally want to leave the central stem and harvest the outside part of the plant. The general guideline is that the remaining plant should look like a palm tree, like the kale shown here. Some green leaves must remain for it to continue to grow and produce all season.



When You Get Veggies Home...

1. Wash all of your greens.

We rinse greens after harvesting them, but they aren't clean enough to consume when you get them home. They are grown in sandy soil and the leaves have a tendency to trap the dirt.

Our favorite way to clean greens is to fill a clean sink or large bowl with cold water, and submerge the leaves completely. Swish the leaves around gently with your hands, then let them soak for a few minutes. This will allow the sand and grit to sink to the bottom. Scoop leaves up then drain in a colander or a salad spinner. Drain the sink. Repeat this process until there's no sand at the bottom of the bowl or sink. Wrap in a paper towel (this will keep greens moist but not wet) then store in a zip-top bag in the refrigerator.



Generally, greens keep for several days if stored properly. (Because they are freshly picked, they will usually keep better than store-bought greens.) These will be your most perishable crops; you should try to use them first.

Note: if your greens have wilted by the time you get them home, a soak in cold water will perk them up.

2. Cut the greens from any root vegetables.

The roots will get spongy if you don't cut off the greens right away. Remember that the greens are edible! Wash and store them as above. You may need to brush the bulbs to remove dirt. You can use your root vegetables last -- they will keep for up to 2 weeks in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. (It's a good idea to add a paper towel in the plastic bag.)

3. Rinse and refrigerate your herbs. Store as you would greens, above.

4. Refrigerate most other veggies.

Most fruits and vegetables will hold best in plastic in the fridge. Some exceptions:

- **Garlic bulbs and storage onions** keep best in a basket on a countertop or in a cool, dark place. Store these away from potatoes, because gasses from onions can cause potatoes to sprout.
- **Potatoes** should be stored in a cool, dark place away from moisture. A basket is ideal for allowing good air circulation.
- **Tomatoes** are a bit controversial, as many people claim that refrigerating destroys the flavor. Some studies show that not to be the case. Our suggestion: if you can eat them within a day or two, don't refrigerate. If it's going to be longer than that, you're better off refrigerating than letting them spoil.
- **Winter squash** (acorn, butternut, delicata, spaghetti, etc.) hold best in 40- to 50-degree dry, dark conditions. A garage is great if you don't have critters! Delicata and spaghetti squash are less suited for long-term storage than the others.

