

CSA Memberships Skyrocket in The Wake of Coronavirus

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Coronavirus has revealed the fragility of our global food supply chain, and prompted a renaissance of community supported agriculture



Before anyone had ever heard of a coronavirus, community supported agriculture was a fringe movement supported solely by crunchy hippies and yuppie urbanites.

But now that restaurants are closed and a trip to the grocery store feels like a trip to a post-apocalyptic war zone, people are turning to their local, organic, biodiverse farms in droves.

CSA memberships to farms across the country have [doubled and tripled in some places](#), with waitlists growing longer by the day.

The value of fresh, locally grown, chemical-free food that hasn't traveled thousands of miles and passed through countless hands, is now priceless to more of us than ever.

Many of us are learning for the first time in our lives to grow a chunk of it for ourselves, but in the meantime, we are holding those who've been honing their skills for decades in a new esteem.

"We've doubled our CSA [produce] box numbers and quadrupled our add-ons like wheat flour, oils like olive oil, nuts, fruit juices, even yarn," founder of California Full Belly Farm Judith Redmond [tells NPR](#).

"In all the time that we've worked with CSAs, which is several decades, we've never seen a surge as quickly as we have the last few weeks," added Evan Wiig with the [Community Alliance with Family Farmers](#).

"It's sort of a heyday for CSAs," he said. "Farmers that were starting in March struggling to get enough members for the season – which we see every year — by mid-March were dealing with waiting lists with hundreds of people trying to get in."

Images of farmers dumping milk, plowing under crops and euthanizing livestock as meat processing plants shutter have apparently shaken us awake when it comes to knowing where our food comes from and supporting the farmers who produce it directly, so we know it'll be around when the middlemen fail us.

We are learning it's not sustainable or safe to put all our eggs in the baskets of corporate, monocrop, mega-farms, reprioritizing what's essential, and putting our money where our mouths are.

"We think people's habits will shift because of this" pandemic, says [Mountain Bounty Farm](#) CSA manager John Tecklin. "For a lot of them, it's kind of a wake-up call: what's really important to you?"

"It's local food security for our community," Tecklin said. "In these times it's more important than ever."