

# THE NOFA-VT FARM SHARE PROGRAM: TIPS FOR SOURCING COMMUNITY FUNDS



Raising funds from your community is a vital component of the Farm Share Program. Here are some strategies for sourcing funds to support shares.

## Incorporate donation into CSA sign-up

### 1. Have NOFA-VT be your Fiscal Sponsor

CSA members and community groups can make tax-deductible donations to the program to help support shares for your farm, if NOFA-VT serves as your [fiscal sponsor \(paperwork linked here\)](#). Once you have completed the paperwork, donations should be made directly to NOFA-VT and should have your farm's name written in the check memo. These donations are counted towards your farm's Farm Share cost portion, and are paid out to the farm at the end of the season.

Members can make donations directly to your farm, but the donation will not be tax-deductible. Please adjust the language you use in your materials to reflect this.

### 2. Include in CSA Outreach Materials

Introduce your CSA members to the Farm Share Program by including information in your CSA publicity materials (e.g., on your website, newsletters, Front Porch Forum, social media posts). **Here is some recommended wording:**

“Our farm participates in the NOFA-VT Farm Share Program. This program subsidizes CSA shares for our neighbors who otherwise could not afford to join our CSA. Through the program, NOFA-VT will match each dollar that our CSA raises to offer a discount to Vermonters needing financial assistance. Your contributions are tax-deductible if you make checks payable to NOFA-VT; or visit the [NOFA-VT donation web page](#), select “Farm Share” as the Campaign, and write our farm name in the Donor Note. If you are in need of financial assistance, please ask us about the Farm Share Program.”

Remember, folks can make donations directly to your farm, but the donation will not be tax-deductible.

### 3. Include in CSA Application

Include an option to donate to the program on your CSA application. We have found it works best to include this at the bottom of the sign-up form. **Here is some recommended language:**

“Would you like to contribute to the NOFA-VT Farm Share Program to help low-income households in our community get a CSA? For donations to be tax deductible, make checks payable to the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT) and write our farm name in the check memo; or visit the [NOFA-VT donation web page](#), select “Farm Share” as the Campaign, and write our farm name in the Donor Note. NOFA-VT will match the donation, and grant it back to our farm.”

**Bonus idea from Sandy Bottom Farm:** Full-paying CSA members have a “bonus” dollar amount added to their share if they sign up before a certain date. On the online CSA application form, they have the option to donate this bonus to the Farm Share fund, which most people choose to do.

## Engage support from local businesses

### 4. Participate in NOFA-VT's Share the Harvest fundraiser

We invite all Farm Share farms to take part in our [Share the Harvest](#) fundraiser, which occurs throughout the month of October. This event engages food and beverage businesses, which donate a portion of their sales to the Farm Share Program throughout October. We will reach out to you in September to encourage you to share our promotional materials and opportunities to contribute to Share the Harvest with your CSA community. Stay tuned!

### 5. Explore key relationships with local businesses

Local businesses invested in food access may be interested in contributing funds to cover the farm's portion of the cost. If you have established relationships with co-ops, restaurants, or other food businesses, consider asking if they would be interested in supporting a certain number of shares. Some farms have gotten support from local churches and community organizations. Reach out to [johanna@nofavt.org](mailto:johanna@nofavt.org) if you would like support in reaching out to a local business.

## Other farms' successful strategies

## 6. Host a fundraising event

Some farms go above and beyond by hosting events or sales to support shares. Below are a few ideas that have been successful for farms:

- [Farm to Table Dinner](#)
- [Festivals and Events](#)
- Sell farm merchandise (t-shirts, hats, bags, etc.)

## 7. Build the cost into your full-price CSA share

**Intervale Community Farm** builds the cost of their Farm Share portion into their full-price CSA share cost. This allows them to have a more consistent amount of funds built into their budget for a set number of Farm Share members each season.

## 8. Sliding scale CSA share cost

**Bread & Butter Farm** utilized a solidarity share option in the past, in which CSA members could purchase a share for a neighbor. Now, they have a sliding scale for their share costs, which allows for those who are able to contribute more to balance out the supported-share costs. Reach out to [johanna@nofavt.org](mailto:johanna@nofavt.org) for examples of sliding scales.

**Questions about the program?** Contact Johanna Doren at (802) 434-7162 or [johanna@nofavt.org](mailto:johanna@nofavt.org).