



Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont

Nourishing People, Land, and Justice through
Organic Agriculture



Farm Share Program Information for Farms

How to Participate

To participate in the NOFA-VT Farm Share Program, you must meet the following requirements:

1. Be a member of NOFA-VT and/or certified organic by Vermont Organic Farmers (VOF), and
2. Offer a full-season CSA and/or a pre-paid farmstand model. At least half of your sales should be food items, as our priority is to direct Farm Share funds to CSA models that sell majority food.

If you meet these requirements, email farmshare@nofavt.org to get started with the program.

Farm Responsibilities

1. **Promote the program:** Communicate the program to your existing community and current shareholders who may benefit from the program, and share with them the program application.
2. **Fundraise:** Commit to a certain number of shares your farm can support through the Farm Share Program for the year. Solicit donations from your current shareholders and area businesses to support 25% of the cost of this number of shares. Those individuals/community groups can make tax-deductible donations to the program to help support shares from your farm, if NOFA-VT serves as your [fiscal sponsor](#). See the Fundraising section below for more. NOFA-VT is here to balance the interests of the community members and of the farm, and we do our best to work with farms and participants to make the program work for them. If your farm is unable to fundraise, but still wishes to participate, we will work with you to figure out the best cost share breakdown.
3. **Communicate with NOFA-VT:** This program is a collaboration between community members, farmers, and NOFA-VT. We communicate regularly with farmers through email or phone about important information throughout the season.

PO Box 697 | 14 Pleasant Street | Richmond, VT 05477

NOFA-VT | nofavt.org | Phone: 802-434-4122 | Fax: 802-329-3033

Vermont Organic Farmers LLC | vermontorganic.org | Phone: 802-434-3821 | Fax: 802-329-3029



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Process

SPRING/SUMMER DATE	FALL/WINTER DATE	EVENT
January	June	NOFA-VT contacts farms to confirm interest in participation, estimate of shares they can support, current designated donation balance (if applicable), and updates to CSA directory on NOFA-VT website.
February 1	July 1	Farm Share application opens.
Late February (and ongoing)	Late July (and ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOFA-VT reviews applications and begins to notify farms about applicants that have requested a CSA. • The farm will notify NOFA-VT whether they accept or deny these applicants, based on how much funding they can support. • NOFA-VT will notify applicants of the decision. • Accepted applicants contact the farm to 1) arrange payment of their cost responsibility (50%, or more if total share cost exceeds \$600) and 2) confirm the specifics about the share distribution.
March-April	August-September	NOFA-VT continues to review applications on a rolling basis until the application closes and will notify CSA farms as additional applicants are received, or until the CSA farm has indicated that they can no longer accept any more Farm Share applicants.

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April 30th	September 30th	Application closes (or earlier, if funds run out) - NOFA-VT will not accept any new Farm Share participants for the season.
Early June	Early November	NOFA-VT confirms with the farm that all Farm Share applicants have signed up for their CSA. Once confirmed, NOFA-VT will reimburse farms for NOFA-VT's 25% cost contribution, along with funds from the farm's designated donations account (if applicable).
July	December	Farms receive reimbursement, as laid out above.

Fundraising

Raising funds from your members and community helps to build a stronger community network within your CSA and allows more Vermonters to access farm-fresh food - regardless of their financial status. Some farms have even become independent from NOFA-VT's financial support because their CSA members have contributed enough money to subsidize all of the farm's supported shares. This independence also allows NOFA-VT to stretch our funding to new farms and eligible members around the state.

Designated Donations through NOFA-VT

If you have completed the [paperwork](#) to have NOFA-VT act as a fiscal sponsor for Farm Share funds on your farm's behalf, individuals/community groups can make tax-deductible donations by writing the check directly to NOFA-VT. These donations should have your farm's name written in the check memo. If the check or cash is donated to your farm (not NOFA-VT), we cannot offer a tax deduction.



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Promoting Farm Share

You can introduce your CSA members to the Farm Share Program by including information in your CSA publicity materials. Here is some recommended wording:

"Our farm participates in the Vermont 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 our CSA raises to offer reduced rates to income-eligible individuals and families. Your contributions are tax-deductible if you make checks payable to NOFA-VT. Please see the attached donation form on our CSA application."

Some farms also add:

"If you are in need of financial assistance, please ask us about the Vermont Farm Share Program. You may be eligible for a partially subsidized share."

Many farms include an option to donate to the program on their CSA application. Here is some recommended language (we have found it works best to include this at the bottom of the sign-up form):

"I would like to contribute to the Vermont Farm Share Program to help low-income households in our community join the farm. Every cent donated goes directly towards the cost of a share. Any size donation helps. 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. NOFA-VT will match the donation, and grant it back to our farm."

Some farms go beyond this and host events or sales to support shares, including farm-to-table dinner, festivals or events, or selling farm merchandise (like t-shirts, hats, bags, etc.)

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