



Be part of CSA!

SUPPORTING BOOKLET
FOR TRAINING ON COMMUNITY
SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE





BE PART OF CSA!

*Supporting booklet for training on
Community Supported Agriculture*

CSA initiatives are blossoming all over Europe. Based on the figures collected in 16 different European countries, there were at least 4,000 CSA groups in 2014, involving nearly 465,000 consumers and 6,300 farms. URGENCI (The International Network for CSA) and its partners promote CSA as a cross-border and context-sensitive concept rather than a unique model. Many experience-sharing projects have been carried out since 2011, starting with the “CSA for Europe” project (2011–2013, with 8 partner countries), creating trust and mutual exchange within the European CSA community. The current priority is to strengthen our movement. If many strands can be connected to make the European CSA community grow stronger, then it is clear to us that training is a core issue. Indeed, at the 2nd European CSA Meeting (2014) organised by URGENCI, stakeholders agreed that there is a growing interest in CSA and that educational programmes should support its dissemination.

This acknowledgement was the starting point of the “Be part of CSA!” project, which aims at facilitating the spread of CSA initiatives in Europe by providing knowledge, skills and competences to local communities and disseminating its outcomes at the European level.

It brings together CSA actors from Hungary (TVE), Czech Republic (PRO-BIO LIGA), Romania (CRIES) and the network URGENCI, already long-term partners in their efforts to bring the CSA model into light.

Together, these partners planned to develop an innovative European informal and non-formal training programme of 4 progressive modules. The topics

they explore are based on research and common needs analysis: partners collected feedback at workshops and forums from more than 300 stakeholders and also carried out research. Their common conclusion was that, for the spread and development of CSAs, their members need specific knowledge on how CSAs operate, access to management tools and community-building skills.

This booklet you have in your hands now is the main support of the training programme; it summarises the basic learning points of the 4 modules accompanied by case studies from partner countries.

- » **Training module 1: General background of CSA**
- » **Training module 2: Starting a CSA initiative**
- » **Training module 3: CSA community-building**
- » **Training module 4: Field training**

We hope you'll find it useful, practical, adequately illustrated with motivating stories, best practices, case studies and easy-to-use templates.

It is the result of collaborative work and reflects the specificity of the partner countries. We are strongly convinced that the flexibility of CSA allows for many inventive and meaningful combinations, building sustainable communities and constructive alliances. Translating CSA to other landscapes and mentalities, which are vastly different in scale with different available resources and culture, is a challenge.

The model has certain core principles based on sustainable, fair and ecological practices that are similar no matter where or how it is practiced, but, at the same time, it is largely a learning process, highly adaptable to local constraints and group specificities.

Indeed, the “Be part of CSA!” team has chosen a participatory approach which is consistent with the CSA values of autonomy and partnership.

Partners believe that a learning process is, in a way, a community-building process; their role, therefore, is to facilitate their cross-fertilisation within the partnerships they develop. They have worked together with farmers and local communities on building CSA schemes for several years now. They know how friendly relationships are good (truly organic) fertilisers for sound CSA projects and happy communities. They would like to continue with this approach and intensively involve the adult learners into the development, testing and dissemination of the training programme.

*May CSA flourish in Europe!
Food sovereignty now!*



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INTRODUCTION

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a direct relationship between consumers and farmers which can contribute to a better food system. This relationship enables consumers to obtain local, healthy, often organic food produced with care and joy and helps farmers to sustain themselves and take care of the landscape, preserve the quality of their produce and processes and enables them to keep their dignity and have respectable livelihoods.

CSA is a partnership between local farmers and consumers in which the responsibilities, risks and rewards of farming are shared. The CSA model has been coined and implemented autonomously by active citizens making a commitment to local farms in many countries. CSA models provide access to markets for family farmers, and have already proved to be effective in creating adequate conditions for new work opportunities in rural areas, closely interconnected with local communities and the environment. This booklet aims to summarise the essential knowledge for those who would like to start their own CSA scheme. The first part makes readers familiar with the principles and background of the CSA scheme, its development and practical aspects. The second part of the booklet is focused on the first steps of starting a CSA initiative. Last but not least, the booklet explains how an initiative which is already operating could grow stronger through communication and community-building.

Let's set out on an inspirational journey!





PART A

*General background
of CSA*



1. CSA BASICS

1.1. CSA origins

The concept of CSA originates from Japan.

In 1971, Teruo Ichiraku (1906–1994), a philosopher and a leader of agricultural cooperatives, alerted consumers to the dangers of the chemicals used in agriculture which were causing problems with contamination of the soil and food.

He initiated the Japanese organic farming movement. Three years later, concerned housewives joined up with organic farmers to form the first farmer–consumer agreement, because it was the only way to provide secure food – consumers were sure who, how and where their food is produced.

These agreements are called “Teikei” in Japan - which means “food with face of the farmer”

American and European CSAs developed during the seventies, partly influenced by the Anthroposophy of Rudolph Steiner and his new way of economics based on the reciprocity of the people. Since the 1980s, CSA has spread to Germany, Switzerland, USA and the rest of Europe. In the USA and Canada they are called CSAs, in France they are called AMAPs, in Portuguese Reciprocos. URGENCI, the International Network of Community Supported Agriculture, was founded in Aubagne, France in 2004.

ACCORDING TO URGENCI’S ESTIMATIONS IN 2015, THERE WERE AT LEAST 4 792 CSAs IN EUROPE PRODUCING FOOD FOR ALMOST ONE MILLION (969 255) PEOPLE.

Teikei was defined by the Japanese Organic Agriculture Association as follows:

“An idea to create an alternative distribution system, not depending on the conventional market. Though the forms of Teikei vary, it is basically a direct distribution system.

To carry it out, the producer(s) and the consumer(s) have talks and contact to deepen their mutual understanding: both of them provide labour and capital to support their own delivery system. Teikei is not only a practical idea but also a dynamic philosophy to make people think of a better way of life either as a producer or as a consumer through their interaction.”¹

1.2. CSA principles

Simply put: Community Supported Agriculture is a partnership between farmers and consumers where the risks and rewards of farming are shared.

The CSA movement has defined 4 fundamental principles that represent a common basis for the concept globally.² CSA is based on a **partnership**, usually formalised as an individual contract between each consumer and the producer, and characterised by a mutual commitment to supply one another (with resources – usually money and food) over an extended period of time, beyond any single act of exchange. The contracts last for several months, a season or a year. CSA is based on **localisation** – local producers should be well-integrated into their surrounding areas and their work should benefit the communities which support them. CSAs are based on **solidarity** between producers and consumers. The whole functioning of the groups is designed on a human scale – paying a sufficient, fair price up-front in advance to enable farmers and their families to maintain their farms and live in a dignified manner, and at the same time the price respects the needs and abilities of consumers. A key element is sharing both the risks and the rewards of healthy production. The **producer/consumer tandem** is based on direct person-to-person contact and trust, with no intermediaries or hierarchy.



1.3. Three roots of CSA

The above-mentioned is the reasoning for the growing efforts in society to re-establish themes like **FOOD SOVEREIGNTY**, **SOLIDARITY ECONOMY** and **ORGANIC SMALL-SCALE FARMING**. All these are main foundations of CSA that embrace the issue of food production which is better able to respect people's needs and the limits of the environment. The close partnership of consumers and producers without other intermediaries, which is possible on a small scale, is very important, as indicated below.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY is the right of every person to sustainable, good quality and healthy food and the right and power to decide what food to eat.

In establishing direct and trusting relationships between farmers and consumers, people have access to fresh food from an accountable source: organic farmers produce healthy, safe, nutritious and minimally processed food without pesticides and various additives, at an affordable price and – additionally – they gain power to influence the way the farming would go.

Changing the direction of multifunctional food system should be possible through its transformation in the direction of Food Sovereignty. That means heading towards the decentralisation of food chains, promoting diversified markets based on solidarity and fair prices, and short supply chains and intensified relations between producers and consumers in local food webs to counter the expansion and power of agribusiness corporations and supermarkets.⁴

~~~~~  
*“Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations”.*<sup>3</sup>  
~~~~~

ORGANIC FARMING is the traditional way of soil cultivation based on cooperation with natural laws and local natural conditions with the exclusion of artificial fertilisers and synthetic pesticides. Soil is perceived as a partner which has to be kept healthy and treated with care. If not treated properly, the soil cannot produce healthy food. This way of production helps to keep up biodiversity, respects the limits of the landscape, and aims for better animal welfare in agriculture (more below).



SOLIDARITY ECONOMY. People have always made their living through cooperation, which has been recently substituted by unleashed competition and it's high time to resurrect the cooperative approach based on solidarity in building our food system. CSA is more than just another direct marketing scheme, the growers and the eaters, as they sometimes call themselves, need to work together to create local social/economic forms, **based on trust.**⁵

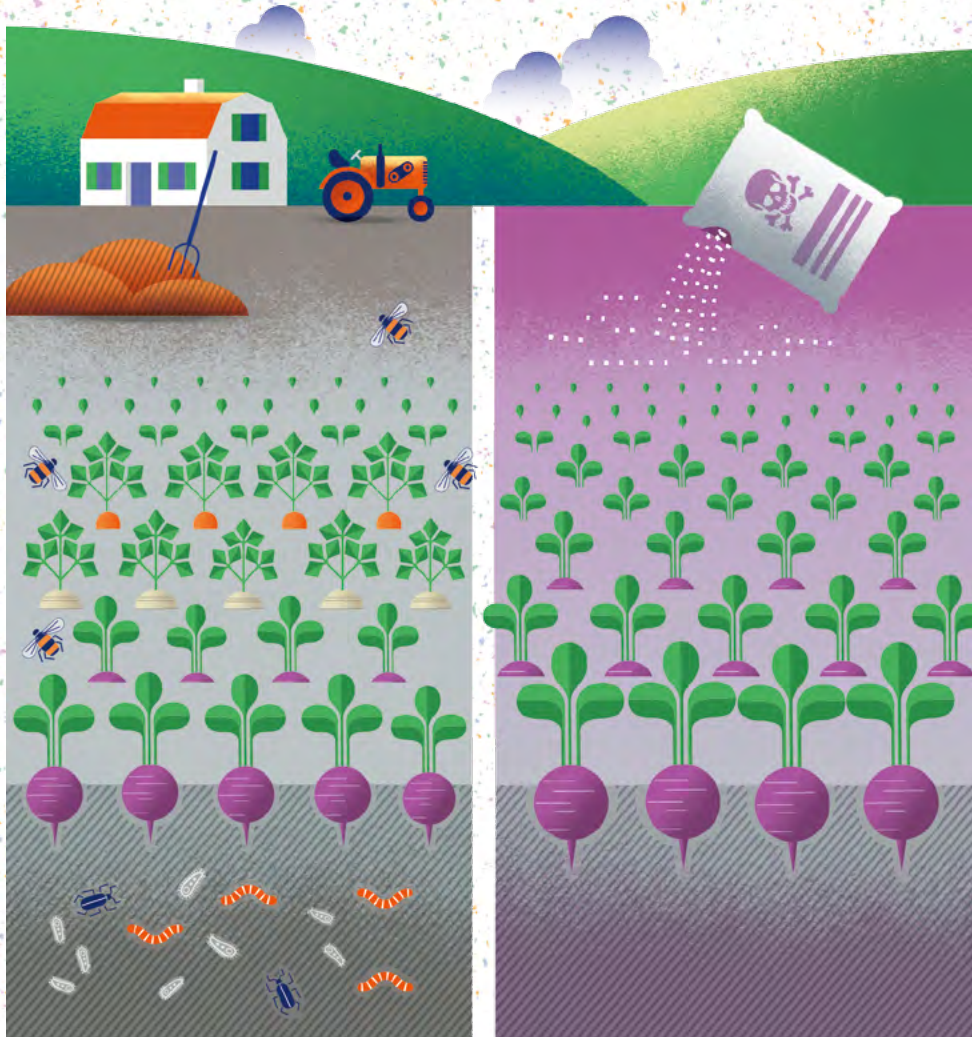
The example of solidarity within the CSA scheme represents the commitment of eaters to a farmer – and vice versa – based on mutual trust. See the case studies at the end of this document.

The “solidarity” refers to a two-way relationship where consumers and farmers are not separated, more likely they are transformed to **co-farmers** or **pro-sumers** – both groups cooperate together, producers are close to consumers, and consumers more actively select their own and reflected way of getting healthy and local food. In the solidarity-based communities, producers are supported for the whole season in the form of advance payments, both parties also share the risks and rewards of farming together, and, in many cases, “solidarity” also refers to the inclusion of low-income individuals.⁶

Hidden treasure of organic farming

NATURE IS A SOPHISTICATED AND COMPLEX SYSTEM THAT ONE CANNOT EASILY OVER-SMART. EVERY SOIL WHICH IS MAINTAINED IN HARMONY WITH NATURAL CONDITIONS AND WHERE MAN IS OPEN TO COOPERATION WITH PLANTS AND ANIMALS IS SELF-SUFFICIENT.

Small-scale and organic agriculture respects the limits of the landscape and helps enhance or maintain its quality. As organic farmers can work in small scale, their approach is usually more personal – to the environment and also to the people.



ORGANIC

INTENSIVE

CLOSED NUTRIENT CHAIN AND THE LIVING SOIL

Soil is our partner. In a handful of soil, there are more living creatures than there are humans in the world. Every second, these creatures build soil fertility which man cannot replace. Chemical treatments, like easily soluble mineral fertilisers and synthetic pesticides kill our soil fellows, thus organic agriculture avoids these ways of treating the soil.

RETURN WHAT WE TOOK AWAY

We need nutrients, which our body cannot synthesise, for a living. We obtain these nutrients from water and food. Every living creature is an important part of what we call the “closed nutrient circle”. We need to return to the soil that what we took away from it. In organic agriculture, the circulation is more closed and the nutrients in our food are more complex and valuable. In intensive agriculture, the nutrients are taken away but not returned, that is why there is a need for artificial fertilisers – these, however, cannot replace the natural ones and destroy our “soil fellows”.

Additionally, the exposition of the soil is minimised in organic farming. The roots of diverse vegetation support humidity and soil fellows who produce valuable nutrients and create better soil structure. Did you know that dandelions have roots as long as an adult is tall?

DIVERSITY

Nature does not know monoculture. The greater the diversification of the landscape, the better the chances for spontaneous natural processes to address disturbances. Fragmented fields of organic growers are accompanied by spots of diversity, like herb strips, forests, meadows, brooks etc., which enrich the diversity of plants and animals in the agro-ecosystem.

The landscape diversity of organic farming is also accompanied by a diversity of cultivated crops and animal species and their varieties. For example, there are hundreds of different varieties of tomatoes, potatoes etc., far more than you could ever find on a shelf in the supermarket.

COOPERATION

Emphasis on creating more cooperative relationships is the key in organic farming and helps better integration in the agro-ecosystem. Well-designed combination and rotation of plants and using their synergies with animals can have supportive effects without the need for adding synthetics.

ORGANIC FOOD

Organic is better, because consumers can be sure that it is produced without hazardous chemicals.

2. CLOSER TO CSA

2.1. Challenges CSA addresses

The development of a CSA system has been a natural reaction to the problems of a globalised world which stems from giant system structures that, at a certain point, tend to become too rigid to assure people's basic needs, support social and cultural diversity and self-sufficiency. Below, you can find the most frequent impacts of these tendencies which CSA addresses:

- » *Loss of small-scale farms and the infrastructure they need.*
- » *Control of large corporations which use the food system to increase shareholder profits.*
- » *Loss of food security as people become dependent on a small number of large oil-hungry processes (like production of pesticides, running mechanisation, etc.). These large systems lack diversity and may be more vulnerable to collapse in times of crisis. They are also dependent on seeds produced by big agribusinesses which can't be reproduced: hybrids, patented seeds, etc.*
- » *An irreversible damage of soil – the base-ment of our food.*
- » *Degradation of biodiversity caused by large-scale factory farming.*
- » *Poor animal welfare in mass production farms.*
- » *Huge environmental impacts of transporting food.*
- » *Health problems caused by over-processed food and unhealthy eating habits.*
- » *Loss of creative, meaningful and self-directed work (eg. family farms) as farmwork is mechanised and controlled by large companies, often using temporary migrant labour.*
- » *Lack of access to organic and local food by low-income households.*
- » *Loss of culture and community in rural areas, but also in the city.*
- » *Loss of population in rural areas.*
- » *Loss of trust, care and love in matters relating to food and farming.*
- » *Lack of trust and understanding between consumers and farmers.*

CHART 1 FOOD SYSTEM MATRIX »

For easier understanding of the CSA's role in the dominant industrial food system and also transitive food systems, see the matrix of transition from industrial food provisioning to CSA in Chart 1.

| ASPECT | MARKET-ORIENTED MODEL (SUPERMARKET/SHOP) | TRANSITIVE MODEL (FARMER'S MARKET) | SOLIDARITY-BASED MODEL (CSA) |
|---|--|---|---|
| Farming method | Industrial | Industrial / large-scale organic | Organic / small-scale |
| Decision-making | Buyer's demand (valet decision) | Buyer's demand (with face-to-face interaction) | Collective discussion of needs and options among actors |
| Origin of food | Global | Regional | Local |
| Payment method | Direct payment after purchase | Direct (after purchase) or in advance (month/share) | In advance for whole/part of season |
| Relationship between producer and consumer | No relationship | Consumers may know the name of the producer, can meet him/her at distribution spot | They usually know each other personally and recognise their mutual needs |
| Freedom of choice | Consumer's choice is limited by offer of the middlemen (trader), usually with no respect to seasonality and localisation | Consumers respect seasonality while competition is highly individual and limited by the offer of producers | Consumer accepts what is produced on the farm according to the season and farm possibilities |
| Distribution place | Store or home-delivery | Market, farmyard sale or home-delivery | Farmyard or negotiated distribution place |
| Commitment | Consumer is not committed to the producer | Consumer is not formally committed to the producer however they can negotiate mutual commitment on an informal basis | Consumer is committed to the producer for a whole season's produce and shares the risks and rewards of farming |
| Distribution method | Producer sells to wholesaler | Producer packs and distributes on his/her own or through middlemen | Consumers organise distribution by themselves |
| System organisation | Entrepreneur or company with no connection to farming | Producer him/herself | Self-organisation of community |
| Other commitments | No other activities apart from purchase | No further commitment is required but some farmers invite consumers to the farm for fairs or pick your own activities | Consumers support producer in the case of a bad season or other difficulties; they might help with farming, planning and other community activities |

2. 2. CSA as a solution

The conventional food system is based on the industrial model of production and is dominated by a few corporations and retailers who use the food system to increase shareholder profits. This model is not focused on the well-being of people, but is designed solely to generate profit for the few. Instead of producing healthy, affordable food for people from sustainable resources, dominant contemporary farming focuses increasingly on the production of raw materials such as agrofuels, animal feeds or commodity plantations.

CSAs seek a food system controlled by communities to serve social well-being and the environment.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE REPRESENTS A MODEL OF SOCIAL INNOVATION WITH MULTIDIMENSIONAL CONSEQUENCES AT DIFFERENT LEVELS ⁷:

AT MICRO LEVEL: for consumers, it generates a sense of participative ownership of the scheme and it contributes to the reshaping of the vision about food practices. For farmers, it represents a direct way of selling with a predictable/secure revenue;

AT MIDDLE LEVEL: it encourages the circulation of money in local economies, provides employment opportunities and creates a sense of community and mutual support;

AT MACRO LEVEL: rebalances the power relations in the food sector, contributing to food sovereignty worldwide.

Farmers, consumers and organisations create solid local initiatives through the equation: “food producer + food consumers + annual commitment to one another = CSA and untold possibilities.” ⁸

CSA farmers have the opportunity to decide the way they work, they should not be compromised in their attitude to nature and animals by pressure of price and regulation of contractors. Consumers support the farm during a whole season so the income of the farmers is secure and independent of the global market.



2. 3. Actors and terms of CSA

MEMBER... producers and consumers are typically both considered equal members of the CSA.

PRODUCER / FARMER / GROWER... vegetable grower, small baker, or butcher, who produces food or other products for the community of members in CSA.

CONSUMER / SHAREHOLDER... a member of a CSA group who shares risks and benefits with the farmer, usually is involved in planning the growing season including vegetable varieties, prices, etc. He or she also commits to the farm for the whole season, and pays in advance or on a regular basis – depending on the needs of farmers and agreement of the group. This can be especially helpful for farmers starting their enterprise and farmers converting from conventional to organic farming. A member can be a coordinator of the group, or can share coordination with other members or a producer, he/she can also help on the farm.

PARTNERSHIP CONTRACT / AGREEMENT... The reciprocal relationship is stated in a contract which contains the rules and principles on which members agreed. It can contain details about risk sharing, commitment, organic farming, amount of vegetables, price, distribution place, distribution days and hours, length of the season, etc.

SHARE (“BASKET”)... The Share is the content of the regularly-distributed amount of food, producers share the weekly crop or products equally among all of the consumers. It can be distributed once a week, twice a week, etc. One share usually contains vegetables/food for one family, but there can also be the possibility to get half of the share.

COORDINATOR / CORE GROUP... For best operation of the group, it is very important not to underestimate the communication. It is crucial to decide who is responsible for what – communication, administration, care for the distribution place, planning meetings and farm visits/work days on the farm, etc. It is better if the coordination tasks are shared among consumers and farmers. If there is one main coordinator, the group can reward his/her work by covering his/her share collectively.

DISTRIBUTION / DELIVERY PLACE / COLLECTION POINT... Place where the food from farm is regularly distributed. It should be easily accessible for members. There are various possibilities; it can be on the farm, in a café, school, workplace, kindergarten, garage... it depends on the possibilities and creativity.

2. 4. Modes of operation

Initiatives based on the CSA scheme can have many different forms. The most widespread form is when a group of members gets connected with one or more existing farms. But a community can also start its own farm from scratch, of course agricultural expertise is necessary. CSA does not describe an end-product, it is more about how to develop a new local food system which reflects the character and needs of a locality, members and farmers. There are no two identical CSAs, each one has its own dynamic in time and space.

The experience shows that a CSA partnership can be initiated by both sides: producers and potential consumers. Both these groups are motivated differently to create local and alternative food networks. Consumers can organise themselves as informal groups or, later, can opt for a legal status like non-profit organisation. It can be helpful in some cases to cooperate with existing NGOs.

CSAs can be categorised according to who organises them or the motivation behind them:

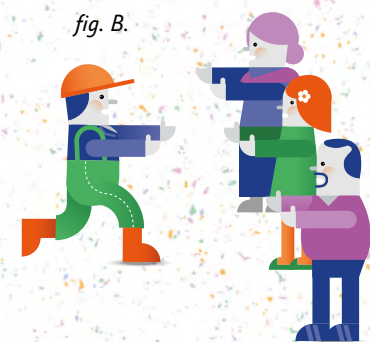
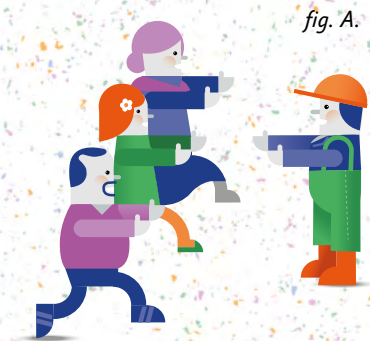
COORDINATION/ ORGANISATION

Farmer-led

Organised by the farmer, to whom the members financially subscribe, with little other involvement, but this obviously varies between schemes. This kind of CSA is probably the most common in Hungary.

Community/consumer-led

Consumers are coordinators or facilitators (one or more). They participate in, or may even run, the scheme working closely with the farmer who produces what they prefer. The degree of consumer involvement is variable. This scheme is very common in the Czech Republic and Romania.



INITIATION

Group of members connected with an existing farm

Consumers form a group and then form a partnership with a local farmer. The farm is owned and organised by the farmer. Members sign a partnership contract with the farmer and pay the whole costs of the production in advance for a certain amount of time (a season or half). This kind of CSA is probably the most common.

Community farm

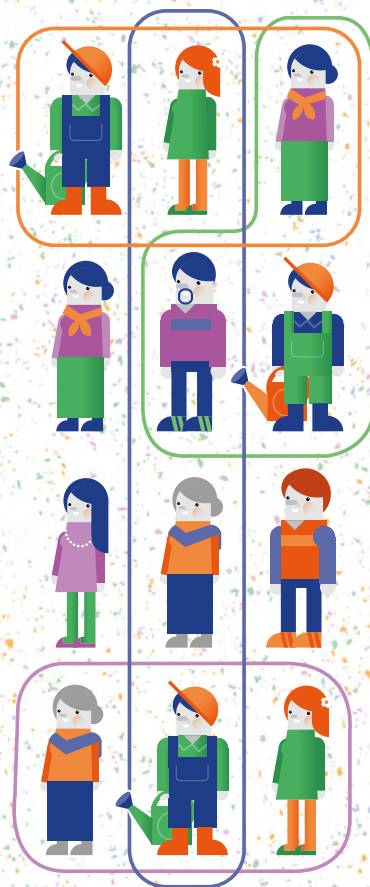
A group of people start and maintain their own farm, they share the costs of production and work as farmers or they eventually employ a farmer or farmers. We can find examples in Germany, UK, the Czech Republic.

Farmer–consumer cooperative

Farmers develop cooperative networks to access a variety of products. Consumers may co-own land and other resources with the participating farmers and work together to produce and distribute food. Stroud Food Hub in UK or Alter Conso in France are pioneering models where the coop is jointly owned by both producer and consumer members. Cooperatives might be a good solution in Eastern Europe as one of the few legal forms for collective enterprises.

Farmer cooperative

Farmer-driven CSA where two or more farms cooperate to supply its members with a greater variety of produce. This model allows individual farms to specialise in the most appropriate farming for that holding (larger farms may concentrate on field-scale production, smaller farms on specialist crops and upland farms on rearing livestock). There are several examples in France.







PART B

*Starting a CSA
initiative*

3. LET'S START A CSA

(Actors interested in starting a CSA have to understand the complexity of benefits of participation, but also the challenges, and the changes that should be made by those involved.)

3. 1. Benefits of CSA

BENEFITS FOR THE PRODUCER

SMALL-SCALE (ALSO ORGANIC) FARMING IS FACING COMPETITION FROM INDUSTRIAL AGRIBUSINESS AND MARKET PRESSURE DESPITE THE FACT THAT IT IS FAR MORE DEPENDENT ON UNPREDICTABLE NATURAL CONDITIONS. GROWERS MOSTLY BEAR ALL THE UNCERTAINTY ON THEIR OWN. IN THE CSA SYSTEM, MEMBERS SHARE THE RISKS. SOLIDARITY AND RECIPROCAL HELP IS VERY IMPORTANT.

» **CSA improves economic viability:**

As mentioned above, small-scale farmers have difficulties in the market due to fierce competition. Another source of problems is associated with wholesaling to retailers: low prices, uncertainty and lag-time between delivery and payments.⁹ CSAs aim to solve these problems. Farmers receive payments in advance or at agreed intervals, which provides a reasonable and guaranteed income with a stable group of consumers. It means sharing the risks of farming with the community. Thanks to the close relationship, members understand if some products could not be harvested because of the weather or some other

issue. Thus the farmer can rely on a more secure income which improves business planning and support from people to do farming right without the market pressure. CSA farmers can solely concentrate on good farming.

In some cases, part of the harvest can be produced for the market and another part for a CSA.¹⁰ Thanks to members, small investments may be realised – the farm can, for example, be equipped with an irrigation system and solar power plant.¹¹ It is important that producers should not be shy about asking to have the real costs of production covered.

» **CSA reconnects farmers with the local community:**

The global food system is characterised by a 'disconnect' between food production and food consumption which leads to a lack of transparency and fair relationships.¹³ Through CSA, farmers reconnect themselves with people by showing them the process and values of proper food production and they also get direct feedback from the eaters and thus have the opportunity to respond to their needs. Producers may also teach their

members important aspects of growing vegetables and fruit. If the farmer feels confident, he/she can also offer training opportunities at their farms.¹⁴ Furthermore, better involvement in the local community might help producers to tackle various challenges of small-scale farming as indicated in Chart 2.

For example, in Hungary and the Czech Republic, it transpires that sometimes farmers are embarrassed to ask for money from people who are actually prepared to pay more. In other cases, it can lead to a situation where farmers have to take extra jobs, which amounts to self-exploitation, because their expenses are not fully covered.¹²

| POTENTIAL CHALLENGES FOR FARMERS ¹⁵ | CSA HELP |
|---|--|
| Low crop output (for example because of pests, severe weather, diseases) | Members accept the share: even if it is smaller, the price is the same. The farmer can compensate members with a larger share later. |
| Unpredictable market; incapability of sale | Members pay for long period (season) for negotiated amount of food. |
| Risk of unstable prices | At the beginning of the season, a meeting should be organised where the price of the share is discussed. |
| | The price reflects the needs of members and covers all costs of farming at the same time. |
| Illness of the farmer or poor social insurance | Members can retain the farmer during bad times. |
| Small amount of capital for farm development, risk of fluctuating loan conditions and high interest rates | Members can offer an interest-free loan, donate the farmer or can buy share of the farm. |

CHART 2 CSA SOLUTION TO CHALLENGES PRODUCERS FACE

CSA MAY ALSO BRING FARMERS OTHER BENEFITS:

- » help with labour and planning and less administration.
- » more time for themselves and family, as there is no need to spend days at a farmers’ market.
- » freedom to decide the way of production and the crop varieties, not compromised by market pressure and requirements of traders or retailers, adapted to their needs rather than to the limits of nature and needs of people.

Furthermore the benefits of CSA for the producers can be identified in all areas of life as shown in Chart 3 below.



| PERSONAL | SOCIAL | ECONOMIC | ENVIRONMENTAL |
|--|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Reputation within rural community » Fair remuneration » No need for off-farm employment » Networking with CSA producers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Creation of solidarity » Community around the farm » Fair pay for seasonal workers » Maintain family farms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Access to a stable market resulting in a steady income » Avoidance of middlemen » Lower production risk » If the trust is strong, no need for organic certification » Circumvent competition » Plan production | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Maintain the soil fertility » Maintain biodiversity » Possibility of using traditional species » Less transportation » Less packaging |

CHART 3 BENEFITS FOR CSAs MAY PRESENT THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS FOR THE PRODUCERS

BENEFITS FOR THE MEMBERS

CSA members benefit from their involvement in the scheme in many different ways, however in many countries, surveys identified these major reported benefits:

» **Accessing healthy and nutritionally rich local food.**

» **Freshness and taste:** Number of varieties and crops is usually broad and brings new tastes. *‘The quality and the flavour of the products is the first subscribing argument to AMAPs. It’s so fresh and appetizing!’.*¹⁷

» **Transparency:** access to complex information regarding the content of the scheme represents one of the important features for which CSA system is preferred.¹⁸ CSA members have a voice in the amount, content and price of the food and the means of its production and distribution. *‘I can see behind the curtain of food production methods and its costs. And I can visit the farm where my food is produced.’*¹⁹

» **Accessible prices:** in some countries the production can be certified by the community, so the prices could be lower than the standard market prices. Because of the direct relationship between farmers and consumers, the middleman is eliminated.

» **Knowledge/friendship with farmer:** eaters can get to know the farmer personally and possibly become friends with him/her, support him/her and know how he/she farms and even might have a right to co-decide what farming methods would look like.

» **Investing in local communities:** enhancement of local economy through higher employment, more local processing, local consumption and a re-circulation of money through ‘local spend’.

A study conducted among Romanian CSA shareholders in 2014²¹ revealed the following reasons to subscribe to the system:

» *Access to organic vegetables*
83.6%

» *Supporting local farmers*
13%

» *Concern for the protection of local and traditional seeds*
2.3%

» *Healthy food for their children*
0.6%

» *The idea of fair economic relations with small producers*
0.6%



» **Reconnection with local communities:** subscription can establish shared responsibility among members and reinforce a local affiliation.

» **Environmental protection and animal welfare:** small-scale, often organic, farming which cares for the quality of the landscape and animal well-being with fewer food-miles and less packaging saves the consumption of raw materials and energy.

» **Reconnection with land and nature:** members are reconnected with land and nature through subscription, generating the “feeling of belonging and property” and through farm visits, members have the opportunity to be in contact with the growers’ environment, land, vegetables and fruit.²⁰

These benefits cover all different areas of society as described in Chart 4 below.

| PERSONAL | SOCIAL | ECONOMIC | ENVIRONMENTAL |
|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Traceability and organic quality of food » Freshness, seasonality » Healthy diet » Farm visits » Connection with like-minded individuals » Changes in consumption pattern | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Connection with rural areas/agriculture. » Trust-based solidarity relationship with a community farmer. » Feeling of belonging to a community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Lower prices for organic products » Fixed price for the whole season » Fair price negotiated with the producer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Production methods in accordance with environmental concerns |

CHART 4 BENEFITS OF CSA MEMBERSHIP ²²

EXAMPLE

CSA of Pospíšilovi Farm / Czech Republic / Since 2012, there have been two communities in Brno – the second largest city of the Czech Republic – who receive vegetables on a weekly basis from the Pospíšil family of organic farmers. One of the CSA groups has 34 members and the other 20. Members pay half a year in advance (from May to December) and receive a full share of vegetables (about 7.5kg) or a half share every week. At the beginning of the season, the members meet the farmers, plan the season together and organise their group. The pick-up spot is in the centre of the city in an environmental café – and the farmers have created a special wooden vegetable shelf for the café. The members sometimes go to help at the farm.

SOCIAL DIMENSION OF THE CSA

CSA supports social life and makes it more lively. Food brings about many topics and activities and CSA enables us to share the moments, inspiration and experiences with people we would otherwise maybe not have met, it brings together people of different ages overcoming the generation gaps and it is a great way of developing ourselves and our relationships with others.

CSA farms also offer many opportunities for city people to relax and learn – members have the chance to visit a farm, sink their hand in soil and wonder at the beauty of farming. CSA is also a perfect way to make kids aware about the origin of food and its consequences.

From the perspective of CSA farmers, it is really motivating to be part of a community, as they get much more positive feedback from their consumers. It helps them to continue the work, because they know that their products are appreciated.



EXAMPLE:

KomPot COMMUNITY FOOD

KomPot means Community Food and it is the first CSA farm in the Czech Republic established by consumers in 2012. It is a CSA community market garden with almost 40 members, two of whom became employee-growers and take care of the vegetable crops on a half-hectare field. KomPot is based on the high involvement of members that help with vegetables and building the farm. It has been established on land owned by one of the members and it is, in a way, the renewal of a small family-farming tradition which was interrupted by the communist period. KomPot also organises events for the public, provides work experience for students and does many other things to help people find their way to healthy local food and boosting the countryside.

3. 2. Obstacles to starting a CSA ²³

There are a few challenges associated with the CSAs. CSA is more than everyday farming or ordinary buying, so it is crucial to think about whether or not you – as a farmer or as a consumer – are able to get involved in this model.

FOR PRODUCERS

» In countries with a lack of relational and social capital, producers can find it difficult to trust a group of future consumers. *Once the model has been experimented with and “people talk about it”, the level of trust rises.*

» Producers must “wear more than one hat”:²⁴ they are in charge of complex tasks: making the offer, getting the subscribers, reconnecting with them, being in charge of their money, doing the newsletter and last, but not least, doing

the farming. Communication requires time. At the same time, not all producers have the necessary skills to sustain these activities in an adequate manner. *Get in touch with the first members, they usually help the farmer with the organisation of the group (the coordinator can be one of the consumers), because they are engaged with the model. The farmer should not be shy about asking for help. Also, producers who develop their scheme together with non-profit organisations or work with volunteers are at an advantage because they can hand over these tasks.*

» At the beginning, it can be difficult to gain the knowledge and experience necessary to grow a diversified culture in a planned manner. It can also be difficult to gain knowledge and experience in organic agriculture and in

financial planning. *Connect with existing CSA farms and get inspired by their way of farming, functioning and problem-solving or get in touch with national CSA network (if it exists) as it is usually able to connect you with CSAs in your area or provide advisory on itself.*

FOR MEMBERS

» *Low income can be the most significant barrier to joining a CSA for potential members. However, there are several strategies to enable persons with limited financial resources to join the scheme:²⁵*

› *Offering work-shares to reduce the price: people can work on the farm and receive shares at a lower price*

› *Selling shares at a lower price: although the producer should seek to cover all costs, some members could pay a lower price for the share if others are ready to pay more, assuming solidarity*

› *Payments plan: instead of one fixed payment, producers can offer the opportunity for multiple payments or instalments.*

› *Solidarity fund: one extra part of the budget could be dedicated for those who are not able to pay their share for a while. Later on, they should repay the back-payments.*

› *Subsidised low income shares: sliding scale of share prices allows those who earn less to pay less for a share and requires those who earn more to pay more; producers offer different sized shares.*

› *Programmes that target seniors on limited resources: programmes which are sponsored by donations and, for a period of time, seniors can buy shares with fresh vegetables at reduced prices*

› *Voluntary contribution: each member can contribute a voluntary amount to the budget, however the costs of the season need to be covered.*

» *Limited choice of produce, acceptance of non-standard products, unpredictability of quality and quantity. Producers or other members might provide recipes and some basic knowledge about the not-so-well-known species.*

» *Inconvenience of picking up the CSA share at a given time and place every week. Regular deliveries might be beneficial for long term planning and you can share these tasks with other consumer if they live close to you.*

» *Time invested in picking up and preparing food from raw vegetables. Seek easy-to-do recipes and eat as much raw food as possible it's not only healthy but also saves time.*

» *Change in lifestyle and inconvenience of preparing the vegetables. Core group members might provide you with experience how they got used to CSA and what their tips are for processing the veggies.*

» *Obligation of advance payment, higher prices compared to conventional products, share risk of production. Negotiate the most suitable payment system. If you cannot pay for the whole season in advance, try out the monthly system.*

» *Obligation to volunteer for farm work and/or distribution of the shares. Volunteering is not an expectation at all of the CSA farms, however, in cases of emergency, voluntary work is highly recommended.*

4. STARTING A CSA PARTNERSHIP

(A CSA INITIATIVE COULD BE STARTED BY PRODUCERS, CONSUMERS OR EVEN BY NGOs. NO MATTER WHAT YOUR BACKGROUND IS, YOU SHOULD BE PREPARED THAT THE FIRST YEAR IS ALWAYS VERY COMPLICATED WHEN YOU START SUCH A COMPLEX SYSTEM. PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS SHOULD LEARN HOW TO COOPERATE, BUILD TRUST AND PLAN THE SEASON CAREFULLY. BUT YOU SHOULD NOT STEP BACK BECAUSE OF THESE CHALLENGES, THE MOTIVATION OF CONSUMERS AND THE COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVE WILL HELP YOU TO ENJOY THIS EXPERIMENT. THE FOLLOWING SECTION PROVIDES THE FIRST NECESSARY STEPS.)

4. 1. Setting up a CSA

Regardless of the fact that the CSA is community/organisation or is farmer-initiated, the following steps are recommended: ²⁶

UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT

It is important to understand what kind of production has to be realised (diversity of products, organic practices, continuity of production, etc.), what could be the estimated revenue in a year, what kind of relationship you have to develop within a CSA community. It is worth contacting other CSA initiatives in your region or country, finding an NGO which works with this topic, and, of course, you can get more information from the internet.

As a consumer, you should be prepared for the commitments, so it is really important to think about whether or not you are able to undertake these:

- » To pay in advance of receiving of food (whether by season, month or other schedule) regardless of quantity and quality of food due to weather conditions
- » In the case of a community-based CSA model, the members commit also to take part in distribution, farmwork, etc.

PLANNING

As a producer it is important to estimate your capacity and possibilities.

Plan what kind of products you can offer during the first year: you should list those vegetables which are already cultivated by you or which you could produce for your consumers. Do you have an idea of how many consumers you could supply with your products? Could you estimate how much working time is needed? Do you have the capacity or should you employ some workers?

LET'S FIND MEMBERS

To start a CSA it is a key to find some consumers who could become your partners.

- » If you already sold on the market, it is possible to have some clients who are very content about your products and could be interested in joining your model.
- » Ask your friends or neighbours; you won't have to start building trust from zero if you have personal relationships with them.
- » Search for existing groups: day cares centres, environmental or other organisations, civic groups, churches, workplaces, alternative schools, yoga centres could be a good place to find people who are interested in healthy food and community-based partnerships. You can try to contact existing CSAs, they may know some possible consumers from your region who are already familiar with the idea.
- » Contact your national CSA network or any NGO which is working with this issue or any other one which is close to the concept of CSA (traditional agriculture, healthy food, social economy, sustainable development, etc.).

To seek members, you might try to use these communication channels:

- » Use flyers
- » Organise meetings
- » Spread the idea to friends
- » Find a friendly journalist to write a story
- » Use social media

ORGANISE MEETINGS

With the first allies, you should be prepared to participate in public meetings where you can find new consumers. For future cooperation, it is key to be honest and transparent at these meetings, consumers appreciate these qualities. Do not be afraid if you don't have a lot of experience or you have some fears. CSA is a partnership, try to involve the consumers in finding solutions.

Possible agenda:

- » What is CSA?
- » Why eat locally grown food?
- » Why small farmers need support?
- » What are the risks of industrial agriculture?
- » What are the advantage of becoming a CSA member?
- » Assess level of commitment of participants
- » If interest is high enough, create a core group

If you are a group of consumers or organisation and would like to start a CSA

In this case it is recommended you find a farmer interested in starting a partnership with a group of consumers and find land if the farmer does not have any. It is necessary to check the following criteria:

Farmer must have:

- » farming and gardening background;
- » training in or knowledge of organic or biodynamic gardening;

- » familiarity with function, operation and maintenance of equipment;
- » experience in growing vegetable in comparable climate and weather conditions. You can use also the questionnaire for potential farmer in Chart 5.

TIP: *You know that the majority of the CSA members in your country are young parents who are interested in a sustainable lifestyle and organic food? Search for eco/ alternative schools in your neighbourhood and leave leaflets there. Do not forget your contact details and the link of your website- if you have one!*



IF YOU ARE SEARCHING FOR A POTENTIAL CSA FARMER, ONE RELIABLE INSTRUMENT FOR EVALUATION MAY BE A QUESTIONNAIRE WHICH PROVIDES INFORMATION ABOUT A PRODUCER'S BACKGROUND. THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS MAY BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT: (VETAN AND FLOREAN, 2012)

1. Up to the present, did you try/did you succeed in selling your own agricultural produce? Where?
2. Are you capable of cultivating 30 different vegetables in one season?
3. Do you enjoy talking to your friends, neighbours, clients about your work?
4. Are you comfortable with leadership responsibilities?
5. What area, technical equipment and resources do you have in order to cultivate for more people at the same time?
6. Do you think that you are able to cultivate without using chemical fertiliser and pesticide?
7. Do you have a place from which you can procure 'good seeds'?
8. Do you know how to make your own seedlings?
9. Do you have a means of transportation to carry the boxes to the cities? If not, do you have any relatives that you can count on for a season?

CHART 5 FARMER QUESTIONNAIRE

If you do not know where to find a farmer it is useful to try at farmers' market or ask for a list of organic farmers in your neighbourhood. It is really valuable if you can invite an experienced CSA farmer to your meeting, because, for some farmers, it is more convincing if they get to know the concept from somebody who is also experienced in agriculture.

Transparency is really important. All of your questions or concerns should be discussed, because CSA can only stand on strong foundations.

HOW LONG DOES ALL THIS TAKE?

The journey from the first idea to the up-and-running CSA is long and demanding, but, at the same time, inspirational and adventurous. The timeline for setting up a CSA might differ according to your starting circumstances and the community around you. However, generally speaking, the more time you devote to the initial planning and thinking about the scheme, speaking with people and elaborating the scheme set-up the better prepared you will be for the CSA operation.

4.2. Everyday running of CSA

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to avoid misunderstandings and difficulties in the community, roles and responsibilities should be clarified from the beginning. This can help with integration of newcomers and could be also a good reference in questionable situations. Roles of the farmers and members are usually explained in the partnership agreement, but discussing them from time to time at personal meetings – especially at recruitment events – is really important for a common understanding.



For example, the start of the Gartencoop CSA in Germany preceded nearly a year of thinking and talking before the members first plunged their hands in soil. However the simpler schemes might be established in the span of few months, for example the CSA Modřany scheme from the Czech Republic was established in just three months from the first idea to the first shares being delivered to the members.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF FARMERS

- » Farming to the best of their abilities to satisfy the needs and expectations of consumers.
- » Following special farming methods (e.g., organic, biodynamic, kosher, permaculture).
- » Defining quantities supplied in one share.
- » Defining the method and frequency of distribution.
- » Setting the amount and scope of farm events.
- » Setting the cost / price for a share or half-share.
- » Determining opportunities for and manner of voluntary farm work.
- » Ensuring transparency related to the production.

POSSIBLE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GROUP COORDINATOR (a person who advocates for CSA might be eater or farmer)

- » Facilitates; Collects and sends communication within the group.
- » Collect payments for shares and send money to the producer.
- » However, duties and roles are not prescribed.²⁷

POSSIBLE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MEMBERS

- » Pay agreed price for share/products in a timely manner.
- » Accept that the harvest usually cannot be modified for individuals' preferences.
- » Accept the seasonality of products.

- » Respect and accept the special knowledge and skills of the farmer.
- » Clean and return boxes and other containers used for distribution.
- » Take part in specific tasks (e.g. help in delivery, harvesting).

CROP PLANNING

Crop planning in the CSA is extremely important as the producer has to be sure he or she can feed a certain amount of people during the whole season or even longer so it is necessary to devote enough time and wisdom into the planning of crops. However no farm and no CSA is the same and the approaches to crop planning differ greatly so there is no universal guideline and, furthermore, there is lot of great literature.²⁸ However, as a starting point for you, there is an online Crop Calculator prepared as a supplementary tool to this booklet, which can help you assume how much crops you might grow on a certain amount of land and for how many people. The Crop Calculator is available on www.urgenci.net.

TIME AND PLACE FOR DISTRIBUTION

Distribution usually takes place weekly starting in April or May depending on the climate conditions. The place of distribution may be at the farm if the consumers live in the same area as the producer or in the city. If distribution takes place in the city, it is recommended that a free space in a local organisation or a private institution which supports social-economy activities is found.

If not, consumers will rent a space for distribution. The time of distribution is usually agreed between the producers and the group of consumers.

CONTRACT

The agreement between producer(s) and eaters is usually concluded in the contract – either oral or written. Sometimes it is sufficient to make an oral commitment based on promises and trust. If written down, it might include practical arrangements as well as the main principles and values, and, apart from typical contract contents, it may contain the following points:

» **List of vegetables:** Production for one season is planned by farmers or can be planned together with committee members, based on farmers' capacity, experience, characteristics of the land and number of consumers. At the same time, consumers can propose new vegetables to be included in the contract.

» **Distribution plan:** time-span of deliveries, number of weeks of delivery, time and place of delivery, etc.

» **Responsibilities of the farmer and consumers**

» **Payment method and prices**

» **Optional:** plan for weekly planting and harvesting these are estimated plans, because it depends on weather conditions and other factors

4.3. Financing CSA fairly

If the producer is not the owner of the land, it is necessary to establish capital to procure a farm. A CSA can start with a minimum of some rented land and borrowed equipment. In this case, for the long term, a decision should be taken to purchase land. Options include:

- » Farmers provide capital
- » Members provide capital
- » The group seeks grants
- » The group seeks loans

Production costs are covered and producers receive a decent income for their work. Members pay the cost of an estimated production and receive a diversified harvest which is equally distributed among all members. Besides these mandatory costs, subscribers may decide to pay for the social insurance for producers. All the costs are decided transparently.

Fair financing can be achieved in a number of different ways, including the following:²⁹

MARKET PRICE

Find out the price that people are usually paying for veggie box schemes and compose the share based on the price of individual items (at Farmers' markets or similar distribution channels) until you reach the approximate price of the whole share.

Example: You've found out that people are willing to pay 10 € for a weekly delivery, then compound the share:

| ITEM | QUAN-TITY | UNIT | FM PRICE/ UNIT (€) | TOTAL PRICE (€) |
|----------------------|-----------|------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Onion | 0.5 | kg | 1 | 0.5 |
| Peppers | 0.5 | kg | 3.2 | 1.6 |
| Potatoes | 1 | kg | 0.48 | 0.48 |
| Apples | 1.5 | kg | 0.8 | 1.2 |
| Plums | 1 | kg | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Squash | 2.5 | kg | 0.6 | 1.5 |
| Zucchini | 0.5 | kg | 0.6 | 0.3 |
| Tomatoes | 1 | kg | 2 | 2 |
| Red beet | 0.5 | kg | 1.2 | 0.6 |
| Kohlrabi | 1 | kg | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| Total delivery price | | | | € 9.98 |



MARKET VALUE PRICING

Estimate the CSA annual costs for season production (with the farmer's income for season) = A. Estimate how much people usually spend on vegetables per season = B. Divide A by B and you get the number of shares.

Example:

Annual farming cost =
€4,000

Typical spending on vegs =
€200

Number of shares to meet budget =
 $4,000/200 = \mathbf{€20}$

REAL COSTS OF FARMING BASED ON COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

Set out the CSA farm total budget. Most often: Cost of production (i.e. seeds, seedlings, tools, etc.); Employee's costs; Machinery depreciation; Investments; Advisory services; Overheads.

Divide the total amount by the number of current or potential members, i.e. budget for the season is €4,000 and you have 20 members, thus the member share must be €200.

DELIBERATE CONTRIBUTIONS

You can even have the members decide what amount they would like to contribute (i.e. how much they can afford to pay to enable the total farm budget costs to be covered). This method supports creativity, freedom, solidarity and inclusion of low-income members. However, it is demanding on community cohesion, trust, etc. Steps:

- » Present the total budget (see above) to the community
- » Let the members (usually secretly) write their bids
- » If all bids meet the budget = OK
- » If not, next round of bids is done until the budget is met.

SIMILAR MODELS PRICING

Very simply, find a similar CSA (in terms of production, membership, acreage, altitude, etc.) to the one you want to start and ask what their share price is. If it sounds reasonable to you, just use it!

TRY IT OUT!

CSA is a sensitive and specific model. You should give some time to setting up your initiative.

As a producer it could help you if you » experience the model with a small group

» cultivate a larger area than needed in order to cover the losses

» build a strong relationship with your consumers: discuss with them the concept of CSA regularly, invite them to your farm, ask for their feedback about the system, etc.

If somebody could not fit into the community, just let him/her go. Sometimes it is not easy, but the energy that you put into convincing somebody can be more efficiently used for farming or community-building.

“Sometimes it is a problem that consumers do not understand the system. We had someone, for instance, who did not show up for the delivery several times and was unreachable by phone or email. Afterwards, of course, they complained about having to pay. In such a situation one must stand their ground. If a share is not paid in advance at the beginning of the month, it will be not delivered. The contract also defines consumer responsibility for pick-up, and if a share is not taken, we carry it back home”.

Orsolya Kiss-Kovacs,
The Wheel of the Year organic farm,
Hungary





PART C

*CSA community-
building*



5. COMMUNITY BUILDING

CSA is more than a direct trading model between consumers and farmers. The partnership based on trust cannot work without complete understanding of the common principles and values. Open communication and common thinking result in food communities where farmers and consumers do not form two different groups anymore but are members of one community.

In 2011, the Soil Association commissioned research into the impact and benefits of CSA. It was found that CSA farms help enable communities to take control of their food supply by providing their members with a variety of local, often organically produced food. The report highlights the remarkable power of community farms to positively influence a wide array of important social aspects. Many members report feeling significantly happier, with over 70% saying their quality of life has improved with the main proportion saying their cooking and eating habits have changed through using more local, seasonal and healthy food.

Gerald Miles, a farmer at Caerhys Farm in Pembrokeshire says *“CSA is the best thing I’ve ever done as it has connected the farm with the local community.”*³⁰

WHY COMMUNICATION IS IMPORTANT FOR CSA COMMUNITIES

Communication is a crucial aspect of CSA. It forms the basis for trust and

partnership, creating a shared identity and also contributes to the recruitment of new members. Consistent, frequent communication is a key to success; especially important in case of problems: the earlier you start to talk about a problem, the sooner it is solved.

TIP: *Be constructive! Positive atmosphere is a key to solving problems and moving forward.*

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

For better communication and more fluent operation of the CSA it is important that everyone knows what his/her role and responsibility in the scheme is. Being precise and specific about the role and responsibility division helps to release the work burden from some CSA members but also helps the less active members to see what the whole scheme operation means and how demanding it can be.

Chart 6 lists the typical roles in a community-led CSA and the description of the tasks incorporated in that role.

NOTE: *The necessary roles and responsibilities differ greatly depending on the type of CSA, for example, in a CSA where members just subscribe and receive their shares and are not involved in the farming business, most of the responsibilities mentioned would fall upon the producer’s shoulders.*

| ROLE | DESCRIPTION OF TASKS |
|---------------------------------|--|
| FARMING | |
| Crop planning | Planning the harvests and yields, the amount of cultivated crops and varieties, green manure, etc. |
| Work organisation | Continuous farm-work and coordination of workers during the year |
| Budgeting of farming costs | Creating a budget for farm-work |
| LOGISTICS | |
| Coordination of distribution | Evidence of logistics, communication of deliveries, outlet points management, etc. |
| ADMINISTRATION | |
| Accountancy and records | Accountancy, payments, bank account, cash, etc. |
| Financial management | Money-keeping, budget evidence, preparatory work for finance issues for the core group and general assembly. |
| Fundraising | Donors, sponsors and grants |
| MEMBERSHIP | |
| Submission | Maintenance of the electronic (or hardcopy) submission form |
| Membership record | Keeping updated list of members |
| Registration of new members | Communication with new members, evidence, etc. |
| Recruitment | Promotion of the CSA and recruiting new members |
| COMMUNICATION AND EVENTS | |
| General assembly | Preparation of programme, content and procedure of general assembly |
| Social event organisation | Organisation of social events for members and public |
| Volunteering | Working with volunteers |
| E-communication | Website and social networks maintenance |
| Core group coordination | Preparation and procedures of regular core group meetings |
| MAINTENANCE | |
| Building maintenance | Ensuring that all buildings are functioning and repaired |
| Machinery maintenance | Fixing of machinery, irrigation, water pipelines, etc. |
| EDUCATION | |
| Children's education | Events for children from both inside and outside the CSA |
| Assistance to other CSAs | Consultancy for other CSAs |
| CHART 6 ROLES IN THE CSA | |

5.1. Communication between producers and members

There are several communication channels which can be used within a CSA community. Never forget to discuss among members which one is preferred. We are different, there are people who prefer personal communication, but others like e-mailing or sharing posts on Facebook. You should find out the common ways that will not exclude anyone and find out which kind of channels are suitable for specific issues (e.g. it is enough to write an e-mail about the next farm visit, but, similarly, you should not need to call every member).

Be prepared, do not expect communication to be easy. It is more likely that in many cases your communication will be one-sided as answers and responses do not arrive when or how you intended. Accept this fact and do not despair: even though most people appreciate information, they do not have the time or willingness to actively communicate.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Deliveries are perfect occasions to meet members personally. As a farmer/coordinator you should be the host of these meetings – never forget to talk a bit with the members as they arrive!

Topics to speak about at the delivery:

- » Explain to your members what happened on the farm last week. What is growing well, which kind of difficulties you experienced, etc.
- » Ask them how they used the share from last week, were they satisfied with the content, quality, etc.
- » Explain to them how they can use the new vegetables, share recipes or tips.

TIP: *The best way of building a CSA community in an informal way is when you organise one common delivery for all of your members. The common weighing of the vegetables, discussions and the friendly atmosphere helps members to get to know each other, so the deliveries become a community event. Members could come with their children, share recipes and other useful information regarding sustainable lifestyles and enjoy each other's company.*

ONLINE COMMUNICATION

E-mails

The easiest way to communicate with your members is by e-mailing. Do not forget to add a relevant subject to your e-mails, because it can help to attract attention. If you do not receive an answer to your e-mails on an ongoing basis, ask your members, because your e-mails could be ending up in their spam folder.

Website/blog

It is vital for CSA farmers/communities to publish their availability. It is a common problem that interested consumers are often not able to find, join or contact suitable farmers. These channels can be used for sharing news with your members as well. Some CSA communities also started thematic blogs which are most often collecting the best recipes made from the weekly share.

Newsletters

The most common communication tool used by CSA communities is the newsletter. Through regular e-mails you can inform the members about the content of the weekly shares, send some of the best recipes, share news from the farm, promote your events (e.g. farm visit, community day) and send reminders (e.g. this is the time for renewing the contract or transfer the monthly share). Never forget to illustrate these with nice photos!

Almost all of the e-mail providers (like Google, Yahoo, Mailchimp) offer a newsletter app which can be started easily. You should collect the e-mail addresses of your members, find out a good name for the mailing list and decide about the structure and the frequency of the e-mails.

TIP: *If you find it difficult to start a newsletter on your own, ask somebody from your CSA community who has the capability to work with this kind of application. Moreover, a member could be also responsible for compiling the content with your assistance.*



Social media

Somebody likes it, somebody doesn't, but social media platforms like Facebook or Google+ are used widely. If your members are happy to use these, a group or community could be a good place to share news, pictures and motivate the members of your community to be in touch with each other.

Being engaged in too many sites can spread resources too thinly; it is better to actively engage and create a community on a few platforms than have disengaged communities on every platform.

Printed materials

If your members are not using online applications too much, you can produce a printed newsletter which could be delivered with their share, or you can even use printed posters for promotion.

Media

If you are searching for new members, it is worth connecting with local media (local TV, radio or newspapers) or asking the help of an NGO/national CSA network which could have good media connections. The media outlets like nice pictures and stories, so your CSA can definitely be good content for them. Be prepared! Always have at least three sentences in your mind of what you would like to share.

FACEBOOK GROUPS

Facebook Groups are the place for small group communication. Groups allow people to come together around a common cause, issue or activity to organise, express objectives, discuss issues, post photos and share related content. When you create a group, you can decide whether to make it publicly available for anyone to join, require administrator approval for members to join, or keep it private and by-invitation only.

GOOGLE+

If you have a Google account, you will be able to create a community. Find communities on the sidebar and select 'create community'. Choose public or private and it will ask you to name your community, so create a name. Select the level of privacy, whether or not anyone can join or search for your community, and click 'create community'. From there, it will ask you to finish setting up the community by adding a tagline, picking a photo, filling out the 'about' section, and adding discussion categories.

Google can be a good option for using shared tools. You can easily share tables and documents with your members if you choose the option of shared editing.

5.2. Communication among members

Communication should be bilateral within CSA communities. As a member we cannot wait only for the farmer or the coordinator in case of problems, because in a CSA they are responsible for many tasks in parallel, they may not be available all the time. If members are also the initiators of communication, solutions will come easier.

Giving feedback

Without feedback, a CSA community cannot exist and develop: the community-based operation requires regular, but constructive feedback mechanisms. Sometimes it is not easy to tell our opinion or critique in a way which is not unpleasant, but there are some easy techniques which can be of help to you.

All CSA communities should decide on the feedback mechanisms they will use. There could be regular meetings organised, online questionnaires sent out, or farmers/coordinators could monitor the satisfaction when they make deliveries. But because giving or accepting feedback could be a sensitive situation, you should pay attention to some principles.



STORY

Marie was worried because her daughter became sick on the same day she should pick up her share. Her husband was travelling abroad and she was home alone with the kids. She tried to call the farmer, but could not reach her. Finally, she realised that a nice family from the CSA community lives just two streets from them and last time they exchanged phone numbers. So, everything was solved, the family was so nice that they brought the weekly share to her house. From this time, it was not a problem if one of the families could not go to the delivery, they even offered each other the weekly shares during holidays.

» Create a safe situation: find an appropriate time and place for giving your feedback. If the person receiving the feedback doesn't feel comfortable, your feedback will not reach its objective. If you are giving feedback regarding a problem, first you should do it personally, without the presence of the whole group.

» Be specific: get to the point and talk straight. The more you use complex sentences with reference to other issues, the less your message will be understood.

» Do not classify someone, talk about a specific situation or problem.

TECHNIQUES FOR GIVING/ACCEPTING FEEDBACK

Online surveys

Online surveys could contribute to the effective assessment of the season. During winter-time when you and all of the members have more time, it is worth dealing with a survey which could give you a good picture of how your members evaluated the season.

HELPFUL:

"There were not enough strawberries at the delivery. Not helpful: "I was the last one at the delivery, even Linda left, so I could only have the rest of the vegetables. By the way, I did not know that you can cook something good from these green beans, but Mark gave me a really good recipe, even my son had some beans for the dinner. That was good that we got a half kilogram of green beans, it was enough for the whole family, not like the strawberries."

HELPFUL:

"The salad was too old when we got it." Not helpful: "I do not like this salad, it had a strange taste."

WHAT YOU CAN ASK WITH THE USE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES?

- *What your members really liked? Which kind of vegetables should be grown or other produce should be manufactured during the next season? What did your members not like at all?*

- *What they think about the size of the share and its price? Is it too much? Or are they willing to pay even more?*

- *How satisfied are they with the delivery? Is it arranged for a good time and place?*

- *How satisfied are they with the organisation? Do they have enough information? Are the communication channels appropriate?*

- *What do they think about the community events? What else they would like to do?*

- *Are they involved in any kind of volunteer activity? What do they think about that? If not, what is the main reason for their stand-off?*

Personal feedback

Taking the principles mentioned above into consideration, a useful model for giving feedback could be the **B.O.F.F.** or BOFF. The acronym explains how it works in practice.

Behaviour: describe the behaviour or the problem you wish to provide feedback on

Outcome: describe the result of the behaviour or the problem in question

Feelings: how the behaviour/result made you feel

Future: what you would like to have in the future



TWO EXAMPLES HOW TO USE THE BOFF MODEL

1. The farmer is quite often late with the delivery. You are very busy: usually just coming from your work-place. When the delivery starts late, you cannot pick up the share, because the kids cannot wait outside.

“David, I have a problem. For the last three weeks, you arrived late, so the deliveries started more than 40 minutes later than they should. So, I felt really bad and nervous, because I had to ask somebody else to take my share, because I could not wait for you; I should bring home my kids from their dance class. For me it is really important to have a fixed time when you start the deliveries. Do you think it would be possible?”

2. Or as a farmer/coordinator you can also give feedback to the members.

“Robert, as you know we agreed upon a monthly payment system. We are already in the middle of the month but you have not paid your monthly membership fee. For me, it is a difficult situation, because I need to buy some new seeds and tools. It is really important for me that you pay your fee at the beginning of the month and settle your debt this week, because my budget strongly depends on the members. If the online transfer is not working for you, it is possible to give me your fee in cash here. What do you think?”

STORY

Peter noticed that some other members were standing in a group and talking about something secretly. He was curious what was happening so he joined the conversation. It turned out that the members were not satisfied with the quantity of the carrots. Last week all of the carrots were full of worms and they just realised that this week also there were too many holes in them. Peter suggested to the group to talk about this problem, because if they don't, nothing will change. So they expressed their problem to the farmer who was surprised, because the carrots were picked by one of the interns and he did not have time to check them in the rush of the harvesting. So, from this week, the farmer will check all of the vegetables before the delivery.

Never forget to give positive feedback as well. Recognition always motivates people to keep on doing their work. It is easier than you thought:
Marie, I just wanted to tell you that it is so great to be a member of your CSA community. Since I have joined, I eat much more vegetables. I realised what you produce is delicious, not like the vegetables sold in the shop near us.

Meetings

Community-based meetings could be a good occasion for common planning, evaluating a season or even discussing a problem. Being in a group could help the less active members to express their opinion. It is always useful to have a schedule for the meeting, because this

can help with not wasting your time. If many members are coming, it is useful to have somebody who is facilitating the event. In order for you not to be the only person who is doing that, it is worth asking an external facilitator who could help you focus on the issues.

STORY

At one CSA farm, rumours started that the membership fee was unfairly high and that the farmer only spends money on his own wellbeing instead of investing in the farm. The farmer called a meeting where he presented the precise and very transparent budget of the farm. The members understood what is behind the prices and that the rumours lacked any foundation. The trust within the community was re-established.

5.3. Volunteering

WHY VOLUNTEERING IS IMPORTANT ON CSA FARMS

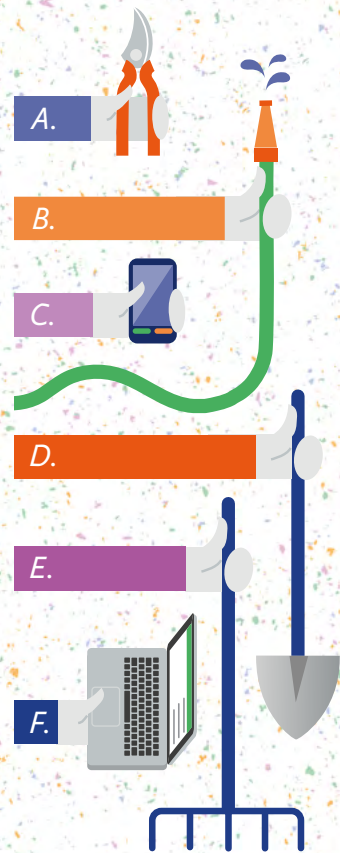
The involvement of the members differs from country to country and from CSA to CSA. It definitely requires more energy to organise volunteers from a community, but it has many advantages. Through volunteering, members can easily understand the model of CSA and some of the tasks can be taken away from the farmer/coordinator. The majority of CSA members come from a city and have only a weak link with agriculture. Hands-on experience could build a stronger connection with the farm and change the general picture of consumers that farming is a “romantic” activity. And of course, there are some organisational tasks which can be shared between the members, making the farmers’ life easier.

Volunteers have a really important role in substituting the farmer or coordinator. Just think about it: harvesting is more demanding than you expect, everyone can fall ill or just need a holiday for a week. In those cases, it is really important to have some key members who can be asked for help.

WHICH KIND OF TASKS CAN BE THE SUBJECT OF VOLUNTEERING?

Deliveries

Most CSA volunteers are involved in the delivery. More hands can be really useful for packing, but the distribution of the harvest, the cleaning and the administration (registration of the coming members & paying/contracting) can be also organised with the involvement of volunteers. And do not forget the basic fact: this is attended by every member if he/she wants to get the share. In some countries undertaking some tasks during the delivery is



TIP: *In some countries, co-ordinators receive free shares for their work. In this way, they feel their work is acknowledged, and this is a good motivation for doing some kind of organisational work for the community.*

obligatory, because it is a good occasion for education – members will be familiar with the processes in practice and become more familiar with each other.

Internal communication

Communication with the members can be a challenge alongside everyday farming. It is really common that somebody within the community likes to talk, write and connect people. Young mothers who are home with their babies are usually happy to do something for the community. Ask the members to start a blog with recipes which can help in informing people how to use the harvest, or to manage the newsletter or your social media platforms.

External communication

Sharing personal experiences about your community is a perfect way of seeking new members – (in Hungary) the majority of the newbies are friends, colleagues or family members of the members. Do not be shy, in the case of a vacancy, ask your members to help. Or if you do not have time for promoting your community through social media or at a public event? Ask some of your members who are passionate about your CSA.

Farm-work

Members from the city usually love to work on the farm. Sometimes even weeding or harvesting can be a relaxation for those who spend their time in an office during the week. Farm-work could play a role in children's education

as well. For families with children it is a perfect recreation to visit a CSA farm. Collect the tasks that could be done by your members and organise farm workdays on your farm – they can also be connected with a farm visit. And be patient! Not everyone knows how these tasks should be carried out properly.

Social coordinators

You have probably met people who are the catalysts of an event or a party. They have the ability for hosting an event, entertaining the guests and taking care of everybody at the same time. If you are not that kind of person, do not worry! There might be somebody within your CSA community who can help in organising farm visits, harvest parties or recruitment events.

Treasurers

If you already have a core group of volunteers who understand the operation of your CSA community, you can find somebody for administrative tasks. In some CSAs, there are special members who are responsible for renewing the partnership contracts or checking and recording the payments.

Volunteer coordinator

If you already have a big group of volunteers, it can take quite a lot of time to manage them. Try to find a key person who is good at networking, managing people and already experienced in volunteering – he or she can be a perfect volunteer coordinator in your community.

STORY

In some countries, there is a specific volunteer who is responsible for organising the CSA community, so farmers have more time for taking care of the farm-related activities and logistics. In Romania, for example, each group has a facilitator who is responsible for helping producers and consumers to manage their partnership. The facilitator could be consumer in that CSA or only a resource person for the group. But it is mandatory that each facilitator is member of a CSA. The facilitators are volunteers and they are in close contact with the national network. They have an important role in initiating the CSA and in helping the members (producer and consumers) to understand what CSA is and what kind of roles and responsibilities should be taken and how difficult situations could be managed.

HOW TO WORK WITH VOLUNTEERS?

Sometimes it can be a challenge to motivate the members to volunteer. They usually have a family, work a lot, or simply are not experienced in volunteering. But here is some practical advice which can help in overcoming these excuses.

» **Prioritise your tasks.** Sometimes it is difficult to hand over a task to a member. But if you make a list and recognise which are the most important to-dos which can be realised only by you or your employees, you will also see the ones that could be done by a volunteer. You should never forget that your time and experience should be valued.

» **Have a list of tasks for volunteers.** People are different. Somebody who feels uncomfortable among new people is probably not a good person for coordinating an on-farm event. Or a manager who works all day long in an office could be more motivated to work

outside in your fields during the weekend than be responsible for some kind of online task. So, try to collect different kind of tasks and let your members decide.

» **Estimate time!** The different tasks should be also ordered by the necessary time-frames. In that way, members can easily recognise which kind of tasks are regular, or what they can choose if they have only 1-2 hours in the month for volunteering. It is also useful to ask your members how much time they have for volunteering in a week/month/year. This can help them to realise what they have undertaken.

» **Be detailed and explain everything step by step.** Some tasks can come natural to you, but could be a challenge for your members who are not used to working on a farm. How is a weed recognised in a field? How should a spade

or a hoe be used? Try to collect all of the information which is needed for a volunteer task and explain it patiently to your members.

» **Lay down some rules.** What will happen if somebody takes on a task and forgets about it? Or just does not carry it out in the agreed time? Think about these possible cases and find out some common guidelines which can facilitate the volunteer activities. You can agree with your members that they should inform you about their possible delay some days before the deadline, or it could be their responsibility to ask for help if something is not clear to them.

» **Mentor your volunteers.** If you are continuously monitoring and mentoring your volunteers, the motivation can be sustained for a long time and mistakes can be avoided. From time to time, ask them if everything is going well; do they have any questions or difficulties? It can happen that your volunteers suggest some methods that are new to you but that helps to perform the tasks much easier.

» **Organise groups.** Some members – especially those who would like to belong to a community – may prefer to do volunteering with others. So, you can organise small groups like “social coordinators”, “online volunteers” or “helpers of the farm”. In CSAs where volunteering works really well, usually a core group is formed. Core group

members are the “right hands” of the farmer, they can be asked to do the main organisational tasks and can substitute the farmer in many cases.

» **Praise them!** Never forget to thank volunteers when they are finished with a task or they do something really helpful regularly. You can do this also through your mailing list by sending some nice pictures or funny stories about the volunteer activities: they definitely will feel rewarded and your other members will see how great it is to be a volunteer within the community.

» **Never give up.** You may not find a volunteer for all of the tasks, but you should keep on sharing with your CSA community if you need volunteer contribution. In that way, they will see how complex your work is and, at some point, they will jump in and help you.

» **Be aware of the legality of volunteer work.** In some countries, volunteering might be subject to specific legislative guidelines so be careful before you employ someone as a volunteer in order not to clash with the law.

TIP: *Start a common table in which you list the preference (what your members are good at or would like to do) and the availability (how much time they can devote for volunteering) of your members. Usually it works better, if you ask somebody directly for a specific task than sending a message to everybody.*

5.4. On-farm activities and recruitment events

WHY THESE EVENTS ARE IMPORTANT

Farm visits and events are great occasions to meet the farmer and fellow CSA members. Members can learn where their food is coming from, farmers meet the people, who actually eat their delicious and carefully grown produce. Personal meetings give members the sense of belonging and can make a real community from a bunch of individuals. These events are essential for building relationship and trust among members.

WHAT IS A RECRUITMENT EVENT?

At this meeting, potential consumers have the opportunity to meet the farmer and other members. Newbies are introduced to the concept and principles of CSA and to the actual terms and conditions of the farm. This is the event where the produce, the delivery, the fees and payment, the communication means and all the basic things are explained.

The recruitment event is usually organised at the beginning of the season and can be held back-to-back with the yearly kick-off meeting, where community members discuss the yearly crop and delivery plan, the fees and other important issues of the CSA.

TIP TO FARMERS:

Let everyone talk! Invite older members to recruitment events. When potential consumers ask questions about the CSA at the recruitment event, first invite people who are members for a longer time to share their experience, then you can add the missing pieces of information. This way the meeting is more inclusive, older members will feel competent and become more closely related to the farm. The newcomers will receive information from a consumer perspective, which is similar to their position. Try this method, and you will realise that it is not easy, but worth practicing!

STORY

People can only join a CSA community, if they participate in the recruitment event and meet the farmer eye-to-eye. This way the CSA can assure that everyone is on the same page: they have the same ideas and expectations about how their CSA is running and they will follow shared principles. There is nothing worse than being disappointed about the CSA or managing disappointed members. Let's prevent these!

WHAT ARE THE ON-FARM ACTIVITIES?

This can be anything that happens on the farm: cooking, preserving, party, pick-your-own, discussion and planning.

How many events are necessary?

One face-to-face recruitment or kick-off meeting is an essential event, where members can discuss the principles and practicalities as well as yearly crop plans. Additionally, most CSAs organise at least one farm visit during the year, when members can look around, participate in planting, weeding or harvest, and meet each other. When there is surplus on the fields, members can be invited to help harvesting and have fun or, in the case of an unfortunate disaster, for example a storm, they can help with the recovery. The only limit is the capacity of the farmer and of the members.

Who should organise the meeting?

The key competence of the farmer is production. Let's help him or her to focus on what she or he knows best! Of course, the farmer issues the invitation, but active and committed members can volunteer to help with the organisation, the preparation, with on-site and after-party activities. Members sometimes don't realise how good they are at organising. If there are no volunteers, the farmer can ask open-minded members and members who are good at organising directly to help with the events.

CHECKLIST FOR EVENTS FOR ORGANISERS

- » Send directions to the farm.
- » Share organisers' mobile numbers, just in case.
- » Let people know about the purpose of the meeting and if their presence is expected or optional.
- » Tell people what they should bring: food, mugs, paper and pen...

TIP FOR MEETINGS:

Always start and finish meetings on time. When you start to adjust the meeting kick-off to late-comers, suddenly being late becomes a habit even for those who are usually on time. Why should they arrive on time when everyone else is late? This is a dangerous path, don't step on it! Finishing on time is also essential, so people who have other commitments after the meeting, will not miss important information. Once the scheduled parts of the meeting are over, people can still stay for chit-chatting.

- » You should set the time-frame for the programme, and start and finish on time. If there are special events, send the timing in advance, so people know when they want to join or leave.
- » If you have a programme, follow it and prepare with 2-3 simple but funny games. You may ask members to volunteer for the animation of games.

» You can play a short, funny game at the beginning to help learning names and focusing on the forthcoming meeting. Simple but funny games could be also a good way of entertaining during the day if the members are open to this kind of activity. You may ask members to volunteer for the animation of games.

» Have someone (can be a volunteer), who welcomes and introduces people to each other whenever people come. Always introduce people to each other!

» Give badges to people where they can put down their names and wear it during the event. You only need some cheap and simple white stickers and markers for this. This will bring people closer.

» If you expect people to be active at the event, let them know in advance or on the spot. You can invite people to help with cooking, dishwashing, planting, weeding, whatever. Just don't be shy: go and ask politely and explicitly. If you ask them nicely no one will refuse or feel uncomfortable.

» If it is a recruitment event, send general info about the CSA movement, for example charters, principles, link to the farm's internet site, and ask invited wannabe-members to read these before the meeting.

A PLAYFUL WAY TO INTRODUCE:

People stand up in a circle. One by one says their name and with one single movement they imitate what they have done before they arrived to the meeting. For example: my name is Jane and I had a coffee this morning – and Jane shows how she drank the coffee. Each person says their own name and movement as well as the names and movements of all the previous persons. If there are 15 people, that last one will say 15 names and do 15 movements.

TIP FOR EVENTS:

People love to play, even if they deny it sometimes, an introduction to each other goes very well with games! Let's try this one! Ask people to stand up and imagine a map where the central location is the farm. The farmer stands on the farm's spot and appoints the Northern direction. Now all people should stand in a spot that indicates their living area relative to the farm. When everyone is on the imaginary map, people should say their name, where they live and the name of the vegetables that they like and/or dislike. With this exercise members are introduced to close living mates who may help them out when they cannot go for their shares and they may find like and dislike matches.





PART D
Field training

6. PARTNER'S DESCRIPTION AND THEIR COUNTRY SITUATION

6.1. Hungary

PARTNER DESCRIPTION

The Association of Conscious Consumers (ACC/TVE) was established in 2001. TVE's activities focus on sustainable and ethical consumption; the aim of the organisation is to make consumers aware of the environmental, social, and ethical aspects of their consumption and to help them to live more sustainable lifestyles. To achieve this aim, TVE provides information, delivers campaigns and community learning, publishes and distributes educational materials, conducts background research, and lobbies decision makers.

<http://tudatosvasarlo.hu/english>

CSA IN HUNGARY

In Hungary, there are ten operating CSA farms, but also some others which are testing the community-based operation. The majority of the CSAs are farmers driven, but the size of the communities are really different and varies between 15 and 90 families. Almost all of the CSA farms are certified organic, only one biodynamic farm decided not to enter the official certification system. All of these farms produce vegetables, but, in some cases, additional products are also organised for the communities: e.g. eggs, cheese, fruit, etc. The consumers – who are often called “members”

– are mainly city people who sign a contract with the farmers in which they engage themselves to the farm for a season (whole season or spring/autumn season). They pay a “membership fee”, the membership fee is not necessarily paid in advance, members usually pay every month.

The CSA concept was introduced to Hungary in 1998, but the three farms which were influenced by the English CSA concept gave up the model or started something similar but as a more open system. The reasons for the failure were really diverse: 1) the costs were not properly calculated, 2) the concept was new for the consumers, and 3) the consumption habits were not “ready” for the seasonal content of the vegetable boxes.

In 2010, three new CSA farms started to operate, influenced by the French AMAPians visits which were organised by URGENCI. The French influence is still determinative among the Hungarian CSA farms (some of them using, for example, the translated AMAP charter), but new forms have appeared too, for example a social cooperative or a not-for-profit limited company.

An important result is that, in 2014, the informal Hungarian CSA network was formed (Közösségi Kisgazdaságok Szövetsége ~ Alliance of Small-scale CSA Farms).

TVE is promoting the idea of CSA in Hungary – publishing information about the national and international best practices, organising training for local communities and coordinating projects about the topic. Since 2012, more than 580 participants have attended our CSA-related events. These activities contributed to finding new farmers and consumers who are committed to having more and more CSA communities in Hungary.

It should also be mentioned that, in Hungary, there are some initiatives which are close to CSA. Box-schemes started to operate which offer organic vegetable boxes. These also contain seasonal vegetables which were harvested on the farm and given for the same price every week. The main difference is that the consumer can decide every week if they order it or not.

Buying groups are also really popular. In that case, city people form a community and they search for farmers from 30-50 kilometers from their place. So the products are seasonal and local but not necessarily organic. However, the personal guarantee system has a crucial role: organisers and consumers visit the farms regularly. The ordering is also up to consumers: more often they can choose vegetables and other products from a list and order what they wish.

More information about CSA and the list of operating initiatives are available in Hungarian on the website:

www.tudatosvasarlo.hu/csa

CASE STUDY

Community building on Évkerék Ökotanya, Hungary

A young couple of the Hungarian Évkerék Ökotanya started CSA five years ago in the south of Hungary, Balástya. Altogether they have 7 hectares of land with a pasture and orchard. They produce vegetables on 1,5 hectares (the whole farm is 7 hectares) for about 90 families (altogether 50 boxes). The deliveries are organised 38 weeks of the year, from May to February weekly, and from February till May in a two-weekly system.

The community building is the base for the weekly distribution which is organised at the court of a Steiner school in Szeged (the closest town). The members can pick up their share from 16.00 till 18.30. This place is perfect for informal meetings, open for families and also other groups.

Volunteering started in earnest when the wife of the young couple became pregnant. Up to that time, she had been responsible for the main communication and community-related tasks. So, members were told that in order to maintain the system, more volunteer work was needed. Fortunately, there were a small group of people who were ready to help in this situation.

The community started a Google table in which all of the volunteer tasks were listed and members chose from these.

For those who had only limited time for volunteering there was the possibility of helping with deliveries. In that case, one or two volunteer members came a bit earlier to the deliveries and helped in packing the vegetables. They were responsible for the registration (checking who came for their share). At the end of the delivery, the volunteers could bring home the leftover vegetables.

Also, a new volunteer group “Köménymag” (in Hungarian cumin which is pronounced almost like hard core) formed. This group has a special mailing list and regular meetings are organised for them at the last delivery of the month. The members of this special volunteer group organise events for the community (like bread feast) and are asked for advice by the farmers in case of decisions or questionable situations. The group is open, everyone can join, currently about 12-13 members participate in it.

According to the experience of this farm, many members are willing to do farm-work but it can be difficult for the farmer. Members are not familiar with the farm-work and sometimes they come to the farms as a guest. They would like to enjoy nature, meet other nice members and enjoy their time. So the farmers of the Évkerék Ökotanya prefer if only one member comes to the farm so that they have more time to explain the tasks and check the work done by the volunteer. This system works really well, one of the members has become a special helper with the harvesting.

Another volunteer initiative was the Recipe Blog of the CSA community (<http://evkerekreceptek.blogspot.hu/>) The blog was started by those members who really like cooking and are so enthusiastic that they share their recipes on the mailing list of the CSA community as well.

6.2. The Czech Republic

PARTNER DESCRIPTION

PRO-BIO LIGA is a Czech association of conscious consumers gathering consumers and fair-traders around a common ecological vision. The organisation was established back in 2002 as an independent educational expert branch of the Czech Republic’s only organic farmers’ union, PRO-BIO Association of Organic Farmers, and since then it has carried out projects related to education in the field of sustainable and organic farming, local food marketing and distribution, local community-building and community supported agriculture, and food sovereignty in particular.

www.biospotrebitel.cz

CSA IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Farming in the Czech Republic is based on industrial farms with an average acreage of 800 hectares. Only 7 % of big agricultural enterprises “cultivate” 65 % of arable land in the country. Family farms with independent distribution cultivate only 6 % of arable land. The majority of food is distributed through

retail chains, widely owned by foreign capital and offering a large proportion of food from abroad.

Despite these facts, the movement for local food is growing stronger through the development of farmers' markets, box-schemes and also community- and solidarity-based initiatives ranging from organic-buying groups to CSA farms.

At the moment, there are about 26 CSA schemes or initiatives that are either already successfully operating or are seeking members or a farmer. The majority of the CSA initiatives act as a community subscriber group (20 initiatives) where a group of consumers commit to an existing farm for a whole/part season delivery, and take care of the distribution from the pick-up point (farming is the responsibility of the farmer and the community is not much involved – the farmer is an entrepreneur who sells his produce to members). Another sector of these initiatives is represented by community-owned farms (3 farms) where a community (or an NGO) runs a farm on its own and employs a farmer (or farm-workers) and shares the whole harvest (or sells its part), and is responsible for the operation of the whole enterprise. The last section of the CSA initiatives is formed by subscriptions CSAs (3 farms) where farmers offer their produce and consumers subscribe shares for a whole season for a discounted price. Delivery and outlet is organised by the farmer. No risk and reward sharing. No

commitment apart from advance payment and a subscription for the whole season is required from the subscribers. Seen from the farmers' side, there are 17 farmers supplying those CSAs in total. Some of them are officially certified organic farmers (10) and the rest at least declare to be farming according to organic principles.

CASE STUDIES

Subscriber CSA group Toulcův dvůr

“CSA could really save small-scale farms in operation, it could be their perpetuation”
Karel Tachecí, CSA farmer

This CSA group was established in 2009 following the dissemination meeting of URGENCI, bringing together Czech farmers and consumers with AMAP practitioners. Establishment of the group and its cooperation with the first farmer was organised and facilitated by an NGO, PRO-BIO LIGA, in the initial phases, later on the core group of about five members formed to take over coordination of the CSA. The CSA started its first season with some 20 members (i.e. 20 shares) in 2009 and the number grew to nearly 80 members and 3 farmers in 2014.

The group has developed a mutual “Code” where commitment of both parties is stated. Consumers are committed to take in the whole season's produce of the farm and to pay in advance for the produce and have an obligation to serve duty at the outlet point at least once

per season. The farmers are obliged to deliver part of their produce to the outlet point regularly, keep the agreed price of the shares for the whole season, and follow organic farming principles (though formal certification is not required), use as little packaging as possible and limit the food-miles to a minimum (as they are allowed to buy in some produce according to their choice and needs).

There are usually 3 meetings of the whole group per year: pre-season meeting where the share content, prices and time-frame are discussed and agreed upon – such meetings are usually attended by half of the members. Then, during the season, a field day is organised at one of the farms; this is usually attended by one third of the members and is typically combined with pick-your-own, apple juice making, joint cooking or other events. At the end of the season, there is an evaluation meeting with the farmers where the season is discussed, possible troubles are debated, etc.

Communication between the farmers and the group is facilitated by “farmer ambassadors”, it means that each farmer has his own member with whom he or she communicates and who serves as a representative of the rest of the group. These ambassadors also provide regular information from the farms to the rest of the group and facilitate possible problems that may occur during the season.

The price of the shares is usually proposed and justified by the farmers at the

pre-season meetings, the members usually discuss the price with the farmer. The farmers usually calculate the price of the share from the market prices of the share’s components and the average price for share is agreed, i.e. the value of the share may vary greatly during the season but the average should neither exceed nor go below the average.

The solidarity between the farmer and the consumers is spelt out in the above-mentioned Code, which each member and each farmer has to agree with before entering the partnership. It states that the members accept lower or no shares in case of a severe situation (extreme weather, pest or disease raid). For their part, the farmers express their solidarity with the members by not changing prices or selling their produce somewhere else if they get a better price.

www.bio-bedyňky.cz

CASE STUDY

KomPot – Community Food

KomPot is a Czech acronym meaning “community food” in English. It is the first community-led CSA farm established in the Czech Republic in 2011. The community has almost 40 members who cultivate 0.5ha of vegetable farm. The production field has 0.5ha and average production is about 4 tonnes of vegetables annually, that is 5 kg of vegetables per weekly share during the season, which usually runs from May to November.

Next to the field there is also a 1,000 square metre natural garden that serves the community – hosting celebrations, meetings and also educational activities for the public. One of the gardeners runs a practical seasonal course on organic growing; from time to time there are excursions or even educational programmes.

Operation

There are two paid members responsible for growing. They also hire external staff to help out during the peak season. However, all the members are obliged to work at least 4 days per year. There are regular workdays when members come and help. Some members do administrative or organisational and coordination work. So there are various options for how to participate according to individual circumstances. KomPot has three different outlet points. Members cover the transport on a voluntary basis so that the growers only have to prepare the shares and do not have to organise the distribution.

Members' involvement

Work in the garden is done on a voluntary basis, and there are differences as how intensively individual members participate. There is a non-formal core group of very active people who seek other benefits from the community apart from the vegetables – like relationships or good feeling derived from working in the open air. The interesting

fact is that this core group is changing – the intensity of involvement of each member oscillates over time, mainly according to life situation (children, own jobs, etc.). The gardeners are at the centre of the community and are the driving force of development. One of them, especially, has a very high motivation to develop the farm – her family owns the land.

Finances

KomPot has been financed mostly by the members' contribution since the beginning. There was only the land and one small shed with electricity on the site. Members invested in equipment, they built a fence and composting toilet, made a watering system or planted trees. This work still continues and, each year, the farm gets more professional. There are also operational costs that cover all the expenses for growing – seeds and plants, gardeners' work, energy, etc. This budget is covered only by members who want to be getting their share in the season (36 in 2014, 23 in 2015). The budget is discussed at the beginning of the season at a general assembly, and is covered by voluntary contributions. It means that members give their own proposals on the amount they pay. All proposals put together must cover the annual budget. If not, members must make a new round of bids of contributions. This helps to make the system more solidarity-based.

www.kom-pot.cz

6.3. Romania

PARTNER DESCRIPTION

The CRIES Association (Centre of Resources for Ethical and Solidarity-Based Initiatives) is an NGO founded in 2009. The aim of CRIES is to develop a responsible economy and an equitable society. Its main objectives are:

- 1) to increase the ability of the institutional, social and economic stakeholders to act in the field of social economy, and sustainable development;
- 2) to increase the participation of citizens in the promotion, development and strengthening of ethical financing, responsible consumption, fair trade, solidarity-based economy;
- 3) to facilitate the active participation of marginalised people, through the social economy (e.g. social enterprises, working integration social enterprises, cooperatives, or other innovative forms of social and solidarity-based economy).

www.cries.ro

CSA IN ROMANIA

ASAT (Association for the Support of Peasant Agriculture) started in 2008 as an informal group of consumers and one producer. From 2008 to 2014 it worked as an informal network, with a charter, but with no legal status. Because the network was slowly but constantly growing, in 2014 it was decided to register ASAT as an NGO, using its charter as its defining document. Much of the

ASAT charter and its *modus operandi* is inspired by the french AMAP model.

As previously mentioned, the first CSA initiative in Romania started in 2008 with the development of the first ASAT partnership in the western city of Timisoara. In the following years, other partnerships were developed both in Timisoara and around other cities in Romania: Arad, Oradea, Cluj, Bucuresti, Odorheiul Secuiesc. The largest number of ASAT partnerships was 14, which is now reduced to 9. Five former ASAT partnerships decided to continue independently, but still operating in a CSA fashion. All in all, more than 650 families from urban areas gained access to accessible, organic and locally produced food through the ASAT network. Also most of these farmer families working within the ASAT network were at risk of poverty and social exclusion, and, in some cases, their children were at risk of abandoning school. Some of the farmers had little or no formal income and were practicing subsistence agriculture following the loss of their formal employment. Over the years, the consumers in the ASAT partnerships invested around €30,000 in supporting the farms. The investment went into equipment and training for farmers. Most of the investment in farming equipment went into buying motor-hoes, building greenhouses, irrigation systems, acquisition of heirloom seeds and various smaller

tools. The investment into training was focused both on agricultural training (teaching farmers new methods in ecological agriculture) and on marketing training so that they developed the necessary skills to interact smoothly with present and future customers.

CASE STUDIES

Case study: Marcel Haş

The solidarity partnership with Marcel Haş started in 2010 at his request. CRIES (Centre of Resources for Ethical and Solidarity-Based Initiatives) supported him by helping find and coagulate a group of consumers consisting of 40 families.

At the start of the partnership, Marcel Haş had only a short experience as a farmer. Previously he worked as a tinman in an auto repair shop and he was forced to move to the countryside after losing his job.

Being a small farmer with little experience, he faced marginalisation by the conventional agricultural market. He lacked the necessary infrastructure to grow (and process) agricultural products at competitive prices, and the bio market was inaccessible to him. On the other hand, he had a very strong motivation for starting an ASAT partnership and this convinced a group of consumers to support him.

The consumers' solidarity with the Haş family was extremely strong throughout the 5 years of the partnership. In fact, their partnership has some

of the highest levels of solidarity-driven involvement of all Romanian partnerships. This allowed members of the partnerships to experiment different practices and mechanisms of support for small-scale farmers. Among them, it is worth mentioning a few:

» Fostering volunteering and encouraging consumers to organise the distributions: during the first years of the partnership there was an active involvement of a core group of consumers in the running of the partnership. Noticing that there is an unequal involvement, in order to make the situation fairer, consumers proposed that those that are unwilling to take part in management of the partnership should pay a small fee to the producer. This highlighted the importance of consumers' involvement in the good running of the partnership and that consumers must really take on their commitments. It also increased consumers' voluntary participation in the management of the partnership, and the practice was adopted by other Romanian partnerships.

» Long-term financial support for the farm: at the annual evaluation and planning meeting, the long-term development of the farm is a priority. As a consequence, it was agreed that the investment costs of the farms must be included in the budget of the partnership – the budget paid by consumers' contributions. Consumers understood that by paying for these investments they would ensure the forthcoming produce and that they supported the work

of the farmer. Some of the most important investments done with the contribution of the consumers were: building a new greenhouse, building an irrigation system, installing a motorised water pump, buying a tractor. Of all Romanian partnerships, this one is the partnership where consumers accepted to cover most of the investments in the farm.

» Building an emergency budget: given that there could be unexpected emergency works (for example if there were an unpredicted drought and further irrigation works were needed, or if the weather was too wet and further protection works were needed) the consumers' group accepted to include an emergency section in the general budget: money that the farmer could immediately use in case of emergency, according to the farmer's needs.

Case study:

Irinel Cîrstea & Elena Bărcanu

Irinel and Elena are the youngest producers involved in Romanian CSA. Both Irinel and Elena are trained horticulturists and agronomists. After completing their university studies at the University of Agronomy in Bucharest, they worked for a few years at an ecological farm in Great Britain.

In 2012, they decided to return to Romania and to set up their own ecological farm. They moved to a village not far from Bucharest where their family (in fact, their grandparents!) owned a few plots of land. With money earned in Britain, they made their first

investments: a tractor, two greenhouses, a water pump and two water reservoirs for the irrigation system. In their first year of working at the farm, they were not part of the ASAT network and they did a lot of trials and experiments to find out the full potential of the farm, and what products were best suited given the local soil, weather patterns and water availability. In this first year, they tried to sell their ecological products on the normal market, but they had difficulties selling their products at a fair price.

The partnership with Irinel and Elena started in 2014 in Bucharest when they came in contact with ASAT wanting to be part of a wider network of small-scale ecological farmers. They were helped by the CRIES association to form a group of 25 consumers.

Consumers' enthusiasm and involvement in the partnerships was and remains quite high. This is reflected in the fact that a very high percentage of those who were in partnership in its first year decided to renew their commitments for a second and a third year. Some of the most interesting and successful practices that Irinel and Elena initiated are the following:

- » They started writing regular newsletters for their consumers and for the wider ASAT community about the state of their garden, with detailed information about various plants and the stages of the works;
- » They shared their expertise in ecological agriculture with other ASAT

producers: they wrote detailed material listing practices they used in their garden and they shared it with the other ASAT producers;

» They selected their consumers based on values. They required a face-to-face meeting with every potential consumer and a conversation with them about motivations and values.

» In order to help other small-scale farmers, they put them in touch with consumers from their partnerships, so the latter could buy products not found in the ASAT basket directly from producers. They refused to become sales-intermediaries.

» They neither plan to extend the size of their farm nor to increase the number of consumers in their group. They prefer to increase the quality and diversity of their products and to support new producers to develop their own farm and CSA group.

6.4. URGENCI

PARTNER DESCRIPTION

The international network of Community-Supported Agriculture initiatives fostering peer-based solidarity among CSA initiatives to actively contribute to the food sovereignty movement!

Local solidarity-based partnerships between farmers and the people they feed are, in essence, a member-farmer cooperative, whoever initiates it and whatever legal form it takes. There is no fixed way of organising these

partnerships, it is a framework to inspire communities to work together with their local farmers, to provide mutual benefits and to reconnect people to the land where their food is grown.

The emergence of Community Supported Agriculture, first in Japan with Teikei created back in the late 1960s, and of many more other initiatives since then, shows how consumers and farmers in various places are responding to the same global pressures. This supports the development of organic family-run farms and fair local food systems.

www.urgenci.net.

CSA IN EUROPE

In Europe, the diversity of the CSA movement is fully reflected in the increasing amount of initiatives:

- » Association pour le Maintien de l'Agriculture Paysanne (AMAP) in France, Groupes d'achats solidaires de l'agriculture paysanne (GASAP) and Voedselteams in Belgium,
- » Solidarische landwirtschaft in Germany or Austria,
- » Kumppanuusmaatalous or 'partnership agriculture' in Finland,
- » Gruppo di acquisto solidale in Italy and Grupos de Consumo in Spain,
- » GSR (Groups of solidarity exchange), SEG (Ecological solidarity groups) and RIS (exchange and solidarity) in Croatia,
- » Agriculture contractuelle de proximité in Switzerland,
- » Asociatia pentru Sustinerea

Agriculturii Taranesti (ASAT) in Romania,

- » Komunitou podporované zemědělství (KPZ) in the Czech Republic,
- » Közösségi mezőgazdálkodás in Hungary.

Despite the diversity of approaches and the lack of solid organising structures, CSA can be seen as an alternative movement, characterised by a common aim to connect producers and communities. Many members and organisers of CSA initiatives express a desire to see the concept spread, with active support and encouragement provided by some established initiatives.

CASE STUDIES

ROOTS: Buschberghof: the first CSA in Europe

The Buschberghof farm was converted from a privately owned biodynamic family farm into a Community Land Trust (GmbH) in 1968, to ensure biodynamic farming in perpetuity. The idea to set up a CSA was initiated in 1988 by three farmers, making Buschberghof the first CSA farm in Europe.

Wolfgang Stränz of Buschberghof CSA comments: “When the CSA was started in 1988, only half of the farm capacity was used by the community of 40 families, the other half of the harvest was still conventionally sold at the farm shop. After it became obvious that Community Supported Agriculture

could be a sustainable solution for the farm, the sales at the shop were stopped and the remaining customers were asked to join the CSA scheme.”

Buschberghof CSA’s objectives are to prevent the soil from becoming a commodity and the farm from being indebted. The farm is rented to farmers who agree to meet three preconditions:

- » To farm biodynamically
- » To agree not to sell any piece of farmland
- » To attempt to avoid accumulating any debts for the farm

Every year, the farmers present a provisional budget for the year ahead and the households make pledges according to their financial capacities. If the expenses are not met, the budget has to be cut or additional pledges found. Households then get food from the farm according to their needs - the quantity of products per household has nothing to do with their contribution to the budget.

The CSA hopes to eventually acquire more land, and to reduce the waiting list of participants by encouraging neighbours to establish a CSA as well.

The terms “consumers” and “producers” are not very popular and sometimes, like in Buschberghof, have been replaced by the notions “active farmer” and “non-active-farmer” to underline the common concept of the community and to develop it.

www.buschberghof.de

TREES! Where will the AMAP lead us? The outcomes of civic involvement

After supporting the market gardening farm at La Roustide (Gard, France) for more than three full seasons, three AMAP groups from the Marseilles area decided in 2007 to deepen their support and work together with the farmers towards a greater autonomy in fruit production. The outcome of their action is a splendid winter and summer 2-hectare organic orchard, consisting of 500 trees, more than 50 ancient varieties and 300 vines of table grapes. Since its creation, another group of shareholders in Nîmes joined to bring more support to the farmers. It also contributes to the growth of the orchard.

AMAP members helped in many ways! When the project was created, their donations made it possible to buy young trees and to dig the land. The urban AMAPians put on their Wellington boots in order to plant the trees. The seed growers promised to replace all the seeds that would not grow (for example, the kiwis which came under attack from mildew). Lotteries and selling small bags representing the orchard are a way to meet the needs for weeding, laying the irrigation system, pruning... AMAPians are used to coming to the farm to help their farmers out with maintenance tasks. When she was invited to the Council of Europe, the farmer, Jocelyne, ended her speech on poverty with a presentation on the

orchard. Understanding the impact of such a project, the whole council applauded!

The 500 trees of the orchard are now registered in the United Nations Environment Programme: "One million trees for the planet!" Extra donations and initiatives are still welcome, since the funding is still not complete.

When asked about what the orchard means to him, Jean-François, a farmer trained in fruit farming, answers: "This is the soul of our AMAPs. The AMAPians might well leave some day. The orchard will remain". Considering that he himself will be leaving, he adds: "After us, the orchard!"

The genuine pleasure of planting a tree and watching it grow: "Planting a tree is like living forever" wrote Zakaria, an AMAP member from Marseilles. The orchard makes it possible to keep more than 50 ancient varieties of fruit trees alive. Not only will these varieties continue growing for several generations, but this diversity also secures the orchard's sustainability by reducing the potential impact of diseases. And as their flowering cycles are not synchronous, the various types of a single fruit will make it possible to spread out harvests over a longer period. This is good news for the AMAP members, who will benefit from the reduction of storage and potential losses. Revitalising a small part of the ecosystem means strengthening the ecosystem as a whole.

“When one speaks about strawberries, people’s eyes start to sparkle when they think about these fruits. But a greenhouse full of strawberries is not doing a lot. You have to enter a flowering orchard in spring to understand. It is an enchantment. Thousands of bees are at work. This is a real living space!” says Jean-François.

More information and videos on www.laroustide.over-blog.com

A story of CSA, bees & DISSEMINATION

Bungay Community Bees, established in 2010, was the first beekeeping CSA in England. In common with all schemes, it raises money from subscribers in order to carry out productive activities, however, unlike most CSAs, the primary products are not tangibly agricultural but are instead educational and less tangible ecosystem services.

Rapidly growing to 50 members, Bungay Community Bees operates three apiary sites in Bungay as well as working with members who keep their own bees. Alongside beekeeping, volunteers from the group run two related projects: plants for bees, and education and outreach.

Bungay Community Bees works with landowners, local schools, businesses and residents to improve the quality and continuity of forage for bees and to raise awareness about the

vital role bees play in ecosystems and, in particular, food production.

Bungay Community Bees has inspired similar groups to follow a similar approach and has given its parent organisation, Sustainable Bungay, the confidence to apply CSA principles to other micro enterprises.

www.sustainablebungay.com/2010/03/bungay-community-bees

AMAP Charter

The new AMAP Charter invites people to engage in the positive dissemination of the “AMAP spirit”. By doing so, it sends an invitation to create new local partnerships that include processors who share the values and principles of the AMAP but without them having to merge with the AMAP. Although AMAPs remain a direct support for local and organic small-scale agriculture by the nature of the contract between the AMAP members and the farmer, the new Charter also positions them as incubators of alternatives.

May the CSA spirit be with you!

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8. Links

CSA in the Czech Republic: www.kpzinfo.cz

CSA in Hungary: <http://tudatosvasarlo.hu/csa>

CSA in Romania: <http://asatromania.ro>

International network: [www.urgenci.net](http://urgenci.net) You can find links to many European CSA networks and initiatives, here: <http://urgenci.net/csa-map/europe>

CSA network in Germany: www.solidarische-landwirtschaft.org

CSA in Austria: www.solidarische-landwirtschaft.at

CSA in France: <http://miramap.org>

CSA in the United Kingdom: www.soilassociation.org/csa.aspx

9. Footnotes

1. www.joaa.net/english/teikei.htm
2. According to the conclusions from the first international CSA Symposium.
3. <http://nyeleni.org/spip.php?article290>
4. The Movement of Food Sovereignty wants to provide the building blocks for people to develop their own food distribution systems and allow farmers to produce and process food for their communities. This requires supportive food safety rules and local food infrastructure for smallholder farmers. We also work to ensure that the food we produce reaches all people in society, including people with little or no income.
5. According to the international solidarity economy network, SE refers to the production of goods and services by a broad range of organisations and enterprises that have explicit social and often environmental objectives, and are guided by principles and practices of cooperation, solidarity, ethics and democratic self-management. The field of SSE includes cooperatives and other forms of social enterprise, self-help groups, community-based organisations, associations of informal economy workers, service-provisioning NGOs, solidarity finance schemes, amongst others. More at www.ripess.org/social-solidarity-economy-sse-and-financing-for-development-ffd-a-concept-note-about-ffd-yvon-poirier-ripess-board-of-directors/?lang=en.
6. More about this at http://urgenci.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Hitchman_CASS1.pdf
7. Holloway et al., 2007
8. Henderson and Van En, 2007
9. Perez et al., 2003; Bregendahl and Flora, 2012
10. Holloway et al., 2007
11. Bregendahl and Flora 2012
12. Perez et al. 2003
13. Holloway et al. 2007
14. Perez et al., 2003
15. Bashford et al., 2013
16. Birhala and Möllers, 2014

17. respondent cited in Lagane, 2015
18. Lang, 2008
19. This system of certification is called Participatory Guarantee System. The quality of farming is usually guaranteed by a reliable farmer from another CSA. More here: www.ifoam.bio/en/value-chain/participatory-guarantee-systems-pgs
20. Perry and Franzblau, 2010
21. Research done in November 2014 with 177 respondents.
22. Birhala and Möllers, 2014
23. Henderson and Van En, 2007
24. Perez et al., 2003
25. Perez et al., 2003; Forbes and Harmon, 2008
26. Henderson and Van En, 2007
27. Swisher et al., 2012
28. For example, Frédéric Thériault and Daniel Brisebois's Crop Planning for Organic Vegetable Growers issued by Canadian Organic Growers in 2010
29. Bashford et al., 2013
30. More information about the research: www.communitysupportedagriculture.org.uk/what-is-csa/benefits-csa



Notes

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This booklet you have in your hands now is the main support for the “*Be part of CSA!*” training programme which was designed by CSA actors from Hungary (TVE), Czech Republic (PRO-BIO LIGA), Romania (CRIES) and the network URGENCI. It summarises the basic learning points of the 4 modules accompanied by case studies from partner countries: 1. *General background of CSA*, 2. *Starting a CSA initiative*, 3. *CSA community-building* and 4. *Field training*.

We hope you'll find it useful, practical, adequately illustrated with motivating stories, best practices, case studies and easy-to-use templates.

May CSA flourish in Europe!