

# Great Lakes CSA Conference 2008

## Membership Recruitment & Retention

*Session Presentation by  
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Orchard Hill Farm*

Began CSA in 1997 with 30 shares - \$250  
Currently 160 shares - \$500  
Return rate of 72%-87%  
Happy members return  
Recruitment – word of mouth

### **Here's what we do:**

- Balance the soil fertility and focus on good production of **fine tasting** produce
- Share the Risk / Share the Bounty
- We have invested in irrigation and tile drains
- Give enough, but not so much that people can't eat it in a week
- Give some interesting different vegetables, but mostly the favorites
- We grow all the produce that we give to the CSA

### **Presentation is important**

- Pay attention to the overall appearance of the farm
- Clear signs
- Attractive display of produce

### **Extras available as Help Yourself - for those who like them**

- We have flowers and herbs as they are available
- The most popular herbs are parsley, dill, cilantro, basil and mint
- We grow flowers for cut-your-own
- We give cooking greens as EXTRA after the beginning of the season
- We also give extra produce in the "Extra Box"

### **Communication**

- Talk to the members on Pick-Up days
- Take advantage of local media interest
- Say "yes" to local speaking engagements and farm tours
- Be available to answer questions by phone, Email, Website, Blog

**Share the Farm**

- Horses
- Laying Hens
- Composting pigs
- Encourage farm strolls

**Apprentices**

- Add to the interest of the farm for CSA members
- Happy, Friendly, Enthusiastic, Dedicated, Energetic

**Working Shares**

- Increased involvement
- Increased loyalty
- Sense of ownership in the farm
- Labour saving

**CSA Potluck**

- Builds Community as we Celebrate Food