

# RED WIGGLER CARE FARM



## 2025 CSA Member Handbook

*This handbook contains essential information regarding your share, important dates, program guidelines and more. Please review prior to registering, and keep as a reference document throughout the season.*

# Welcome to Red Wiggler Care Farm's Community Supported Agriculture Program!



Red Wiggler Care Farm is a sustainable [Care Farm](#) where people with and without developmental disabilities come together to work, learn, and grow healthy food. Our Community Supported Agriculture program provides the framework for our vision of creating fertile ground to nourish a healthy and inclusive community.

## **OUR 50/50 CSA MODEL**

Our unique CSA provides fresh and highly nutritious produce to the surrounding community through our 50/50 model. 50% of our produce is distributed through our traditional CSA shares (that's you!), on-farm events and markets. The other 50% is distributed among several local food bank partners, group home partners, and elementary school programs\*. Our 50/50 model allows us to provide fresh, organic, and nutritious produce to as many people in our community as possible, many of whom cannot access or afford fresh veggies without help.

As a Traditional CSA Share member, you support our work to provide meaningful jobs to people with developmental disabilities and nurture a healthy community. In exchange, we provide you with organically grown vegetables, herbs and flowers as part of a weekly, on-farm experience.

\*This 50% is largely paid for by food banks, grants, and individual donations. To support equitable food access in our community, consider a [donation to us](#) or your local food bank.

## 2025 CSA SCHEDULE

Our 22-week CSA is divided into 3 sessions: Spring, Summer and Fall. Join us for one session, or all three! All sessions include organic vegetables, access to our PYO gardens, access to our compost program, weekly newsletters, and more.

<b>Spring Session</b>	<b>Summer Session</b>	<b>Fall Session</b>
6 Weeks	7 Weeks	9 Weeks
May 21 – June 28	July 16 – August 30	Sept 17 – Nov 15
\$165	\$235	\$300

\*Pick-up days for all sessions are Wednesdays from 2-5 or Saturdays from 9-12. You will choose your pick-up day during the registration process.

\*A non-refundable \$50 registration fee applies to all CSA applications.

Please note that all CSA pick-ups are at Red Wiggler Care Farm in Ovid Hazen Wells Park at 23400 Ridge Road, near Clarksburg, MD. By joining our CSA, you commit to visiting the farm once a week during your chosen session(s).

## HOW TO REGISTER

**CSA registration is first come, first served!** Returning members do get first access to registration, but please remember that our CSA is small, and we have lots of returning members. To be as fair as possible, **all returning member registrations are first come, first served.** Returning CSA members will receive a link via email to the online registration page. After 2 weeks, we open registration to our interest list, who also receive a link via email.

**Whether you're a returning member or on the waitlist, we suggest you register as soon as possible, as spots fill up quickly!** This is especially true for Spring and Summer sessions, as well as Saturday pick-ups. If you want to get exactly what you want, register as soon as possible! If you prefer to register by phone, please contact Rachel Armistead at [csa@redwiggler.org](mailto:csa@redwiggler.org) or 301-916-2216. We are no longer offering paper applications.

## IMPORTANT REGISTRATION DATES

January 22<sup>nd</sup>: Registration opens to returning CSA members

February 5<sup>th</sup>: Registration opens to interest list members

February 19<sup>th</sup>: Registration opens to public, if needed

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR CSA SHARE

Being a part of Red Wiggler's CSA is a wonderful way to bring local, sustainable, seasonal produce into your home, enjoy a farm visit each week, and support our mission. In addition to organic produce, your CSA fee includes weekly access to flowers and herbs in our Pick-Your-Own Gardens, and participation in our Compost Program, described below.

**Vegetables:** A weekly share of vegetables is made up of 4-6 items that vary each week. We always try to incorporate a lot of choice in the shares, as well as some unusual items, so members get plenty of their favorites, while also trying new things. Our CSA works on a valuation basis, meaning we value our vegetables competitively with local farmers' markets and organic grocery stores. Then we combine those values to hit (and often exceed) our target share value. We're always happy to share information about how we value our vegetables or structure our shares; if you're curious, just ask!

### Vegetables typically available by season (list not exhaustive)

Spring	Summer	Fall
Lettuce, Swiss Chard, Kale, Collards, Mustard Greens, Kohlrabi, Turnips, Radishes, Spring Onions, Garlic Scapes	Tomatoes, Sweet Peppers, Hot Peppers, Cucumbers, Summer Squash, Carrots, Potatoes, Garlic, Beets, Swiss Chard, Eggplant	Kale, Collards, Carrots, Swiss Chard, Beets, Turnips, Radishes, Garlic, Kohlrabi, Winter Squash, Sweet Potatoes, Cabbage

**Pick-Your-Own Gardens (PYO):** The PYO is a part of your weekly share value, ranging from \$2 to \$8 per week, depending on what is available. The PYO gardens are full of seasonal flowers, herbs, and/or vegetables, and are a wonderful way to spend some therapeutic time on the farm. To get the full value from your share, we encourage you to take advantage of the PYO every week, especially in the summer and early fall, when the PYO is at its peak (and its highest value).

- PYO items are marked with a blue flag if they are available for picking. Please pick only from these plants.
- Signs next to plants will tell you how to pick and use each item.
- Bring your own clippers or scissors if you have them (we have extras too).
- Bring a container—vase, small bucket, bag or basket—to contain your herbs and flowers. When we have vegetables to pick (snap peas, beans, etc.), we'll give you a container that's the right size for that vegetable.
- Remember the PYO is shared among all CSA members—please think about others when deciding how much of any one herb or flower to take.

**Compost Program:** Our compost program is included in your CSA share as part of a weekly services fee. All CSA members are encouraged to take advantage of our expanded compost program. It's an easy process, and one of the simplest things you can do to reduce your impact on the environment. Here's how you can participate:

1. At your first CSA pick-up, grab a bucket or countertop bin, and a liner (optional). You are also welcome to use your own compost container.
2. Find a spot at home for your bucket or bin, put the liner inside, and lay a few pieces of black and white newspaper, paper towel or craft paper inside (optional, but it helps to absorb moisture).
3. Toss your compostable materials in the bin.
4. Bring your full compost bucket with you to your next CSA pick-up, dump it into the big green bins by the barn, rinse your container out (we're happy to help with this!) at the rinsing station, and grab a new liner (optional).
5. Repeat weekly. And pat yourself on the back, knowing you're diverting food waste away from the landfill, and helping the environment!

## HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR CSA SHARE

1. Attend MuffinLuck (CSA Orientation) on Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>. Enjoy coffee and pastries with Red Wiggler's farmers and other CSA members, all while learning more about what's in store this season. Topics covered include:
  - Our distribution philosophy and your role in it
  - Overview of how our CSA works and how to pick up your share
  - Tour of the Pick-Your-Own Gardens
  - Overview of our compost program
  - What to do when you need to miss a pick-up
2. Read the weekly newsletter for share info, recipes, and farm updates
3. Bring your home compost to the farm each week
4. Visit the PYO gardens every week for seasonal flowers and herbs

## HOW TO PICK UP YOUR SHARE

1. Read the weekly newsletter for share info, recipes, and farm updates
2. Use caution when entering and leaving the farm; Ridge Road can get very busy, and there are no traffic-controlling measures at our intersection
3. Please drive slowly when approaching the Big Red Barn. The parking lot can get pretty busy with cars and pedestrians, so we appreciate your caution
4. Bring your reusable bag, box or basket into the Big Red Barn
5. Check in using the primary shareholder's name at the check-in table
6. Check the white boards for the share contents; follow the prompts at each station as you choose your veggies
7. While you're by the barn, dump and rinse your compost container
8. Head over to the PYO Gardens to pick fresh herbs and flowers
9. Ask us questions! We are always available to answer any questions about the vegetables, fields or anything else going on at the farm

## HOW WE COMMUNICATE WITH MEMBERS

**E-mail:** All important CSA information will be e-mailed to members. The e-mails will automatically go to whomever completes the initial registration (primary shareholder). To add others to the e-mail list please contact Rachel at [csa@redwiggler.org](mailto:csa@redwiggler.org). During each session, members will receive a weekly email containing pertinent pick-up information and the weekly share newsletter, The

Worm's Voice. Please make sure to add [csa@redwiggler.org](mailto:csa@redwiggler.org) and [rachel@redwiggler.org](mailto:rachel@redwiggler.org) to your contacts or "safe" list so you get all our emails.

**Social Media:** While no crucial CSA information is delivered over our general social media channels, following Red Wiggler's [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) feeds will give you a deeper understanding of our programs.

**Website:** We do not use the website to post information midsession for CSA members. However, you can access old newsletters, more information about the compost program, and CSA FAQs on our CSA page: <https://redwiggler.org/csa>.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What if I can't pick up my share one week?

1. Send someone else to get it for you. This is a great chance for a family member, friend or neighbor to find out what it's like to be part of the Red Wiggler community. If they tell us they're picking up for you, we'll check off your name and help them out. You do not need to tell us in advance.
2. Let us donate your share. After the pick-up is through, we donate what remains to an agency that serves people in need.
3. Switch your pick-up day that week. See below for more information.

**Can I switch my pick-up day one week?** Because of harvest constraints, we cannot accommodate the switching of pick-up days from week to week. However, we understand that life happens! If you need to make a one-time switch on your pick-up day due to vacation or work constraints, please email Rachel at [csa@redwiggler.org](mailto:csa@redwiggler.org) at least 3 days before your desired change. We will do our best to accommodate your request, but please understand that this will depend on the time of year and harvest schedule. Thank you for understanding.

**Do you deliver or have other pick-up sites?** All CSA pick-ups occur at the farm. We do not deliver or have other pick-up sites. The farm address is 23400 Ridge Road, Germantown, MD 20876.

**Can I have more vegetables?** Our CSA shares are based on a target value each week. We work very hard to make sure you always receive at least the full value

of your share, if not more. If you want more veggies on top of your original share, you can check the whiteboard at each station. That will say if that vegetable is available and its price. Extra veggies are priced at the same value as they are in the CSA share and are competitive with local farmers markets or organic stores.

**What if I don't like a certain vegetable?** We encourage you to try everything in your share, and we also try to make sure you have plenty of options to choose from. But if there is something you know you just won't use, consider giving it to a friend or neighbor. Otherwise, you're welcome to leave it behind. Anything left will be donated to someone who needs it. If you have a food allergy or intolerance to a particular vegetable, please let us know. If produce quantities allow, we are happy to switch something out for you.

**Can I bring my pet?** While we love our furry friends, in order to meet food safety standards, we ask that you leave your pets at home. Necessary service animals are allowed.

**Do I need a bag?** We highly encourage you to bring your own bag, box or basket to pick up your produce. If you forget, we have a limited number of grocery bags available.

**Do you offer "half shares"?** We do not offer half shares. The typical share throughout the season is 4-6 vegetable items, 1 bouquet of flowers, and 2-3 bunches of herbs. Some participants choose to split their share with another household and divide the share, or alternate pick-ups. Need help figuring out if splitting a share is an appropriate choice for you? Email Rachel at [csa@redwiggler.org](mailto:csa@redwiggler.org) for additional guidance.

**I need help!** During CSA pick-ups, we always have staff members or volunteers available to answer questions. Take advantage of us! We can identify the vegetables you don't recognize and give you ideas for how to prepare them. At other times, email questions or comments to the CSA Coordinator at [csa@redwiggler.org](mailto:csa@redwiggler.org).



## **ABOUT RED WIGGLER CARE FARM**

Red Wiggler is a sustainable Care Farm where people with and without developmental disabilities come together to work, learn, and grow healthy food. Our vision is to create fertile ground to nourish a healthy and inclusive community through:

1. Meaningful employment for adults with developmental disabilities.
2. Delivering food to our community through our 50/50 distribution model.
3. Education and service-learning opportunities in an inclusive setting to youth and adults with and without developmental disabilities.
4. Adherence to our [Core Values](#).

## **GET MORE INVOLVED**

**Volunteer:** Work alongside our Growers in the field seeding, tending, and harvesting. We also have occasional needs for individuals who can do remote computer projects, or have expertise in equipment, building maintenance, or other specialized skills. Contact Becca Roe, our Program Manager, at [volunteer@redwiggler.org](mailto:volunteer@redwiggler.org) about becoming a general or specialized volunteer.

**Bring a group:** If you are part of or know of a professional, educational or civic group that might like to visit Red Wiggler, you can schedule a tour or service-learning opportunity. Contact Becca Roe at [volunteer@redwiggler.org](mailto:volunteer@redwiggler.org) for scheduling and information.

**Donate:** Red Wiggler is a non-profit entity that relies on individual donations and grants. Make a donation or come to an event! Federal employees can support our programs through your CFC giving. Our number is 34399. Donate at <https://www.redwiggler.org/donate>.