



# Montalbano Farms

## Community Supported Agriculture Program Information 2010

### What is a CSA?

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a way to reconnect farmers with people. In a CSA, the farmer cultivates fresh vegetables and herbs throughout the growing season. In return, members pay for a “share” of the season’s produce. In 2010, we are excited to work with Plano and the Logan Square community again to make this opportunity available. Read below for more information and the registration form follows on page 4.

### How We Grow

Sustainable, organic agricultural practices guide our decisions on the farm. We manage soil and plant health through cultivation practices, crop rotations and the use of cover crops. We select plants that do well in the Midwest and we provide proper nutrition to our plants to minimize pests and diseases. Finally, we typically harvest the vegetables and herbs within 24 hours of delivery to ensure the freshest, most nutritious produce.

We believe that local agriculture should be the bedrock upon which our food system rests. We support fair trade policies in which consumers receive excellent produce while prices reflect fair wages for farmers. Farm workers receive a living wage, access to plenty of fresh produce, and an education that lasts for life. Our farm donates extra produce to food pantries within the city of Chicago to ensure access to healthy food for those unable to join the CSA or shop the market.



Montalbano Farms will always grow organically. We believe in the organic principles. However, we may have to transition the land that we use over a period of time to become certified organic. We will work with our organic certifying agency to manage this process and will keep you informed along the way. If you have any questions concerning our growing methods, the land that we use, or anything else related to our organic certification, please do not hesitate to talk with Farmer Rob.

## What to Expect from Montalbano Farms

- 1. We supply produce that's good for you.** All of the vegetables, herbs, and fruit arrive within days of harvest. Fresh food means more nutritious food that lasts longer in your refrigerator and tastes better at dinnertime.
- 2. We'll help make it easy.** Each week, we publish a newsletter detailing what's in your share and offering recipes that utilize the week's offerings. In addition, we'll offer handy tips from the farmers for your own garden or flower patch.
- 3. You'll connect with your farmers.** You'll be greeted by the farmers each week. Knowing your farmers means you get a say in what grows on the farm. We'll ask for your feedback on varieties, quantities, and quality. Meanwhile, we're never more than a phone call away if you need a little support on how to prepare one of our recipes.
- 4. We'll get your kids excited about food.** Taking a trip to receive your weekly share is a wonderful experience for children. You and your children will see, smell, feel, and taste farm fresh vegetables. Your children will be excited about their food and, most importantly, they'll look forward to eating it. Furthermore, teaching your kids to cook is a valuable life skill that will pay off in a lifetime of delicious and healthy eating.
- 5. Your food buying decisions will matter.** They affect the future of our land, our farms, our children, and our communities. Buying from local, sustainable farms is one way of protecting this future.
- 6. We keep your budget in mind.** Compare our prices for locally grown, organic produce with anyone else in town. You'll find we're less expensive than the grocery stores and yet our high quality far surpasses what they put on the shelf. By buying in bulk, CSA members receive at least a 10% discount off our market stand prices.
- 7. You'll receive lots of food.** You will receive a  $\frac{3}{4}$  bushel of produce each week for 20 weeks. CSA members enjoy the program most when they are prepared to eat lots of vegetables during the season. If that sounds like too much, some members will "share a share". In total, you'll receive 15 bushels of mixed vegetables, herbs, fruit, and grains from our farm and our partners.
- 8. We'll create a place of beauty.** We focus on taking care of our natural resources and we'll work hard to leave the land in better shape each year. Of course, members are welcome to volunteer on or visit the farm throughout the year.
- 9. We will share the bounty.** We will continue to grow and donate surplus produce to local food pantries and needy families. In the event that you are unable to receive your share for a particular week and cannot find someone to pick it up for you, we will happily donate it to the pantry.



## What CSA Shareholders Receive

**Your Share:** The harvest season begins in June and continues through early-October. Throughout the year, the contents of your share will vary with the season. In the spring, for example, you'll enjoy cool weather crops like lettuce, spinach, and broccoli. As summer approaches, tomatoes, peppers, and basil begin to fill the shares. I will work to have a variety of crops in each share and to provide an ample amount of popular items - like tomatoes, garlic, and carrots - along with some unusual crops from time to time too. You can expect to receive about 8-9 vegetables and 1-2 herbs each week. The contents of each week will vary, depending on the time of year, our weather, and the seasonality of individual crops.

**Our Newsletter:** Each week, CSA members receive an e-newsletter which is full of great recipes, storage and preservation tips, handy garden advice, and updates from your farmers.

**The Discount:** Having a party? CSA members receive **50% off** additional produce purchased at the Logan Square farmers' market stand.

**Volunteer Opportunities:** CSA members are welcome to visit the farm and help out with the chores. We'll find meaningful work for you and you'll even be able to pack your share for that week's harvest if you like.



*There are only a limited number of shares available, so please sign up early!*

## Thank You for Considering our CSA

We are excited to offer another year of our CSA program. Whether you are new to CSAs or have been a CSA member in the past, we're sure you will enjoy our program. If you would like more information about our CSA program or the farm, please feel free to contact Farmer Rob anytime by telephone at (630) 882-8008, or email me at [rob@montalbanofarms.com](mailto:rob@montalbanofarms.com). You can also find more information on our website at [www.montalbanofarms.com](http://www.montalbanofarms.com).

# Montalbano Farms

## 2010 Community Supported Agriculture Registration

- In 2010, Montalbano Farms will offer 20-week CSA shares. We will send information regarding your first share in early May.

Choose your Site: Logan Square (Sundays)

Plano (Thursdays)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Our 2010 CSA shares are available for \$640.00, which includes state of Illinois sales tax. Over the course of the season, you will receive a total of 15 bushels of fresh produce for \$42.67/bushel. To make things a little easier, we have 2 payment options. *Please circle the payment option you choose.* (If neither of these options work for you, please contact Farmer Rob and we'll work something out.)

**1. Full Payment Option.** Most of our costs (potting soil, seeds, labor, & office and farm equipment) occur long before the first share is delivered and full payment at this time helps us avoid taking out loans to cover these expenditures. Please make checks out to Rob Montalbano.

**2. Partial Payment Option.** We recognize that many people are unable to make a full payment at one time. If you would like to pay in installments, please enclose 3 checks, dated with today's date, June 1, 2010, and July 1, 2010. Each check should equal \$213.33. Enclosing all of the post-dated checks with this form allows us to keep bookkeeping manageable. Please make checks out to Rob Montalbano.

Farmer Rob will contact you by email within two weeks of receiving your sign-up to confirm your membership. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments.

*Please send this completed form with circled payment option to:*

Rob Montalbano  
12424 River Road  
Plano, Illinois 60545  
rob@montalbanofarms.com

*Thank You!*