



RANCOCAS CREEK FARM

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October 17, 2022

Dear Valued CSA Member:

Wow. Somehow it is late October once again. I want to thank you for being a part of our 2nd CSA year. 2022 was a big year for us! We expanded, grew and (I think) improved quite a bit this year. Some highlights are:

- Expanded our CSA to an additional 60 families and increased our off-farm sales.
- Grew our Farm Apprenticeship Program bringing on Chris Bunn, Ezra Tischler and welcoming back Alex Robb.
- Received funding from the Natural Resource and Conservation Service (NRCS) to build a 2nd high tunnel for season extension. And we received a 5-year Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) grant from NRCS to improve soil quality, reduce erosion, increase pollinator habitat and sequester carbon.
- Raised 10 heritage breed pigs on pasture and we planted some native species of trees in an area of the farm we hope to develop as a future “Sylvapasture” or animal pasture which incorporates trees as well as grasses and clover.
- Hosted many volunteer workdays, farm tours, workshops, bird walks, a movie screening, and food gleanings to provide fresh produce for those in need.
- Composted hundreds of tons of leaves and food scraps.

And, despite a pretty vicious drought, we grew a lot of food! I don't have totals yet (in fact the crew is out there right now harvesting radishes, lettuce and carrots). But I am confident by season's end we will have encouraging numbers for food harvested and distributed to you. We had an 8-week period with record heat and very little rain and if not for the farm crew's very hard and efficient work we would have lost a lot of crops.

And we are so grateful to have you here with us! Over the past 20 weeks it really has been our pleasure getting to know you and grow fresh food for you and your families. We have really valued your feedback, encouragement and enthusiasm for the farm and farmers. Many weeks we were given cold drinks, bagels, snacks, treats, cold beer, homemade jams, recipes and photos taken of the farm and your cooking creations. These offerings were really appreciated and helped keep us going through the dog days of summer.

The Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model has been a great way for many farms to form connections with community members and mitigate some risks in what is certainly an endeavor fraught with risks and challenges. We appreciate your willingness to support and trust

us and in return we take very seriously our responsibility to grow high quality food and give you a great value for your food dollar. Your participation makes it easier for us to plan the growing season and grow a true diversity of crops.

We did not raise the share price from 2021 to 2022 even when inflation took its toll. For 2023 we are increasing the price to \$630 but we are also adding a week (21 instead of 20)! In addition we are adding a flexible 10-week option for \$360. For the 2023 season we plan to grow more crops and improve on the ones we grew this year. We will be selling more shares but not too many more as we want to keep the size manageable. We will have a period of a few weeks for existing CSA members to renew for 2023 before we open it up to new members. The attached form has more details and you can use it to register for the 2023 season including a link so you can do it online.

In 2019 all of this farmland was planted in conventionally grown soybeans as it had been for decades prior. Through the generosity of the Yingling family, we were able to take ownership of the property. The idea was to create a farming operation that can provide habitat for birds and pollinating insects, build soil health and increase overall soil organic matter, manage the farms' stormwater flow, plant more fruit-bearing trees and shrubs like blackberries and Asian pears to put permanent roots in the soil AND grow a lot of high-quality food for families and those in need. The goals for Rancocas Creek Farm are high but as we conclude year 3, we feel that we are having measurable success in these areas and are on track for many more.

We are grateful to receive feedback like this:

This is our first year doing the CSA and we love it! Not only are we excited about all of the wonderful produce you're growing, but it's really cool to see how passionate you guys are about the important work you do. So I just wanted to say a big thank you for being out there in all sorts of weather, day after day, so people can have great fresh food to eat.

We thank YOU for making this all possible and we hope the farm has provided you a lot of value and enriched your life. We hope you will join us for the 2023 farm season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeff Tober". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeff" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Tober".

Jeff Tober, Farm Manager