



Tips & Tricks for Farm Share Success

A Beginner's Guide for Sustainable Harvest Farm Farm Share Members

Veggie Exit Strategies

How to handle your excess produce and reduce food waste

Tools of the Trade

Essential kitchen tools that will set you up for Farm Share success

Storage Tips

How to maximize shelf life and prioritize your meal planning





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Your Farm Share can be challenging, but it doesn't have to be.

If you are a first time Farm Share member or early in your Farm Share tenure, you might not realize just what you have gotten yourself into.

Farm Shares and supporting local farms is incredibly fun and rewarding, but cooking with fresh food and bringing a constant supply of fresh vegetables into your home every week can be overwhelming at times.

We know that what you really need is a guide that helps you understand how to efficiently deal with the bounty.

Throughout this e-book you will learn tips, tricks and strategies to help you understand how to prioritize, deal with overwhelm, and deal with excess produce quickly so you can feel confident this Farm Share season!





Store your produce properly

Proper storage of vegetables and fruit is essential. If you store things properly they last longer and you will not have to rush to use them. Many vegetables can last 1-3 weeks based on the quality of storage. And that means less food waste.

And, with a little planning and some work in the summer, you can enjoy farm-fresh produce all winter long.



Storage Tips

- 1** CUT THE EDIBLE GREENS FROM THINGS LIKE CARROTS, KOHLRABI, AND RADISHES

You will likely want to save these edible greens but when you store them together the greens will drain moisture from the roots. Remove the greens and store them separately from the root vegetable.

- 2** BAG IT UP!

Storing vegetables loose in the fridge is easy and uses less plastic, but isn't actually great for long-term storage. You should store most of your veggies (especially your greens) in plastic bags in your refrigerator after you get home. You can even wash the bags and re-use them. We recommend you use Debbie Meyer green bags for this purpose.

- 3** WASH ONLY WHAT YOU PLAN TO USE

Everything coming from Sustainable Harvest Farm will be washed and cleaned. Washing it before storing or actual use will only add unnecessary moisture that will cause produce to lose crispness and get soggy faster. Over time, most Farm Share members discover that if you just wash the amount of vegetables you are planning to use, they will stay fresh a lot longer.

4

REMOVE RUBBERBANDS OR
TWISTIE TIES FOR BETTER
CIRCULATION

5

READ YOUR WEEKLY EMAIL &
USE IT TO SET PRIORITIES

Our weekly email will always tell you what will be in your share that week and remind you to customize it based on your tastes. It will also provide you with some recipes that will incorporate the produce from that week's share. It's a good idea to take some time to read through the email each week and mentally (or literally) sort all of the veggies based on what will expire fastest. Use our prep and storage guide as a reference. This way you'll know what you should prioritize cooking first and what can wait.

6

STORE FRUITS &
VEGETABLES SEPARATELY

We won't be giving you much fruit in your share, but that doesn't mean you won't have a bunch in your refrigerator already. The ethylene gas given off by fruit can cause faster spoiling in your vegetables.

7

HAVE OUR PRODUCE
PREP AND STORAGE
GUIDE CLOSE AT HAND

Having a our produce prep and storage guide in your kitchen and close at hand will help you meal plan and save you time during busy weeks.





Practice micro- prepping on Farm Share pick up day & throughout the week

A lot of Farm Share members begin prepping veggies right away the night they bring home their share. They find that certain techniques like peeling and/or cutting the carrots, slicing the celery, cucumbers, or bell peppers right away not only makes life easier, but also leads to their families grabbing veggies as snacks throughout the week.

We call these "micro-prep" moments and they are a huge way to stay on top of your produce and not get bogged down by the knife work inherent in cooking with lots of veggies.



Invest in the right kitchen tools

Like any activity, cooking isn't very fun without the proper equipment. Here is a list of the kitchen items we use most for cooking up our veggies.

1

A GOOD KNIFE (PREFERABLY A CHEF'S KNIFE THAT IS KEPT CONSISTENTLY SHARP)

Food prep is so much faster and safer when you spend the money for a high quality knife. To find the best knife for you, it's best to go to a kitchen store and try them out by hand. It's all about how it feels in your hand.

2

SHEET PANS OR BAKING SHEETS

When you join a Farm Share, one of the exit strategies you learn about is "the Sheet Pan Meal." This allows you to throw your entire meal (meat, veggie, starch) onto one sheet pan, and prep a meal in 30-45 minutes in one place. The sheet pan also comes in handy to help you freeze clumps of blanched greens or berries. It can also serve as a "lid" for large skillet on the stove.

The sheet pan should have a lip and be large enough to handle large portions of food. Make sure it can fit in your freezer.

3

A CAST-IRON SKILLET OR OTHER PAN THAT CAN GO FROM STOVETOP TO OVEN

4

DEBBY MEYER GREEN BAGS FOR EASY STORAGE

These reusable bags are a real Farm Share life saver. They are used almost universally by members to help them store, organize, and lengthen the life of their veggies.

5

A VEGETABLE PEELER

This is a multi-purpose tool every home cook should have-- and spend the extra \$5 to get one that has a nice handle that feels comfortable in your hand. You will use this not only to peel veggies, but also to shave vegetables for salads.

6

A MANDOLIN OR VEGETABLE SLICER

The easiest way to thinly slice a bunch of vegetables for salad for the week is definitely with a mandolin. They're also great for matchsticking vegetables as well as making chips or fries.

7

SPLURGE ITEM: A FOOD PROCESSOR

Now this is the highest ticket item on the list and may not be something you invest in your first year, but over time most of our Farm Share members wind up getting one. They use it for making salsa, pesto, pizza dough, and pureeing items like soups and sauces. It's even a great tool for shredding carrots or cauliflower "rice."



Learn how to identify your veggies



It can be hard to unpack produce from your bag or box and properly store it correctly if you have no idea what it is.

In our weekly email, we will identify each type of produce that will be in your share that week so you can easily know what you are dealing with. Again, our prep and storage guide can offer some ideas and tips for the various types of produce you will receive over the course of the season.

Get (and stay) inspired

One of the most rewarding (and fun) parts of being in a Farm Share is trying new vegetables and new recipes! Your Farm Share is a great excuse to experiment with new techniques, and an amazing way to get more variety into your diet.

So don't just stick to old standby recipes when there's a whole world of cooking to explore. Stay inspired throughout the Farm Share season by exploring new ideas and recipes versus looking in cookbooks you've used for years. Instead, we suggest you:

- 1** CHECK OUT OUR WEEKLY EMAIL OR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR RECIPES.
- 2** FIND A COUPLE FAVORITE BLOGS OR RECIPE WEBSITES THAT FEATURE A LOT OF FRESH, SEASONAL PRODUCE AND HEAD THERE FOR INSPIRATION
- 3** TREAT YOURSELF TO A NEW COOKBOOK OR TWO EVERY FARM SHARE SEASON.



Our favorite cookbooks & food blogs

COOKBOOKS

Six Seasons by Joshua McFadden

Bounty from the Box by Mi Ae Lipe

The Vegetable Butcher by Cara Mangini

How to Cook Everything by Mark Bittman

From Asparagus to Zucchini by FairShare CSA Coalition

BLOGS

Foodie-Fox

101 Cookbooks

Alexandra's Kitchen

Dishing up the Dirt

Half Baked Harvest

Minimalist Baker

Naturally Ella

Smitten Kitchen

The Leek & The Carrot

Copy Me That





Try new things

One of the best things about being a part of a Farm Share is the opportunity to try new vegetables you aren't familiar with and experimenting with different combinations of food and flavors. Keep things extra interesting by selecting recipes that aren't the kind of thing you usually would make.

Some of our more experienced members like to intentionally select recipes that are outside their "standard comfort zone" or that use a common vegetable in a different way. For example, instead of just roasting or grilling summer squash every week, opt for something unique like a squash pie. (pictured above)

Take inventory & set priorities before the next Farm Share delivery

Farm Shares can feel overwhelming when the vegetables just keep coming. When you're receiving a bag / box week after week, things can really start to pile up. Before the next week's share arrives, it's really important to take stock of the veggies you still have laying around and try to eat, wash, prep or even freeze those things that you know you likely won't eat within the "fresh window." These techniques will help you feel less overwhelmed when the next share arrives.





Learn some tried & true exit strategies

No matter how great you are at enjoying your Farm Share, staying inspired and using up your produce each week, there will be weeks where you feel like you just can't possibly keep up in the kitchen.

This is the time for an "exit strategy": quick, go-to methods to use up produce fast so you can prepare for the next batch of the bounty!

We share our favorite exit strategies on the next few pages.

Our Favorite Exit Strategies

1

WHIPPING UP A STIR FRY IS A GREAT WAY TO USE UP ODDS & ENDS BEFORE THE NEXT SHARE ARRIVES.

2

ROAST IT! EVEN BETTER, EXPLORE THE ART OF THE SHEET PAN MEAL!

Whenever you don't know what to do with the last two vegetables left in your fridge, I urge you to give roasting a try. There is hardly a vegetable that doesn't taste amazing roasted and if you can turn it into a sheet pan meal, all the better! Google "sheet pan meals" if you aren't familiar. It is a serious game changer.

3

WHIP UP SOME PESTO

You can make pesto out of pretty much any green you receive from the farm (basil, kale, collards, spinach, green garlic, scallions, etc) .And if you make too much, it freezes up great!

4

TRY MAKING GREEN CUBES

This is where you take a bunch of blanched greens and puree them together and then put them into ice cube trays. Then add them to sauces or soups as you please.



5

JUST GRILL IT!

When you aren't sure what to make with something or short on time- toss in some olive oil, salt, and pepper and grill it. Works great for MOST veggies (even some of the more unique ones).

Plus who doesn't love the simplicity of a summer dinner alfresco?

6

IF ALL ELSE FAILS, THROW IT IN THE FREEZER

One of the absolute best ways to deal with produce you don't think you'll get to is utilize that freezer. You would be surprised how many vegetables can go straight into the freezer (no blanching or prep required): kale, spinach, chard, tomatoes, peppers, carrots, beets, peas, corn, onions, shredded zucchini. Toss them in freezer bags or freezer-proof containers and get them into the freezer.

Or, if you're feeling ambitious you can take things a bit further. If you have too much produce at any given time, chop it up and freeze or prep sauces for freezing so you can lessen your waste!

7

PLAY AROUND WITH MEALS OR ENTREES THAT CAN INCORPORATE MANY VEGGIES

Think quiche, pizza, pasta, chili, tacos, spring rolls, scrambled eggs, etc.





Preserving the harvest

Another great way to make the most of your Farm Share experience and lessen the amount of food waste is to learn some preservation techniques. We listed freezing as one of our exit strategies because it is one of the quickest and easiest ways to deal with excess produce. But that is not the only method of preservation! On the next page you will find a few other Farm Share member's favorite preservation techniques.

Farm Share Member Preservation Tips

1

SAVE YOUR SCRAPS FOR VEGGIE STOCK

Don't toss your scraps! Put them in a gallon-sized bag in the freezer and keep adding until full. Then in the fall or winter, add the veggies to a full pot of water, bring to a boil and let simmer at least 45 minutes and strain. Keep the liquid, toss the solids, and then you have delicious homemade vegetable stock for soups which you can freeze!

2

PLAY WITH OTHER SIMPLE TECHNIQUES LIKE REFRIDGERATOR PICKLES OR SALSA

3

EXPERIMENT WITH KIMCHI, KRAUTS AND OTHER FERMENTED PRODUCTS

A lot of our Farm Share members swear by fermentation.

4

BATCH COOK AND FREEZE HALF

Take advantage of the abundance by making double batches of things and freezing half. It's so nice to have those meals prepped and ready for a busy night.

5

AS YOUR CONFIDENCE GROWS, BEGIN TO EXPERIMENT WITH VARIOUS CANNING METHODS





Recipes from Foodie-Fox

About Foodie-Fox

Renee Fox (aka Foodie-Fox) is a nutritionist and photographer who has a passion for cooking with local, farm-fresh produce. She has been a Sustainable Farm Share member for the past 7 years. Renee has a blog where she shares a number of her favorite recipes and some of her food photography.

It can be found at www.foodie-fox.com.

Over the next few pages, Renee shares a few of her favorite recipes which she hopes will inspire you in your kitchen to prepare meals featuring your Farm Share produce.





Cabbage Bowl with Thai Peanut Sauce

Tender cabbage coated in mildly spiced peanut sauce replaces noodles in this delicious Thai bowl. Carrots and bean sprouts add color and crunch to this veggie packed dish paired with your favorite protein. It is really quick to make and you can turn this into a 10-minute meal if you grill your protein and make your sauce in advance. Leftovers are delicious the next day if you are lucky enough to have them!

Ingredients

1/2 cup light coconut milk
1 tablespoon red curry paste
1/4 cup peanut butter
1 tablespoon low-sodium soy sauce or coconut aminos
1/2 lime, juiced
3 to 4 dashes of Sriracha hot chili sauce
2 large or 3 medium carrots
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1 tablespoon canola oil
1 medium head of cabbage, cored and freshly shredded
2 green onions, thinly sliced
4 ounces bean sprouts
Grilled chicken, shrimp or tofu
Optional: chopped peanuts

Directions

1. In a blender or food processor, combine coconut milk, curry paste, peanut butter, soy sauce, juice from lime and Sriracha hot chili sauce. Process until smooth and creamy.
2. Trim and peel carrots. Cut carrots into noodles using a spiralizer and set aside.
3. In a wok or large skillet, heat sesame and canola oil over medium-high heat. Add cabbage and cook stirring frequently for 5 to 7 minutes, until tender and lightly browned.
4. Pour 1/3 cup sauce over cabbage and cook for an additional minute. Serve cabbage in bowls topped with carrots, green onions, bean sprouts and grilled chicken, shrimp or tofu. Sprinkle chopped peanuts and drizzle a little extra peanut sauce if desired.

Servings: 4



Shrimp and Kale Quesadilla

Kale is one of my favorite vegetables, because it is so versatile and delicious for breakfast, lunch and dinner. For a quick meal with a Mexican twist, sautéed greens pair perfectly with pinto beans, fast-cooking shrimp and cotija cheese. If you're not serving four, reheat kale mixture the next day and serve for breakfast with a fried egg on top. Add a warm corn tortilla to the bottom of the dish for a different take on huevos rancheros.

Ingredients

- 1 bunch of kale
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 (15.5 ounce) can pinto beans
- 1 teaspoon taco seasoning
- 8 ounces raw peeled and deveined shrimp
- 4 (8-inch) flour tortillas
- 4 ounces cotija cheese, crumbled

Directions

1. Remove stems from kale and roughly chop leaves. In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add kale and water and sauté until wilted.
2. Drain and rinse beans and add to the skillet with the kale. Add taco seasoning and stir to combine. Push the kale mixture to the edge of the skillet with a spatula and add shrimp to the center of the skillet. Sauté until the shrimp are pink and cooked through.
3. Lay tortillas flat and add 1/4 of kale, bean and shrimp mixture to one side of each tortilla. Top with 1 ounce of cotija cheese and fold in half.
4. Lower heat to medium and place two quesadilla in the large skillet and cook for about three minutes each side. Flip and continue cooking for another minute or two until both sides are golden brown. Continue cooking remaining quesadillas. Cut into four wedges and serve.

Servings: 4



Grilled Fish Tacos with Kohlrabi Slaw

Nothing reminds me of the beach more than grilled seafood, and this recipe will have you day dreaming about your last vacation. I added a refreshing and slightly crunchy kohlrabi slaw to these fish tacos, which was inspired by the beautiful purple produce that arrived in my Farm Share from Sustainable Harvest Farm. Pair this with your favorite tropical beverage as you bring the taste of the beach to your backyard. I like to enjoy mine with a mojito or margarita and start the meal with chips and salsa.

Kohlrabi Slaw Ingredients

- 1 medium kohlrabi
- 2 tablespoons cilantro, roughly chopped
- 1 lime
- 1 tablespoon sorghum or honey
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon chili powder
- 1.4 teaspoon salt

Grilled Fish Taco Ingredients

- 1 pound skinless mahi mahi filets
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/4 teaspoon white pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 8 small white or corn tortillas
- 1 lime

Additional Toppings

- 1 avocado, peeled, seeded and cubed
- Cojita cheese, crumbled
- Sour cream

Directions

1. Peel and grate kohlrabi and place in medium bowl. Add cilantro, juice from lime, sorghum, olive oil, chili powder and salt. Stir to evenly combine. Refrigerate until ready to serve.
2. Place mahi mahi filets on a plate and brush with olive oil. In a small bowl, combine cumin, chili powder, white pepper and salt. Rub seasoning onto fish.
3. Prepare an outdoor grill to medium-high heat. Grill the fish for about five minutes and then carefully turn the fish over and cook for another five minutes, until flaky and cooked through.
4. With a fork, flake fish into large chunks. Drizzle with juice from lime and serve tortillas topped with kohlrabi slaw and additional toppings of choice.

Servings: 4



Loaded Salmon Mashed Potatoes

Enjoy the flavors of a stuffed baked potato with this dish, but with the velvety smoothness of mashed potatoes. These creamy spuds are topped with baked salmon, farm-fresh kale and crunchy bacon. This meal has a beautiful plate presentation, perfect for entertaining. Turn it into an elegant appetizer by serving smaller portions in martini glasses. You could even make a mashed potato bar and let your guests select from these toppings and others, like pulled pork, roasted broccoli and smoked gouda.

Ingredients

- 1 pound salmon fillet, cut into four pieces
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon ground white pepper, divided
- 1 lemon
- 4 medium potatoes
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1/4 cup skim or low-fat milk
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large bunch kale
- 4 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. Season salmon with oregano, 1/8 teaspoon salt and pepper and place in a baking dish. Zest and juice lemon, drizzling both evenly on top of salmon. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes, until salmon is cooked through.
2. Leaving the skin on the potatoes, scrub well and cut into 2-inch pieces. Add potatoes in a large pot and add enough water to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and cook for about 20 minutes, until fork tender.
3. Drain potatoes and return to the pot. Add butter, milk, 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper and mash to combine. With hand mixer, blend until velvety smooth.
4. Remove stems from kale and roughly chop. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat, add kale and two tablespoons water. Sauté for 4-5 minutes, until wilted. Season with 1/8 teaspoon salt.
5. Scoop the mashed potatoes onto four plates and top each with equal amounts of sautéed kale. Remove skin from salmon and add a slice on top of potatoes and kale. Top with bacon crumbles and serve.



The Waterstrat Family
Sustainable Harvest Farm

Know the risks & rewards

No “Beginner’s Guide to Farm Shares” would be complete without bringing up the understood “contract” between Farmers and their members.

When you join a Farm Share, you are shaking my hand and giving your word that you will stand behind me through thick and thin that season. You financially commit your dollars to "our" farming operation.

In return, my crew and I will grow the best vegetables that we can to make good on that investment. As your farmer I set out with a plan - and determine what will be in your Farm Share each week. We seed the crops and do our best to get them to harvest in the allotted time.

But Mother Nature is fickle. She can send too much rain, beetle infestations, or overly high temperatures that cause plants to bolt and go to seed. Seeds may not germinate at the proper percentage, leaving us just shy of our harvest goals.

As your farmer, I do my part to minimize the risks. I know how important it is to keep the soil healthy. When my team and I tend to our soil, healthy plants follow -- leading to better disease resistance, better yields and better taste.

But every year, there is something that goes off course. As a member of a Farm Share, you ride this risk with me.

When the fields are bountiful, you benefit in a share of that bounty. When the fields suffer due to circumstances out of our control, you take it in stride and hopefully stand by me - your farmer Ford.

To have the very best experience with your Farm Share, be sure you are 100% behind me no matter what happens.



Your Farmer
Ford Waterstrat