



# MACSAC

Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition  
PO Box 7814, Madison, WI 53707-7814  
608-226-0300 [info@macsac.org](mailto:info@macsac.org) [www.macsac.org](http://www.macsac.org)

August 10, 2009

Dear Madison Area Grower,

We're writing to invite you to participate in the MACSAC community; a vibrant, growing network of family farms working to create a sustainable and just local food system. For more than 17 years MACSAC has built a base of informed and active eaters through community education on the social, environmental, and economic benefits of locally grown, organic food and on-going support of direct market farms throughout Southern Wisconsin.

**MACSAC is actively seeking new Community Supported Agriculture farms to join the coalition. There is a great demand for CSA and we need more farms to meet that demand.**

To be considered for endorsement by MACSAC, applicants must complete the enclosed New Grower Application and attend an interview with the New Grower Committee. MACSAC has developed a strong community reputation for excellence in quality and service amongst our endorsed farms; the application and interview process ensure that we are able to continue to uphold our stringent quality standards for all newly endorsed farms. The New Grower Committee will evaluate applicants based on their ability to be successful in providing a good CSA experience to members. Questions asked in the application and interview are designed for you and the committee to assess your goals, resources, and experience.

It is not uncommon for farms to be deferred in the first year and asked to reapply again at a later date. MACSAC is invested in farms ongoing success and will work with deferred farms through mentorship and resource sharing to prepare farms for successful a CSA operation and MACSAC endorsement.

Enclosed you'll find detailed information about the benefits and requirements of MACSAC endorsement. ***Please note that this year's application deadline is November 15, 2009. No late applications will be considered.***

Please contact us if you have questions or would like more information. Thanks again for your time, interest and all that you do to connect our neighbors with fresh food from your farm.

We hope you'll join us!

Sincerely,

Kiera Mulvey  
MACSAC Coordinator  
608-226-0300  
[info@macsac.org](mailto:info@macsac.org)

Chris McGuire  
MACSAC New Grower Committee Chair

## **2010 INFORMATION FOR NEW GROWERS**

*MACSAC invites any grower, including non-CSA farms and farms producing non-vegetable items, to join the MACSAC community by sending farm name, address, phone number and email to the address above. CSA growers wishing to be formally endorsed by MACSAC are required to go through our application process. The application deadline is November 15. No late applications will be considered.*

### **Farms that are formally endorsed by MACSAC enjoy the following benefits:**

- **Listing in the annual CSA Farm Directory**  
Distributed through Sustainable Times newspaper to over 21,000 Wisconsin households
- **Table at the annual Madison CSA Open House**  
Attended each year by over 1,000 people and publicized in statewide media including the Wisconsin State Journal, Isthmus, Sustainable Times and more
- **Listing on the MACSAC website**  
Receives over 270,000 hits each year. <http://www.macsac.org>.
- **Financial assistance for low-income households**  
The Partner Shares program subsidizes 50% of the cost of you share for low-income households. *(Eligibility after one full season in the Coalition)*
- **Offer your members \$100-\$300 cash back**  
Health Plan Partner Reimbursements allow members of MACSAC endorsed farms access to reimbursements for joining. Coalition and farm publicity through our Health Plan Partners is distributed widely to over 120,000 subscribers.
- **Farmer-to-farmer mentorship and support**  
Grower gatherings, Grower Mentorship program, communication with other CSA growers, and opportunities for bulk supplies purchasing
- **Member services by MACSAC staff**  
MACSAC responds to thousands of general emails and calls each year, organizes events, administers the partner shares program, fundraises and promotes farms and CSA and guides new members through choosing farms.
- **Opportunities to participate in other promotions and benefits** arranged by MACSAC and be promoted by MACSAC staff and volunteers at numerous speaking engagements and public events throughout the year.

## **2010 INFORMATION FOR NEW GROWERS**

**All farms that apply and are accepted to be formally promoted by MACSAC are:**

**REQUIRED TO:**

- **Attend the annual meeting in person or by proxy**
- **Pay the annual membership fee, \$20-\$50**
- **Provide documentation of Organic Certification, or provide certification described in MACSAC's Organic Certification Policy**

**STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO:**

- **Communicate information about MACSAC programs to their farm members** including the Partner Shares Program, Health Insurance Reimbursements, A-Z Foodbook, and MACSAC events
- **Provide MACSAC with annual information** regarding acreage, number of members, share prices, etc
- **Provide members with the opportunity to make donations to the Partner Shares Fund or a farm specific low-income assistance fund**
- **Actively participate in at least one MACSAC committee** (Finance, New Grower committee, Foodbook committee, Land Trust Partnership, Grower Gathering organizing or the Board of Directors)

### **Timeline**

1. **Fill out and hand in the enclosed application by November 15.** No late applications will be accepted due to the printing deadlines for our farm list.
2. **MACSAC New Grower Committee will review the application** and set up a meeting with new farmers to clarify application responses, provide details on the coalition, ask follow-up questions and answer any questions.
3. **New Grower Committee makes a recommendation** to the MACSAC board about formal endorsement of applicant farm for the coming season.
4. **Farm is notified of decision by December 31, 2009.**

Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition  
**2010 INFORMATION FOR NEW GROWERS**

## **2010 New Grower Guidelines**

*These guidelines assist MACSAC's New Grower Committee in evaluating farms applying to be formally promoted by the coalition.*

### **Secure Land & Adequate Infrastructure**

- Either own land or have rental agreement in place offering some assurance of ability to continue growing on that land.
- Appropriate level of mechanization for amount of acreage in production
- Provision for irrigating crops in dry weather
- Provision for cooling crops when harvested and cool storage until delivery

### **Farm Production and Management Experience**

- Preferred minimum of two seasons growing/farming experience (including internships/farm employment)
- Preferred minimum of 1 year with primary responsibility for all or significant portion of a farm operation
- Adequate labor capacity given size of operation
- MACSAC strongly encourages those with limited growing experience to work toward developing a CSA by selling at a farmers' market or to other markets prior to making commitments to CSA members

### **Utilize Organic Farming Practices**

- As of January 1, 2009 MACSAC requires endorsed members to provide documentation of Organic certification (newly endorsed farm members have until March of their first endorsed year to file certification applications) *\*exemptions exist for farms that sell less than \$5,000/year.*
- Demonstrated knowledge of USDA Organic Standards
- Demonstrated knowledge of soil building techniques and organic pest control
- Demonstrated plan for weed control

### **Provide Quality Marketing & Membership Experience**

- Experience communicating/selling food directly to people, stores, restaurants, or others.
- Demonstrated commitment to offering products that are of value to your members
- Offering opportunities for member involvement
- Soliciting member feedback
- Clear, regular communication with members
- Clear, detailed descriptions of your CSA program for potential members

### **Understanding of CSA and CSA Experience**

- Demonstrated understanding of CSA basics, preferably experience growing with the model.
- Provisions for diversity of items to be provided in share
- Knowledge and skills to reliably plan for, grow, harvest, package, and delivery goods to members

### **Agreement to participate in the Coalition**

- Attend the annual meeting in person or by proxy.
- Pay the annual membership fee, \$20-\$50.
- Actively participate in at least one MACSAC committee
- Communicate information about MACSAC programs to farm members
- Provide MACSAC with annual farm information