

Lufkin Urban Garden & Market

CSA

Mission

The Lufkin Urban Garden & Market aims to provide affordable, fresh, locally grown produce for households in the North Lufkin Community, while also providing education on healthy eating and sustainable agricultural practices.

About

The Lufkin Urban Garden & Market (LUGM) is a program of the non-profit organization [Legacy Institute for Financial Education](#) (L.I.F.E). The LUGM site will serve as both a community garden and a market in North Lufkin. Our goal is to improve the overall health of the community and increase community involvement and support.

Vision

- 1) Strengthen the community economically by employing current residents, especially those suffering from hiring discrimination due to age or disabilities.
- 2) Improve the overall health of the community by providing healthy food that will not break their budgets.
- 3) Make healthy food more accessible by setting affordable prices, accepting SNAP benefits, and offering delivery services to those who are elderly, veterans, and/or lacking transportation.
- 4) Expose the community to fruits and vegetables they may have never tasted by holding cooking, nutrition, and wellness classes.
- 5) Increase awareness of sustainable agricultural practices and food systems.

Fresh Seasonal Produce

The community garden will provide fresh, locally grown produce that will be made available weekly, to members of our CSA as well as at the market on designated days for non-CSA members. It will also function as a physical representation of the use and integration of various regenerative agricultural methods. Additionally, members of the community will be welcomed and encouraged to visit and tour the garden, as well as volunteer some of their time to planting, growing, harvesting, and hands-on learning about gardening.

Members of the CSA program will receive a weekly box of various hand-picked goods at an affordable rate that can either be picked up from the market or delivered right to their door. This, along with the acceptance of SNAP benefits allows the program to meet the needs of those who are elderly, disabled, veterans, and/or lacking transportation, and will increase the accessibility of healthy foods.

What is a CSA?

“The Lufkin Urban Garden & Market will be a Community-Supported Agriculture project (or CSA). A CSA is a system that connects the producer and consumers by allowing the consumer to subscribe to the harvest of a certain farm or group of farms. It is an alternative socioeconomic model of agriculture and food distribution that allows the producer and consumer to share the risks of farming. The model is a subcategory of civic agriculture that has an overarching goal of strengthening a sense of community through local markets.

In return for subscribing to a harvest, subscribers receive either a weekly or bi-weekly box of produce or other farm goods. This includes in-season fruits and vegetables and can expand to dried goods, eggs, milk, meat, etc. Typically, farmers try to cultivate a relationship with subscribers by sending weekly letters of what is happening on the farm, inviting them for harvest, or holding an open-farm event. Some CSAs provide for contributions of labor in lieu of a portion of subscription costs.”

Risks

By becoming a member of a Community Supported Agriculture Program, you are agreeing to take on some of the common risks associated with food production. All crops and farm workers are at the mercy of the unpredictability of nature, because of this, there is a chance of crop failure or delays in production due to harsh weather or even pests.

Is it Worth it?

Unlike many of the foods typically found in grocery stores, the food within CSA members' share boxes will be grown locally, in season, and hand-picked fresh by LUGM team members. Our organization vows to avoid the use of potentially harmful synthetic commercial fertilizers, as well as the application of herbicidal, fungicidal, and pesticidal sprays or substances, in order to ensure the health of the community, land, and native wildlife in which the land we use supports.

What to Expect

Our food will be perfectly imperfect. Shopping in supermarkets has misled many shoppers to believe that all produce is and should be evenly colored with absolutely no blemishes or misshaping. Tons of food are thrown away each year in the United States before even reaching the homes of consumers. Why? Because much of it is deemed "unfit" for selling due to minor cosmetic imperfections that have no effect on the taste or quality of the food.

LUGM staff will do its best to provide quality produce. Without the use of heavy machinery or chemical agents, some of our produce may have a few bug bites, minor blemishes, scrapes or bruises, and may come with the occasional stowaway critter; none of which will compromise the safety or flavor of the produce. So, you may get a tomato that isn't perfectly round or even a carrot that isn't perfectly straight, but they will still provide nourishment to your body the same as any other, if not better.

Along the way, we hope to introduce our CSA members to a wide array of foods that they may have never tried before. There are so many more varieties of fruits, vegetables, and herbs than the ones we see at the stores, many of which vary in color, shape, texture, and flavor. There is everything from purple tomatoes to purple bush bean varieties.

Added Benefits

All CSA members will have the opportunity to participate in special CSA events and will have access to free educational workshops.

Rules/Guidelines

Membership

All members will be required to complete a registration form and submit payment of \$__ for their first month of CSA share boxes.

Shares

CSA members will receive a weekly box of produce in return for the support. Share boxes will consist of a variety of fresh, in-season produce.

Costs

Shares will cost \$25-\$100 per month. Members will pay for their share at the beginning of each month.

SNAP

SNAP eligible members may pay using EBT to cover the costs of their weekly produce boxes. Participants using snap cannot pay more than 14 days in advance of receiving produce. As a result, they will have to make two payments each month.

Refunds/EBT Reimbursement

Participants who paid in advance and do not wish to continue their membership may get a refund for produce boxes that they had not already received.

Pick-up

CSA members are expected to pick up their weekly boxes on scheduled pick-up days at the LUGM building. Members must arrive during the allotted pick-up period or cancel their box for the week. Those who fail to do so will not receive a refund and will be at risk of losing their membership after two failed pick-ups. LUGM staff will not hold on to produce boxes beyond scheduled pick-up hours. Members may opt to cancel their box for the week a minimum of 3 days in advance by notifying LUGM staff.

Delivery

To improve access, those who are elderly, disabled, veterans, or lack transportation may sign up to receive free delivery to their home. Those who sign up for delivery must be present to receive the box during the scheduled delivery time or cancel the delivery a minimum of 3 days in advance by notifying LUGM staff members who miss two scheduled deliveries will either lose delivery privileges or be asked to pay for any further deliveries.