

FLATBUSH FARM SHARE NEWS

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Wednesdays: Distribution from 5 – 8 PM at Flatbush Reformed Church,
890 Flatbush Ave (at Church Ave); Weekly share lists available on [Facebook](#) or at www.flatbushfarmshare.com

How to Make Food Fair: Oran Hesterman Makes a Case for Change by Katy Schwalbe

Readers of food-related literature might be forgiven for wondering whether there is a need for yet another expansive tome critiquing the many flaws in our country’s (and our individual) relationship with the food we grow and eat. Hasn’t this territory been covered adequately by superstars like [Michael Pollan](#) and [Eric Schlosser](#) in their bestselling books and award-winning documentaries? What’s left to say?

Plenty, it turns out, and Oran Hesterman’s [Fair Food](#) is a welcome and much-needed addition to the canon. While Pollan and Schlosser concentrate primarily on describing the problems in American food policy, Hesterman goes a step further to offer his solutions. Think less expose of the food industry and more how-to manual for concerned citizens and communities interested in fundamentally transforming existing food policy.

Equity, diversity, ecological integrity and economic viability are the book’s four principles for a redesigned food system, and Hesterman (whose background is in sustainable agriculture and public policy), offers readers many solutions from his own work to implement these principles. **[Continued on p. 2]**



Vegetables. Source: [HD Wallpapers](#)

Care to Share, A Way to Give Back to Our Community

by Malwina Andruczyk



As a CSA member, I have really enjoyed having a farm share throughout this summer. And as someone on food stamps, it’s been very comforting that each week, I’d have a new batch of fresh vegetables to enjoy—even if my food stamps didn’t last me all month. This year, I am doing a year of service through [Americorps](#)—the pay is low, which entitles me to public benefits like food stamps, but the job is very rewarding and focuses on educating low-income seniors and other individuals about nutrition, health and wellness.

So while my food stamp benefits and our farm share give me food security, I know that there are many people in our own community who don’t have that security. Some people have a hard time applying for food stamps because of the stigma around them, and maybe they can’t afford to join a CSA like ours, even though it’s based on income level—maybe they just couldn’t get the money together. **[Continued on p. 4]**

How to Make Food Fair: Oran Hesterman Makes a Case for Change (continued from p.1)

The “equity” chapter, which focuses largely around issues of access to healthy foods in low income neighborhoods, Hesterman and his [Fair Food Network](#) started in Michigan. Called Double Up Food Bucks, the program allows Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefit (SNAP) recipients the opportunity to receive additional matching dollars for every SNAP dollar spent at participating farmers’ markets. In other words, \$20 of SNAP dollars can buy \$40 worth of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Aside from providing access to produce in neighborhoods where it’s easier to find ketchup packets than fresh tomatoes, the extremely successful program has avoided the controversy around other SNAP programs that aim to limit rather than expand consumer choices (for example, NYC’s recent efforts to ban use of SNAP dollars to purchase soda).

The how-to feel of the book should make it appealing to

many in our own community, and Hesterman mentions CSAs along with co-op grocery stores and food buying clubs as consumer-driven initiatives that are helping to change the conversation around food policy. For more ideas on big and small ways to change our relationship with food and the ways it gets to our table, check out the website of the Hesterman-founded Fair Food Network. ♦

Equity is a critical attribute of a healthy food system. Access to healthy, fresh, sustainably grown food is a basic human right that is being systematically denied to residents of historically excluded communities. [Equity: The Fair Food Network](#)

Trip to The Farm at Miller's Crossing & Food Network Filming, Sunday, Sept. 25

The date approaches for our visit with The Farm at Miller's Crossing! Thanks to the efforts of the Long Island City CSA, a Food Network film crew will be joining the bus riders and documenting the whole trip.

A bus will pick-up our passengers at our site at **8:00 am**. If you are doing the bus, please get there a little early, so that we can do a head count and be ready to hop on. If you are driving, check out Google Maps directions [here](#). If any drivers have driving tips for this trip, please send to Membership@Flatbushfarmshare.com and we will spread the word. Anyone who is looking to carpool should try the member-to-member email group or write to Membership.

After pick-ups at the other two CSA sites (Fort Greene and Long Island), the bus heads upstate to the farm. The bus group will be about 56 people. Arrival will be around noon, just in time for lunch. *Please remember to bring your own lunch and, if possible, extra munchies to share to make it a potluck trip!*

After lunch and stretching out, the group will convene in the barnyard for a chat and Q&A with Chris, so come

ready with all your questions! Chris will then lead everyone on a walk through the fields. The walk will probably include a visit to the cows and a discussion on raising grass-fed cattle. There will also be some small chores set up that people can try their hands at: opening up garlic heads for planting, and maybe, if we're lucky, some raspberry picking. Also, bring some shoes for wading in water, if the weather permits. The day will include some activities for kids too, such as a craft table or hayride.

In addition, there will probably be a small market set up for us, where people can buy extra produce and frozen meat at the end of the day. Then, it's home to Brooklyn, with the bus heading back between **4:00 and 4:30**.

The trip promises to be a fantastic experience. Lisa DiClerico, core member of the Long Island CSA, writes: "I can say for myself that no matter how stressed or busy I was leading up to the trips I've taken out there, each one has been amazing and one of my favorite aspects of the CSA season."

Natalia Sucre ♦



Picnic at the barn. Farm trip 2010. Photo: Callia Piperides

Our Farmers' Letter, September 6th 2011

In the Aftermath of Hurricane Irene

I have often thought of September as the best time to be a farmer. A majority of the work is behind you, the constant pressure to plant and irrigate begins to subside, and the pleasant weather and cooler temps make for ideal working conditions...Most years anyways.



Chris Leading AnneMae on Ice Cream at the Columbia County Fair

The week of sunshine after Hurricane Irene helped to dry things out and begins the healing from all of the flooding caused by this historic weather event. Just as we started to think about things other than flooding, these past 3-4 days of heavy rains have put us right back into crisis mode. Unfortunately, whatever mode we are in, there is nothing we can do about the weather other than hope and pray that the current trends change.

We spend most of our time trying to anticipate the problems we may have, and managing things accordingly. With our superb hard working crew, our years of experience, and a beautiful farm that is full of prime soils and level fields, we often feel "in control." This feeling of control has been lost with the dramatic flooding and continuing rain. I feel like the hardest part of all of this is letting go of the idea that we can control our destiny.

Based on the most recent radar images, we will receive much more rain in the coming 48 hours, and then have a respite in the form of 5 days with no forecasted rain. We can only hope that our dangerously full creek can drain just enough in the coming 12 hours before the next rain event swells it again. We will not know how bad things will be until later in the week.

Despite all of this hardship and strife, we are still happy to say the shares should remain full for the foreseeable future, and we have our fingers crossed that our fall crops which are predominately planted on our highest fields will make it through all of these rains and be there for us in October and beyond.



The Cashens on the Farm

ships, we know growers all around us who have lost everything—with no hope of any crops for the remainder of the year. Through no fault of their own, these competent and professional farmers have lost their entire years' worth of work, and there is nothing that can be done about it. It is hard to imagine how that would feel, and our thoughts are with them. We hope to be able to donate to these farms anything that we have in surplus, and will be reaching out to them in the coming days and weeks to offer our assistance.

In a good year, with plenty of sunshine and occasional rains, farming can seem to be an idyllic profession. We have often counted ourselves as lucky to have found a profession that we love so much, and gives us an opportunity to make a living off the land.

In the span of the last 4-5 weeks, this idyllic picture has been disturbed but not lost completely. We hope that these current challenges teach us things that will help us in the future (now we really know how high our creek can get!), and as the saying goes, that which does not kill you makes you stronger.

Thank you for all of your support, Chris ♦

[The Farm at Miller's Crossing](http://farmatmillerscrossing.com) (farmatmillerscrossing.com)



Our 1st Place Red Onions at The Columbia County Fair

"Despite our own hardships, we know growers all around us who have lost everything—with no hope of any crops for the remainder of the year. Through no fault of their own, these competent and professional farmers have lost their entire years' worth of work, and there is nothing that can be done about it."

Despite our own hard-

Care to Share, A Way to Give Back to Our Community

(continued from p.1)

Every week, any leftover food from our distribution goes to the [CAMBA](#) food pantry and is then provided to those for whom this food pantry is part of how they can have food security. The non-profit, [Met Council](#), where I work is teaming up with other non-profits and CSAs to have an event called "[Care to Share](#)" in which CSA members are invited to donate any food from their share which they do not plan to use or donate to the CAMBA food pantry.

Here at the Flatbush Farm Share, we'll be participating during the **October 5th** and **October 12th** distributions, so on those days we'll have a special spot at the end of our regular tables set up so that you can give back any produce you'd like to donate.

This event also coincides with the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, which has a tradition of gleaning. Gleaning is the act of collecting leftover crops, and historically farmers would leave their leftover crops after harvest for those who need them to come and collect them. Regardless of religious background, this seems like a valuable tradition. As CSA members, we know we have access to farm fresh food, and when we donate that food, we know that people who couldn't otherwise will be eating healthy! Participating is

absolutely optional—if you know you will need all you get, please keep it, but if you know you might not need it all, donate what you can. And if anyone is interested in helping to run the table on those Wednesdays, please email me at mandru@metcouncil.org.

See news, videos and more at www.metcouncil.org and get involved on our [Facebook](#) page. ♦

Care to Share will take place at the October 5th and October 12th distributions, encouraging volunteers to symbolically fulfill the Jewish custom of gleaning, a custom tied to the harvest season and the Sukkot period. Traditionally, farmers leave the four corners of their fields unharvested so the needy can glean from the fields with dignity.

Winter Share Season

The FFS Planning Group is hard at work putting together the Winter Share Member Agreement Form. As we nail details regarding extra shares and the sliding scale pricing structure, we would like to inform membership of the basic details, so you can decide whether you'd like to be part of the FFS winter season.

Share Details

The *vegetable share* will include 6-10 lbs. of storage vegetables and up to 1-3 packages of frozen vegetables, with salad and cooking greens as weather allows. The vegetables will be lightly washed and free of excessive mud and dirt.

Leaving the vegetables slightly dirty helps preserve quality and freshness. The frozen veggies come from The Farm at Miller's Crossing also and have been frozen by Farm to Table; find out more about their freezing facility [here](#).

We are also working on arranging a *fruit share* through Hepworth, which would most likely involve apples and



Photo Source: [Lemon Sun Blog](#)

pears. In addition, we are working on continuing the *egg, cheese, and yogurt shares* through our current farmers. We will be asking our dairy farmers to focus on yogurt basics this winter, rather than providing side items such as salad dressing and dips. *No beef share* this winter, but we will continue providing *tempeh*. *Coffee and wine* may be available also—we'll find out soon!

Distribution Details

Pick-up will be on Saturday mornings (exact times TBD), and this year Chris is offering six, rather than four delivery days: **Saturday Nov. 19th, Dec. 3rd, 17th, Jan 7 & 21, and Feb. 4**. In addition, the pick-up operation will be less work on our end, as shares will be pre-boxed, except for the frozen veggies. (The boxes cost \$2.45 a piece, so the best arrangement to keep costs and waste down for all, is for members to come ready with bags and leave the boxes for the farm).

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Winter Share Season (continued from page 4)

Pricing Details

Currently, we only have pricing information for the veggie share and the total cost for six deliveries comes to \$230. Last year the winter share total cost was \$140, but that was only for 4 deliveries. That means last year the cost was \$35 per delivery. This year we are paying \$38.33 per delivery. The extra \$3.33 will help cover the cost of the more efficient packaging and delivery systems.

Even with this relatively small increase in price, we are getting considerably greater value than you can get in our local grocery stores. To provide a little more transparency around this, Chris has given us a run-down of the retail price of the last 2010 winter share delivery (See box to the right).

Given the variability of pricing in specific communities, these might not be the exact prices you find in your local grocer. But our preliminary checks against regional industry information confirm that these retail prices are on target and that the winter share offering definitely fulfills our mission to bring fresh, organic produce to community members at a price they can afford. The only way we can get an even more precise comparison is to visit our local grocers and do an item by item comparison, so that's what we're doing.

If you're interested in helping with this effort, please contact bookkeeping@flatbushfarmshare.com.

Natalia Sucre and Drew Dials ♦

Total retail value for the Dec. 11, 2010 share as listed below was \$51.75, based on average prices for organic produce. The price paid by FFS members was \$35.00 (\$140 divided by 4 deliveries).

- 1 Frozen cauliflower, 12 oz. \$4.25
- 1 Frozen tomato, 28 oz. \$5.00
- 1 Frozen pepper, 12 oz. \$4.25
- 2 lbs. onions, \$3.00
- 4 lbs. sweet potatoes, \$7.00
- 1 cabbage, \$4.00
- 3 garlic, \$3.75
- 2 Butternut, \$6.00
- 3 lbs. Potatoes, \$5.25
- 2 Acorn winter squash, \$4.00
- 3 lbs. carrots, \$5.25

Food Fair October 5th! Seeking Volunteer cooks!

On October 5th, FFS will have a food fair at our distribution site. The event is open to members and non-members, so spread the word among all your friends and neighbors who have been curious (or jealous) about the CSA.

What will we have? A spread of fresh home-cooked dishes prepared by volunteer members, using fresh produce from The Farm at Miller's Crossing. We would also like to have info-volunteer members on site to offer nutritional and prep tips about vegetables and answer questions about the CSA for non-member visitors. Info and sign-up for the winter share will also be available.

To make this fun event possible, we need volunteers! We will need approximately 8-12 members to cook their favorite dishes. The dishes will be prepared in advance, prior to the event in the members' home using fresh veggies pro-



June Potluck. Photo: Callia Piperides

vided by the CSA.

We are also looking for members who are passionate and knowledgeable about our fresh produce to join in and share their knowledge about nutrition and prep methods with others at the food tables during the actual event.

For those who want to pitch in but don't feel comfortable doing any of the above, no worries, we have a spot for you! We will need help an-

swering visitor questions and explaining how our CSA works.

During this week's distribution on Sep. 21st, Virginia and Dania will be signing up volunteers for this event. If you wish to participate but cannot make it to this week's distribution, please email gold.dania@gmail.com

Dania Gold Namdar ♦

Flatbush Community Garden Open House, September 25th

Come drop by the Flatbush Community Garden [Open House](#)! Sunday, **September 25th**, 11am - 3pm: We are located on the corner of Albemarle and Buckingham (E. 16th St) Roads. [Learn more](#) about this tiny but mighty public organic garden that's on private land in Prospect Park South. Come for delicious baked goods, to learn more about our lovely common areas, neighborhood history, and how we built this garden out of an old, rambling foundation.

Elisabeth Snell ♦

Eco-Apple Picking Trips by Callia Piperides



Stone Ridge Orchard. Photo: Callia Piperides

What I look forward to in the autumn: Trips in the countryside to see the changing colors and visits to farms to pick my own apples. Apples are one of those fruits that are heavily sprayed, so I prefer to buy organic where possible. But it's hard to find organic apple farms nearby because our climate makes it difficult to totally eliminate spraying.

Instead, our local farms use low-spray or sustainable farming practices. Though not necessarily better for you if you're trying to avoid pesticides, buying local apples is much better for the environment than buying organic ap-

ples transported from far away. Also, you'll be supporting our small local farmers.

Here are a couple of farms where you can pick your own eco-apples in New York:

[Stone Ridge Orchard](#), Stone Ridge, NY, in the Rondout river valley between the Shawangunk and Catskill Mountains, where they raise a wide variety of sustainably-grown fruits and vegetables; and [Mr Apples](#), another low spray-orchard located in the scenic village of High Falls, NY, near the Hudson river.

The Stone Ridge Orchard's sustainable farming practices include:

- detailed monitoring to predict insect or disease problems;
- eliminating the use of herbicides;
- substituting organic mulches for synthetic fertilizers;
- incorporating new, organic pest control materials into their pest management program;
- continually innovating and evolving their farming philosophy.

For more apple picking suggestions near NYC, visit [Mommy Poppins](#). ♦

SUBMISSIONS To contribute a regular column, article, or photograph, contact newsletter@flatbushfarmshare.com

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