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## **ECO Farm | Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) Restoring the link between farmers and consumers** by Brenda Goldsworthy

**D**o you know where your food comes from? Do you know how it was grown and raised? Were any chemicals used? Do you know whether it was genetically modified, fairly traded, or sustainably produced? Do you know how long it was in transport and storage, or if it was in contact with any contaminants? Food security is a huge issue and the list of questions just keeps growing. This is especially critical at a time when the industrial food system is so alarmingly centralized and exploitative (to the land, to farmers, and to animals). Our food supply is being increasingly threatened by globalization of agriculture, the primary purpose of which is to provide profit for the agricultural corporations. No wonder so many people are concerned about the quality and safety of our food and who controls our food supply.

One of the best ways I know to get sustainable, local, eco-friendly, non-toxic, healthy food is through Community Shared Agriculture (CSA)—a system which provides a direct link between the production and consumption of food.

Keith Neu, an organic farmer from Hudson Bay, SK, started a CSA—*ECO Farm*—in the spring of 2007. Now in its fourth year, *ECO Farm* has grown from 30 to 100 members, with room to expand until the 200-limit is reached. The basic plan is simple: members sign a contract each spring and include 12 post-dated cheques. Options are varied to accommodate meat eaters, vegetarians, single folks, and different sized families. Currently there is one drop-off station in Saskatoon and one in Regina. Twice a month during the growing season, and once a month during the winter and spring, Keith drops off each member's pre-ordered food. Products include garden produce (fresh, frozen, canned), beef, chickens, eggs, flour, flax, pickles, herbs, and other available food throughout the year.

Community Shared Agriculture has many advantages. Consumers know who produces their food and how it's produced. They support local, sustainable agriculture and ensure that farmers receive a fair price. They support the environment; get fresh, healthy, tasty food; and have a farm they can go to. Because both consumers and farmers share in

the production risks and benefits, farmers are provided with the stability and security they need by having a steady income and they get a community that cares about the farm and the farmer.

For more information you can contact Keith Neu directly at: [km.neu@sasktel.net](mailto:km.neu@sasktel.net). We have also set up Saskatoon and Regina contacts so feel free to contact any of us for more information.

Saskatoon: Brenda Goldsworthy ([bgoldsworthy@sasktel.net](mailto:bgoldsworthy@sasktel.net)) and Wilma Poole ([handson87@hotmail.com](mailto:handson87@hotmail.com))

Regina: Amy Snider ([snideramy@yahoo.com](mailto:snideramy@yahoo.com))

### **KNOW YOUR FOOD! KNOW YOUR FARMER!**

*Brenda Goldsworthy, a Saskatoon writer and editor, has been involved with the ECO Farm since its inception. For more information you can contact her at (306) 652-2485 or email: [bgoldsworthy@sasktel.net](mailto:bgoldsworthy@sasktel.net). \**



Community Shared Agriculture (CSA)

**Restoring the link between farmers and consumers**

**Join now for the 2011 growing season and receive the 'early box' now for just \$25/month.**

Early box includes potatoes, carrots, and a 6-7lb chicken.

Keith Neu, an organic farmer from Hudson Bay, started the ECO Farm in 2007. Now in its fourth year, ECO Farm has grown from 30 to 100 members, with room to expand until the 200-limit is reached.

**Receive organic produce YEAR ROUND with the option to add beef, chicken, sausage and eggs.**

**Know Your Food! Know Your Farmer!**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ORDER**

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Brenda Goldsworthy 306 652-2485  
[bgoldsworthy@sasktel.net](mailto:bgoldsworthy@sasktel.net)

**REGINA**

Amy Snider 306 525-1956  
[snideramy@yahoo.com](mailto:snideramy@yahoo.com)

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