



*Last year's work party on the new top for the hoop house*

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#### OUR VISION

WE CREATED ALAMBRIA SPRINGS FARM BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THAT WORKING AND RESPECTING OUR LAND, SUSTAINABLE FARMING, AND PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT WILL ENSURE A FUTURE WORTH LIVING FOR ALL OF US AND THE GENERATIONS TO COME. WE BELIEVE THAT WORKING HARD AT OUR FARM WITH PROPER INTENTIONS WILL BRING ABUNDANCE IN MANY FORMS TO OURSELVES AND TO OUR COMMUNITY. WE INVITE YOU TO SHARE IN OUR MISSION. GET INVOLVED. GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY. HELP US CREATE A FUTURE THAT IS SAFE, ABUNDANT, AND NURTURING FOR US ALL.

*We must be the change we want to see in the world.  
~ Mahatma Gandhi*

## ANOTHER YEAR BEGINS!

It's hard to believe, but we're already into February and getting ready to start a new year on the farm! Our seeds have arrived and now await Spring's warmer temps to begin working the fields to get ready for planting.

Once again, we had many lessons to learn, just as we always do and will. The weather proved to be incredibly challenging, resulting in some crop failures, while others (such as eggplant) far exceeded our expectations and planting calculations. This is all part of farming!

We've made some changes this year that we hope will benefit our members and the farm so that we can continue to provide for all of you and steward the land that sustains us. We'll be communicating more frequently, and more in depth, with this newsletter coming to you once a month. We've created workshare opportunities so you can learn all that goes into providing food, as well as provide help to Alambria in exchange for a reduced cost. We've started a wholesale buyers club so you can buy organic, natural products not produced at the farm. And we've created a core group to help us with planning, events, communication, and administrative tasks.

We look forward to seeing you on pickup day and hope you will become more involved and let us know how we're doing. We are fortunate to live in a magnificent place that allows us to realize our dream, and share it in a meaningful way with our community.

#### COME LEARN ABOUT FARMING!

This year for the first time, we're experimenting with "work shares." We will give a partial refund of the share cost at the end of the season to anyone who commits to 40 hours of work throughout the 24-week growing season. You can also contribute to the work of the farm by volunteering.

Work comes in many shapes and sizes, and we promise no one will be asked to do anything beyond their abilities or desire. Help is most critical during planting time, from mid-April thru June. And we can always use help with weeding throughout the year, harvesting in the summer, and processing garlic, onion sets, and potatoes in the fall. Packing delivery boxes and setting up the farm store before pick up day are other possibilities.

Workshares currently include Chris Hoffman, Bob Smith, Bonnie Gale, Jerri Clair, Ron Jones, and Susan and Dan Galbraith. Memberships are still available, so if you'd like to help, let us know! Workshare members will keep track of their own time commitments on sheets in the Farm Store.

#### SATURDAY PICKUP ONLY THIS YEAR

Because most shareholders came to the Farm for pickup on Saturday last year, this year we have cancelled the Tuesday pickup, and extended the Saturday pickup hours from 9:30 am to 4 pm. This will save us a lot of work, as two pickup days meant we had to harvest and process and set up twice during the week, which takes us away from the fields.

If you are not able to come on Saturday, please contact us so we can box your share and leave it for you to pick up from the Farm Store cooler on Wednesday afternoon or Thursday. Alternatively, you could choose a boxed share to be picked up at the Copper Turret on Thursday afternoon, or contact another member to pick up your share at the Farm on Saturday.

**REMINDER: IF YOU ARE PAYING FOR YOUR SHARE IN INSTALLMENTS, THE NEXT PAYMENT IS DUE ON FEBRUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>.**

# WORKING WITH THE GREATER COMMUNITY

**MORRISVILLE STATE COLLEGE** – We've already received our seeds for 2012, and this year we will be working with Morrisville State College Horticulture department to start a third of our seeds for the season. Since Seneca Dining Hall and The Copper Turret purchase produce from us, MSC students will see the crops come full circle, as they will be eating some of the plants they helped start!

**HERITAGE FARM** – This year, Heritage Farm in Bouckville will be growing some of our Winter Squash. Heritage Farm is a nonprofit Day Habilitation Program for people with developmental disabilities. They use agriculture to teach life skills that are essential to achieve independence, individualism, inclusion and productivity. Based on the principle that "the person comes first, not the disability," they use their land to "grow vegetables, animals, and success."

## 2012 U-PICK CROPS

CSA members will once again have an opportunity to pick perfectly ripe produce right off the plants, including peas, beans, gourmet greens, cherry tomatoes, and herbs.

Additionally, we hope to have an abundance of red raspberries this season, offered on a "u-pick and pay" basis, as they are not part of the veggie share but the beginnings of a fruit share for the future!

Allowing shareholders to pick certain crops saves us the labor and time of picking, hauling, and setting up – which keeps your costs down and helps us concentrate our efforts on producing and keeping the gardens in shape.

This year, we plan to offer lessons in the fields on the "proper way" to pick in order to minimize waste, contamination, and damage to the plants.

### INTRODUCING OUR "2012 CORE GROUP"

Bonnie Gale (Norwich)  
Chris Hoffman (Sherburne)  
Joanne Nigolian (Sherburne)  
Bob Smith (Poolville)

This group will serve as an advisory panel to help with special events, communications, administrative tasks, research, and farm oversight as needs arise. To contact them, please see the 2012 Membership Roster emailed to all members.

Visit us online at  
[www.alambriafarm.com](http://www.alambriafarm.com)

## PLEASE HELP US FIND ...

We are looking for a used outdoor wood-burning furnace large enough to heat 5,000 square feet that we can hook up to our greenhouses for a heat source. With an external heat source, we would be able to provide an abundance of gourmet greens throughout the winter months with, hopefully, no breaks in production. Once established, this would set the foundation for a winter CSA in the future for a limited number of members. If you know of anyone who might be interested in selling or trading, please let us know!

## ALAMBRIA STARTS WHOLESALE BUYERS CLUB

To provide our CSA members with more regional products at wholesale prices that we don't grow or produce, we have started our own buyers club through a company called Wholeshare, which provides products through an Ithaca-based company called Regional Access.

Wholeshare is focused on making local and organic food more accessible. By buying as a group, club members are able to bypass supermarkets, save 20-30% off retail price, and have the food delivered directly to their communities or workplaces.

On the Wholeshare website, members buy what they want and pay with their own credit cards or electronic checks. Wholeshare then aggregates group orders into a single order and a single payment for the seller. Wholeshare's group orders are organized by our coordinators, who are responsible for inviting members, setting order dates, accepting delivery of the order, and separating the food for the individuals in the group. To compensate the coordinators for their time, Wholeshare pays a 5% commission on the entire group order. Regional Access charges a \$10 delivery fee to the group, which is split among everyone participating in an order - the more people on an order, the less each individual's share of the delivery fee.

Each order must total a minimum of \$350, and there is no time requirement. An order can happen once a month, or twice a year, depending on the needs of the group's members. Since we are a new group, Wholeshare is offering us a 10% discount on our first order. The order deadline is Monday, February 27 at Noon. Delivery will be on Friday, March 2. Coordinators will divide the delivery and have your orders ready for pickup at the Farm Store on Saturday, March 3, between 9:30 AM and 4 PM.

To date, 21 people have joined Wholeshare, and 9 people have placed orders. We met our minimum order on Jan. 30, but the order will remain open to make sure everyone has a chance to investigate the website and place an order. If you would like more information about joining, contact Amy or Chris Hoffman.