

October 10, 2011

Hi Everyone,

We are ending this season on a significantly different note than the one on which we began. Whereas in February we weren't anticipating any major changes from the previous season (new baby and chickens notwithstanding), we've got some big ideas for 2012.

For one, the farm stand will change from Saturdays in the Old Bethpage Village parking lot to Wednesdays, 4-6pm, at the pickup tent. The growing popularity of the Saturday pickup has made it tough to continue both on the same day, and I've felt quite a bit of guilt about Dan and I being too busy to chat with the Saturday folks as we often do with the Tuesday and Thursday folks.

We're also merging the berry share with the vegetables so that one price covers everything. Having it as an add-on placed an inordinate amount of pressure on the dollar value of the share, so we'd rather include it as we've always included the herbs and flowers. This way everyone can participate, no one is counting pennies, and the pressure of the stand-alone share is relieved.

Finally, we've decided not to renew our organic certification next summer when it expires. *This does not mean we will be changing any of our cultural practices*—we are as committed to organic farming as ever! When we began Restoration Farm in 2007, we felt we needed the organic label to help establish our credentials; four years later, we're confident in the trust we've established. Dan and I pride ourselves on being completely transparent in all of our practices, and we will continue to foster an atmosphere in which people feel comfortable coming to us with their questions and concerns. While the financial and administrative burdens of certification are not overly onerous (\$250 a year, plus about a week's worth of office work), we now feel the time and money could be better spent elsewhere.

Overall we're very satisfied with the 2011 season. There were a few disappointing performances (winter squash and cucumbers, mainly), but we really can't complain. The tomatoes gave another great year, the lettuce is getting more consistent, and new varieties of kale, eggplant, and peppers showed their staying power. As always, we're eternally grateful for support of our CSA members. As we embark upon our fifth season, it's really starting to feel like family.

Sincerely,
Caroline & Dan