

TUV HASHAVUA: BEST OF THE WEEK

CSA: From Farm to Cubicle

Nancy Matsumoto, online.wsj.com

Kale, arugula and tomatillos are replacing fantasy football and real estate as water cooler talk in some city offices. Workplace CSAs are cropping up in offices, giving rise to veggie swapping, recipe trading and cooking competitions.

From Goldman Sachs to Queens kitchen-and-bath-supply company Davis & Warshow, some staffers say the high point of the week is their produce delivery. On Wednesday mornings, a Katchkie Farm van pulls up to Bryant Park architectural firm Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates' back entrance. Four KPF employees gather 22 bags stuffed with 11 kinds of fruits and vegetables, each including tomatoes, arugula and a watermelon. Excited hordes of CSA shareholders then descend upon the company's 18th-floor kitchen.

The bags are large, and splitting shares is a process the KPF group has down to a ritual. Cutting boards, knives and plastic wrap appear, and pairs of employees begin divvying up the bounty. Architectural designer Michael Young struggles to figure out how to cut a watermelon three ways while his colleague, Nicole McGlinn, counts off green beans into two piles.

In hard-driving workplace cultures where employees can barely find time to microwave a burrito – let alone shop for healthy groceries – the weekly or biweekly deliveries have been embraced as time savers, mood enhancers and an incentive to eat better. Another plus: "It's much cheaper and easier than going to Whole Foods," says KPF staff member Reilly Hogan.

Two organizations coordinate workplace CSAs in the city: Soho-based catering company Great Performances, which owns the 60-acre organic Katchkie Farms in Kinderhook, N.Y., and Just Food, a Midtown nonprofit that connects communities to local farms. Most office CSAs are initiated by employees and paid for by individual members.

Great Performances went from four workplace CSAs in its first season last year to 13 this year at sites including WNYC and the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit. Just Food, which began its workplace program in 2010, has helped four farms sell 420 shares at eight workplaces, according to Just Food CSA Program Manager Paula Lukats.

For workers with erratic hours or demanding schedules, joining a workplace CSA might be the only way to ensure they make pickup time. "I looked at one CSA between here and my

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TUV HA'ARETZ
CSA AT THE
FOREST HILLS
JEWISH CENTER

WEEK #8: 7/22/2014

Many Thanks to Our
Volunteers:

7/22 Pick-up: 5:00 to 8:00PM

Ilona Michalowska
Angelita Alvarado-Santos
Ilan Birnbaum
Ruth Dominguez

Unclaimed Shares Delivery:

Ava Tseng

7/29 Pick-up: 5:00 to 8:00PM

Stacey Samuels
Sharon Matzner
Lori Wolf

Unclaimed Shares Delivery:

Lenny Fuchs

LAST MINUTE CONTACT INFO:
For urgent last-minute pick-up or volunteering changes on pick-up day, call/text **Felicia 917-627-0669** or email **Judy trupinjet@gmail.com**

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Forest Hills, NY 11375
718-264-7000, ext 250 | tuv@fhjc.org

- **Tuv Ha'Aretz CSA:** www.foresthillstuvcsa.com
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/tuvFHJC
- **Twitter:** twitter.com/#!/tuvfhjc
- **Golden Earthworm:** www.goldenearthworm.squarespace.com
- **FHJC:** www.fhjc.org
- **Hazon:** www.hazon.org

apartment ... but it closed way too early," said Justin Burns, a Goldman Sachs associate.


Workplaces see their own benefits in encouraging participation. Rabobank, a cooperative bank specializing in food and agriculture, subsidizes close to half the cost of shares as part of a larger social responsibility initiative; Goldman Sachs sees it as a complement to its health center and wellness rooms.

Part of the fun, say CSA members, is getting produce that is new to them. Danielle Natoli, a Goldman Sachs vice president, says, "I love it because there are a lot of vegetables that I eat in restaurants that I've never cooked before, such as beets." Now, not only has she figured out how to prepare beets, she's improved her diet by adding kale ("you can't really taste it," she says) to her post-workout smoothies.

Many members say workplace CSAs have made for more fun offices. Davis and Warshow sponsored a mini-pickling competition, while WSP Flack + Kurtz staged an Iron Chef CSA competition last season, says engineer and CSA organizer Lauren Segal. "Any equipment was okay, as long as it was approved, so I brought a Cuisinart, another person brought a mandolin and another a blender. The secret ingredient was the whole share." The event, held in a break-out space, was so popular that "people were standing on tables and file cabinets to look over the cubicle," says Segal.

Some companies have even set up intranet or social networking sites to share recipes, photos or other CSA-related business; a Pinterest page at WSP Flack + Kurtz, a Yammer account at Teach For America, and at Rabobank, an intranet blog where employees can also negotiate one-week "sublet" of shares for other employees.

At the city's Community Affairs Unit, where 27 staffers snapped up 25 Katchkie Farm shares this year, Commissioner Nazli Parvizi says, "I spend more time here than I do at home, so the convenience of having bags come here means I always have staples."

A former chef, Ms. Parvizi now sends recipes out to co-workers to help them navigate unusual produce. "I cook a ton and bring in food," says Ms. Parvizi. "We like to eat together." 

Nancy Matsumoto's freelance work includes stories on health, eating disorders and body image.


7/22 What's in the Box:

Green Beans, Swiss Chard, Cabbage, Cucumbers, Zucchini, Red Onions, Scallions

NOTES FROM OUR CO-CHAIRS

Equal Exchange coffee and tea orders are here this week!

Next week will be our first Cayuga grain / flour / beans pick-up – check your email for more info.

NB: Pick-up hours are 5pm to 8pm. We cannot open early or late, nor leave your shares with anyone. 

ANY GREENS BAKED IN RAGS (SPANAKOPITA)

Makes 8 servings | *Adapted from Susanna Hoffman, finecooking.com*

- 2 lb fresh leafy greens (any combination of kale, collards, spinach, swiss chard, cabbage, tops of beets, radishes, turnips, etc.) washed
- 3 tbsp olive oil, plus about ½ cup for assembly
- 1 bunch scallions, finely sliced OR 1 red onion, finely diced
- 2 cups crumbled feta
- ½ cup grated cheese of your choice (optional)
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 bunches dill, parsley, cilantro, in any combination, minced
- ¼ tsp nutmeg, freshly grated

1 lb fillo dough (about 18 sheets – scraps saved from other recipes work great here)

Cook the greens in a microwave till wilted and bright green. Depending on your microwave, this could take 1 to 5 minutes. Place in a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking.

Squeeze out as much water as you can and place the dried greens in another bowl. Chop the greens coarsely; thicker stems should be sliced finely.

To the bowl of greens, add scallions/onions, feta, additional cheese, eggs, herbs, and nutmeg. Toss together to combine well.

Heat oven to 375F.

Oil the bottom and sides of a 9" x 13" x 2" baking pan. Crumple up a bit more than half of the fillo sheets and arrange in the pan. Make sure the whole bottom is covered and up the sides, but it needn't be tidy or level – this recipe is great for using "rags" or the inevitably broken and torn fillo sheets. Drizzle with olive oil. Lay the filling evenly over the ruffled bed of filo, then lay the rest of the ruffled fillo sheets on top, pressing down gently. Make sure the layer is pretty even and doesn't have holes – cover up all the filling. Drizzle with olive oil.

Place in the oven and cook till the crust is golden brown, about 40 minutes. Remove from oven and cool till just warm. Cut into rectangles or triangles to serve. 