

Greetings Harmony Producers!

Despite an unseasonably mild Minnesota winter, it still feels pretty great to ponder this spring’s planting, does it not?! Harmony’s owners, customers, (and staff!) are growing increasingly HUNGRY for some fresh-out-of-the-soil produce, so now is definitely the time to gear up for this season’s local bounty.

Harmony’s dedicated produce staff wants to continue its focus on growing our local product selection to include everything from early spring asparagus, radish, and lettuce to late summer apples, squash, and onions…and, of course, all of that garden fresh produce that grows in between. In the past several years, our team has really streamlined the process of ordering and receiving local produce for the purpose of making it as easy as possible for you to get your produce onto the tables of your neighbors! Thank you for everything you’ve done and are doing to make this possible. You folks are truly needed and appreciated in this community. Thank you!

**Items we are still looking to source:**

* Head and/or leaf lettuce (hardy, transportable, good sized heads)
* Garlic (large, white or purple)
* Shallots
* Blueberries
* Asparagus

**Call-in days and times: a review**

There is one produce buyer for Harmony’s Produce Department and that is me. Calls can be received between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m., Monday through Friday, and voicemail is always a good option if I’m not at my desk. My phone number is 218.751.2009 ext. 111 or I can be reached via email at lweiskopf@gmail.com.

(Brent Irwin, our assistant produce supervisor, will act as back-up should I take an extended leave, and can be reached at the same phone number.) At the time of our phone conversation, we will agree upon the items, quantity, and price of the produce to be delivered, as well as the delivery date and approximate time. I will also specify how particular items should be packaged and/or prepared prior to delivery. Again, most of you have this down to a science so it should be nothing but review!

**Delivery days, times, and protocol:**

Deliveries can generally be received between the hours of 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday-Saturday with flexibility to those of you who can only come to town during times outside of these hours.

Deliveries can be dropped off at the receiving garage on the northwest side of the building (on the same side as the store entrance). Press the call button when you arrive and someone will be with you shortly to receive your delivery.

As with previous seasons, we prefer that you have an invoice prepared and specific to only those items and quantities we agreed upon over the phone. ***We will not take any produce not agreed upon by the Produce Buyer.*** Receipt books can be purchased from Ink Spot press (across the street from Harmony) or at Office Max.

**Payment and Credits:**

ALL payments will be mailed via check at the end of each month. We will file each invoice received to be kept on-site, and will deduct any spoiled product not sold (i.e. as ‘credit’) from each invoice, if applicable. (This applies to product that may have come in damaged; product that spoiled unusually quickly due to weather variations or to improper storage/transport; or to older product that has a short remaining shelf-life.) In order to keep sales high and credits low, I will buy only quantities I feel we are able to sell in a given amount of time, i.e. the life of the product.

**New Paperwork Requirements:**

Attached is an updated Grower Application that we’d LOVE to have returned to us at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions or concerns whatsoever, please feel free to give me a call or shoot me an email.

**Food Safety on and off the Farm:**

***The State of Minnesota requires that local produce be grown, handled, stored and transported in food-safe conditions so that no cross-contamination can occur with non-food safe materials;*** ***and that the produce arrive in clean truck beds or car seats in food-safe, sturdy boxes that can stay with us at Harmony.*** (We often do not have either the time or resources to find other boxes to accommodate new produce deliveries, but as always, you can pick up recycled produce boxes from the Produce Department throughout the week at no charge!)

For more information on Food Safety on the Farm, go to: <http://extension.psu.edu/food/safety/farm/resources> or request information from me and I’ll send it in the mail, no problem!

**Harmony’s Second Annual Grower/Producer/Buyer Summit:**

You can learn more about Food Safety on the Farm, about Who’s Growing What Where, and about Who Wants What When by attending our SECOND annual event on Tuesday, April 12th from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at Harmony. Food and beverages will be served free of charge. Look for the upcoming invitation in the mail!

Once again growers, thank you for making our Co-op a truly functional COMMUNITY-BASED business model. We really look forward to what this next season has in store!

Happy Planting,

Lisa Weiskopf

Harmony Natural Foods Produce Manager

218.751.2009 ext 111 or lweiskopf@gmail.com