

Chain Reaction Urban Farm

Is a farm membership right for you?

Here are 5 key questions to help you figure that out.

#1. Is it important to you to eat food grown right here in Saskatoon by a farmer you know?

The top reason our members give for joining the farm is their desire to know and support a local farmer. In the grocery store, the words “locally grown” can be used for anything depending on how the grocery chain decides to define the term. As a result, “locally grown” items could be sourced hundreds of miles away and even shipped around the country before arriving here. To us, “locally grown” means that the farm land and farmer are so close that you could pass them on the street. Our farm is as local as it gets.

#2. Do you value having quality vegetable ingredients that are safe to eat and taste good too?

One of my favorite comments to hear from our members is that their kids are eating vegetables now. I guess that’s why it’s no surprise that when we asked our members to identify which of our farm standards were also their top priorities, 95% of them voted for the fact that we don’t use synthetic fertilizers or spray our crops with pesticides. When vegetables taste good, you’re going to want more of them, so it makes sense that you’ll want that food to be safe to eat too.

#3. Do you need complete control in your menu planning?

Are you willing to work at eating with the seasons? Are you willing to try new foods once in a while? Really? Over the years, we've learned which vegetables are the most popular and we certainly emphasize these choices in our boxes now, but since everyone's taste buds are unique, there may still be a week when you receive a vegetable that challenges you a little. That's why one common characteristic of our farm members is that they are relatively flexible eaters. They delight in the surprise of opening their box each week and they are happy to try new recipes and cooking methods to make the best use of their farm produce. If the thought of incorporating some new vegetables into your meal planning is scaring you a little, know that you'll have our online Community Kitchen to support you, and we'll certainly be behind you every step of the way. However, if you just never want to see a parsnip, beet, or squash in your kitchen, then it's best we go our separate ways.

#4: Are you looking for a “deal”?

On paper, the major flaw of our business model is that we can't scale up. There is no machinery or factory that we can use to produce our food faster and cheaper without seriously compromising our environmental sustainability. The reality is that food grown with natural methods in Saskatoon by a fairly paid human worker costs more in dollars than imported food grown mechanically with synthetic inputs by underpaid migrant workers. Some of our food is the same price or lower than similar products in the grocery store, but most has a higher price, and all of it is of higher quality. If when making food choices, your top priority is to lower your grocery bill by a few dollars, a farm membership is not for you.

#5: What kind of future do you want?

If we want to encourage positive changes in this world, we need to put our money where our mouth is, literally. Our members understand this. In fact, in our last year end survey, 90% of them cited their desire for sustainably grown food as a primary reason for joining the farm. We want a brighter, more sustainable future for ourselves and our children, and we recognize the role of the food system in creating this future. That's why we've invested our time in growing food sustainably for our community right here in Saskatoon. Every day, we have the power to vote with our forks. What kind of future are you going to vote for?

So, how did that go? Did you pass?

I hope these 5 questions helped you clarify whether or not a farm membership would be right for you. We know that this membership model doesn't work for everyone and we want to make sure that those who join us are going to enjoy their experience just as much as we enjoy growing food for them.

If this quiz helped affirm your desire to buy locally grown vegetables, then return to our [Memberships](#) page to take the final steps. If you have any additional questions about the farm or the registration process, you can reach me at 306-717-2821 or jared@chainreactionurbanfarm.com.

Your Farmer,

Jared Regier

