

équiterre



SERVICES OFFERED BY EQUITERRE TO CSA FARMS

Edmonton – November 3, 2012



1. Services provided to CSA farms



- **Communications & marketing support**
 - Visibility on Equiterre’s website
 - Regional and national media coverage
 - Access to free marketing tools

- **Technical support**
 - Workshops, trainings, and winter conferences
 - Summer farm-to-farm visits
 - Conduct and release different studies

- **Consulting & mentorship**
 - Support during start-up meetings
 - Mentorship
 - Networking & knowledge exchange
 - Farmers’ online forum
 - Priviledge card
 - Price watch

- **Regional drop-off management**

Equiterre’s CSA Network

78 CSA farms
26 “associated” farms

Average of 16 new farms/year
for the past 10 year

71% of farms have been doing
CSA for less than 10 years

Average age of CSA farmers :
37 years (Quebec : 52 years,
Canada : 54 years)

2. Services for new farmers



- **Training for farms who join the CSA network**

- Mandatory training (2 days)
- Themes covered : production planning, equipment needed, soil fertilization, production costs, « social » aspects of CSA

- Trainers : experienced CSA farmers and CSA team

Since 2003 : more than 144 farmers participated in these training days

- **Mentorship**

- Linkage between a new farm and an established CSA farm
- Équiterre : pair the farms based on proximity
- Mentors' roles: meeting to validate the production calendar, identify follow-ups as needed, phone support, farm visit, etc.

On average, 12 farms are mentored each year

- **CSA farm-in-training**

- Service offered to farms who wish to join the network but lack experience
- Transition step towards a strong CSA farm project

On average, 10 farms/year join the CSA farms-in-training program

3. Benefits of the CSA farm-in-training program



Solidarity

Networking and knowledge exchange

Mentorship tailored to local realities

Tips and advice are adapted to meet local needs, realities, etc.

Flexibility

The CSA farm-in-training program helps integrate farms that would otherwise not be part of the CSA network.

Challenges



Growing the network

- Recruiting new farmers
- Get CSA-farms-in-training to join the network faster

Increasing retention rates

- Get farmers to stay in network
- Keep CSA clients from year to year

Maximizing training attendance