



ON THE TABLE

The Official Newsletter of the Astoria CSA

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Farm Bill wraps up in House



After much negotiation, the House of Representatives' version of the farm bill was released to mixed reviews. Those in favor feel that it is a good first step toward farm policy reform,

while those opposed feel that much more reform is still needed to truly change the path of U.S. agriculture. Some of our key priorities and how they fared are listed below, and you can get a [full report](#) from the Community Food Security Coalition.

Community Food Projects: CFP was approved for \$30 million (up from \$5 million in the last farm bill), but the funding is only discretionary, not mandatory. This means that there is a chance there will be no funding for CFP (which started Just Food's City Farms and CSA in NYC programs) in 2008. See our Take Action below for information about how to get this critical program funded in the Senate.

Local Procurement: An amendment offered by Rep. Steve Kagen (D-WI) to clarify previous language allowing schools to use a geographic preference to request local food in all federally-funded child nutrition programs was included. This is great!

Food Stamp Funding: \$4 billion for domestic hunger prevention programs was allotted.

Conservation Security Program: Increases in funding for the CSP were not included in the House Farm Bill. It is expected to be in the Senate bill crafted by Ag Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA), considered by many as the champion of CSP.

Commodity Subsidies: Meaningful commodity reform was not included in the House Farm Bill, with only token changes to Title I (Commodity Title).

Farmers Market Promotion Program: FMNP received \$25 million over the next 5 years in mandatory money with 10% to be used for EBT promotion and technology.

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program: SFMNP received \$15 million in annual mandatory funds and additional discretionary funds increasing each year of the bill up to \$75 million in 2012.

THIS WEEKS SHARE

Lettuce 3 small heads
Cucumbers 2 pieces

Cantaloupe Melon

Please read our disclaimer on the melons... These melons were grown in a field at our new land on Sound Avenue. Since we don't yet have a well there, they were never watered! The grass in that field was also quite vigorous, so they were growing in 2 foot tall weeds. We were delighted when we tasted them--not too shabby! We hope you'll enjoy these "miracle" melons this week. Sure, not as sweet as they could be, but pretty darn good!

1 piece
Baby Watermelon 1 piece
Green Beans .75 lb bag

Sweet Corn

This might be the end of the corn (quick season!) so enjoy! We were so successful this year that we'll try more for next year.

4 pieces
Tomatoes

Time to process these babies. Try this week's roasted tomato sauce recipe and freeze the extra for a mid-winter burst of summer flavor!

10 pieces

FRUIT SHARE

Nectarines Qty: 1 bag
UFO Peaches Qty: 1 bag

Take Action! Get CFP into the Senate's Farm Bill today!



As mentioned above, funding for Community Food Project Grants remains discretionary at \$30 million and not mandatory as it has been for 10 years. This means that right now, **CFP HAS NO MANDATORY FUNDING FOR 2008. We need your help to change this in the Senate Farm**

Bill. Your efforts right now can make a big difference as to this outcome and the next few weeks are critical!

What to do: Call Senators Clinton and Schumer about Community Food Projects and ask them to fund CFP with as close to \$30 million in MANDATORY money as they can.

Clinton: 202-224-4451

Schumer: 202-224-6542

What to say: Ask to speak to the person covering the farm bill. If you get their voice mail, please leave a detailed message. Here is an example: "I am _____ from _____ and I am calling to urge Senator {Clinton/Schumer} to support mandatory funding for the Community Food Projects program. The

House-passed Farm Bill (H.R. 2419) reauthorized the Community Food Projects program at \$30 million, but stripped it of the mandatory funding base it has had for ten years. Without mandatory funding, the future of this program -- regarded as one of the most successful competitive grant programs within USDA -- will be jeopardized. Over its history, this program has funded over 240 innovative projects across the United States, promoting a wide variety of community-based solutions to local food system and food security problems and building stronger links between farmers and consumers.

As the Senate begins to review Farm Bill, I am requesting that Community Food Projects program receives mandatory funding, as it has for the last 10 years."

These quick phone calls will take only a few minutes of your time, but could make a huge impact on whether this program continues.

Want to do more? [Find out more information](#) on faxing letters, meeting with local offices, inviting Senators to see project CSA or City Farm sites and writing letters to the editor.—From *Food Justice*, the newsletter of *Just Food*, August 2007

It is the **Community Food Program** that has supplied some of the funding for **Just Food**, which was **instrumental** in helping our core group get **Astoria CSA** started. Without mandatory funding it is unlikely to get any money at all, or so little that many of the local groups that depend on this source for significant funding will not be able to function.

Further Reading: there is an interesting article in the Nation about the Farm Bill:

<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20070827/nichols>

Mr Nichols discusses the issues facing Senator Harkin as he tries to fashion a Bill that can further the interests of family farmers and nutrition and conservation programs, and at the same time negotiate the Hellgate of reconciliation with the House bill and a threatened Presidential veto. —Ed.

LOST IN THE SUPERMARKET:

Field Guides to Foodtown

There are several recent books written to help people negotiate their local supermarkets (and beyond in some cases). This is, at the very least, an indication that something is terribly wrong in the American food system. In **What To Eat: An Aisle by Aisle Guide to Savvy Food Choices and Good Eating** Marion Nestle uses the structure of the supermarket as a

springboard to her discussion of the produce, meats, dairy, oils and fats, fish, frozen foods, processed foods, beverages and prepared foods we encounter every day from grocery stores to fast food and restaurants. Marion Nestle is a professor of Nutrition at NYU and approaches her subject with common sense knowledge about diet and nutrition, a healthy skepticism about marketing and the food industry, and a lively sense of humor.

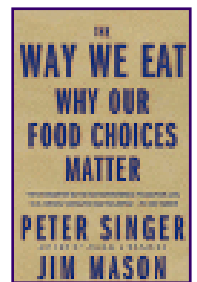
This is a big, well researched and highly readable book. The writing style is conversational and she presents information clearly and consisely. While there

is plenty to get angry about in these issues, and I cannot count the times she encourages readers to write to their congressional representatives, the overall tone is one of curiosity and amusement. Her primary goal is to help people make good choices from the foods that are available to them, not incite a food revolution.

Peter Singer and Jim Mason on the other hand apply their radical brand of philosophy to current food issues. **The Way We Eat: Why Our Food Choices Matter** examines the ethics of food choices from a perspective that considers many more ramifications of each choice than one generally encounters. From the pain inflicted on animals at any point in the process, to the economic well being of farmers in developing countries and the impact on the environment and the health of farm workers of organic farming, their ethical construction encompasses a wider range of considerations than the simplistic health related, consumer oriented framework most American discussions of food are delimited by. Humane treatment takes a much more prominent place in their decision making than you will find in most approaches to this issue. It can be a harrowing book to read. Where Barbara Kingsolver takes the better part of valor in describing the necessities of turkey reproduction in modern turkey farming, one of the authors (I'm guessing Mr Mason) takes a job in such an operation in order to see what really goes on. It is far from appetizing.

Their rigor in both research and argument is impressive and extends far beyond other books of this kind. (Nina Planck's and Michael Pollan's come to mind.) Local produce, for example, is discussed in the context of the fossil fuel it can require to extend a growing season, not solely the fuel required for transport and the economic benefit to much poorer farmers in developing countries of having a market for their produce.

While Mssrs Singer and Mason conclude with an argument that leads inevitably toward veganism this is not a preachy book. If people are going to eat meat, and they will, the authors acknowledge that it is better to make choices you can live with as an individual and not become overwhelmed by all the issues into doing the easiest, cheapest most pleasurable thing. The business of agriculture is designed to encourage people to do the easy, cheap, pleasurable thing, which is why we need these books in the first place. You don't have to agree with every argument they make to benefit from their research. After reading these books you will have more information than most shoppers when your CSA share runs out in November and you find yourself back in the supermarket. —G.W.



ASTORIA CSA CORE GROUP

STACEY, Top Tomato

AARON, Tech Turnip

LIISA, Event Escarole

KARA & KRISTY, Financial Fennel

SANDY & LIZ, Distribution Corianders

GRETCHEN, News nettle

WENDY, Outreach Oregano

HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY? CONTACT US AT:
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