

## Every farm should have an email list — Here's why:

According to a 2016 study, [email marketing generates 174% more conversions than Facebook and Twitter](#) and gives a return on investment of \$44 for every dollar invested in building your email campaign.

Plus, [60% of consumers prefer email over social media](#) for permission-based promotional messages.

### **Along with what the numbers tell us, there are other benefits to email marketing, too.**

When you consistently show up in someone's inbox, you can set yourself apart from the competition by growing a relationship and developing trust with potential customers.

With each email, you can give customers an insider's view and reward them with subscriber-only material, like a free bunch of basil with a purchase of 2lbs of tomatoes, or an early-bird CSA discount, for example.

When it's time for you to sell CSA shares or get people to sign up for a camp or farm program, you'll have direct access to people who already know, like, and want to support you.

## The difference between email and an email list:

When we talk about email marketing, we're not talking about sending a message from gmail.

Instead, we're focusing on email marketing services, where people can sign-up for, or opt-in to, your newsletter on their own.

MailChimp is a great free option to start with.

## Set Expectations:

When someone opts-in to your list, let them know how often they'll hear from you, and what they'll get in return.

Are you sending a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly email? What will they get when they sign-up?

For example: when someone signs up, you can create an automatic welcome email where you'll welcome them to the list, let them know how often you send emails, and what you share in those emails (harvest list, events on the farm, first chance to get CSA, etc.)

Once your subscribers know what to expect, make sure you show up when you say you will. Consistency is key to growing strong relationships and effective mar

## What To Write In Your Emails:

**Recipes:** Local food lovers also love recipes. Weekly recipes can help new CSA members get used to cooking with their share.

**Farm Events:** Have a farm dinner coming up? A special farm tour? Let the people know.

**What's happening in the field:** Seedings, transplantings, how successions are coming along, plus any challenges that you're facing, such as pests, weather damage, injury, etc. The beauty of email is that you can create an authentic connection with your customers. Letting them know about challenges and how you're dealing with them will help customers better understand the nature of farming, which is a win for everyone.

**Specials:** Do you have a new crop ready? Any deals on meat, limited quantities, or special offer for subscribers? Let them know in an email.

**First & Last Offers:** One of the worst things for any business, but especially for a CSA farm, is people dragging their feet on signing-up.

You can use email to increase sales by giving your email subscribers the first chance to sign-up for a CSA share, and by sharing authentic scarcity.

We all respond faster when we're afraid that what we want is going away. It's not ethical to make something up, and you don't need to. There really is a limit to how many shares you can provide. So use that to your advantage and tell people.

A CSA example:

*The Winter CSA always sells out, and we want to give you the first chance to sign up.*

A Farmers Market example:

*Tomato harvest is here! First 10 people to buy tomatoes get a free bunch of basil.*