



## Frequently Asked Questions

<p>What will I get in my share?</p>	<p>The Winter 2009-2010 share includes:</p> <p>Strawberries, blueberries, peaches, raspberries, rhubarb, cranberries, asparagus, sweet corn, green beans, sugar snap peas, edamame, summer squash mix, kale-collard mix or swiss chard, broccoli, cauliflower, tomatoes and stewed tomatoes, pumpkin puree and sweet peppers.</p>
<p>Is it organic?</p>	<p>We will try to get as much certified organic and natural, earth-friendly grown produce as we can. So far we have a couple of certified organic farmers growing for us. (See the Meet the Growers page.) Unfortunately, we will not be able to get everything organic this year, but our philosophy is that knowing your farmer is more important than knowing your inspector. If you have a favorite local organic farmer, let us know; we are always looking to expand our organic. ..especially fruit!</p>
<p>How much will I get?</p>	<p>28 packages of frozen food, in 4 deliveries of 7 packages per delivery.</p>
<p>What size are the packages?</p>	<p>Fruits are in 10 oz, 12 oz or 16 oz packages. Most veggies are in 16 oz packages.</p>
<p>Where do I pick up my share?</p>	<p>You can choose from 3 pick-up spots: Ann Arbor Farmers Market, Morgan and York, or the Corner Brewery</p>
<p>When do I get my share?</p>	<p>Farmers market pick-up dates are: November 21, December 19, January 23, and February 20.</p> <p>Corner Brewery pick-up dates are: November 18, December 22, January 20, and February 17</p> <p>Morgan and York pick-up dates are: November 16, December 14, January 18, February 15</p>
<p>Can I get my frozen produce sooner?</p>	<p>The Michigan winter is plenty long! Enjoy what is seasonal and fresh for as long as possible into the fall, and then when the farmers market tables get quiet, enjoy your locally grown, locally preserved, frozen fruits</p>



	<p>and vegetables. We do not want to compete for space on your table with any locally grown fresh produce.</p>
<p>Can I get all of my frozen produce at once and just keep it in my freezer at home? Can I get more than 7-8 bags at a time to keep my home freezer fuller and running more efficiently?</p>	<p>Our storage freezer is held at -15 F, colder and more stable than home freezers, even chest freezers, so we can maintain a high level of quality. We do not recommend taking all of your produce at once if you have a self-defrosting and/or front door type freezer. Home freezers do not really do a good job of keeping things frozen and they subject food to freeze-thaw cycles due to self-defrosting, power outages, sloppy teenagers leaving the door open, etc, so the produce could degrade much faster at home than if we keep most of it in the storage freezer. <b>(But if you are anxious to fill that big chest freezer in the basement, we can work something out; please email or call Rena)</b></p>
<p>How will you achieve quality?</p>	<p>Because we are buying locally grown, we start with high quality, ripe, fruits and vegetables, and we can get that produce from farm to freezer very rapidly. We also freeze small batches of produce in order to achieve a fast freeze; we use high quality packaging material, and finally we will store the produce at -15 degrees F.</p>
<p>How long does the produce retain its quality after the initial freezing?</p>	<p>The colder you keep frozen produce, the longer it retains its nutritional value because you prevent water loss, and hence loss of water soluble vitamins, minerals &amp; nutrients. Held below zero, you can keep produce 12 months and not tell the difference. The real problem with "quality" is a loss of texture or structure, and this loss occurs primarily due to freeze-thaw cycles that frozen food goes through inadvertently during handling and storage. A big culprit is self-defrosting freezers which cycle the temperature daily in order to melt off the frost. Self-defrosting freezers turn commercial frozen vegetables (which may have already experienced mishandling during their long journey from farm to distribution center to industrial freezer to bagger to freezer warehouse to truck to grocery store) into mushier versions of their fresh cousins.</p>
<p>How does the nutritional value of frozen produce compare to fresh?</p>	<p>In certain circumstances frozen produce can be equal to fresh. Very freshly picked fruits and vegetables are the most nutritious. Since most nutrients are water soluble, the more water that has been driven off of the produce, the more it has decreased in nutritional value. (Canned fruits &amp; vegetables therefore contain reduced amounts of nutrients than fresh &amp; frozen produce because in order to achieve shelf stability they have been heated extensively, driving off water.) The deal with fresh and</p>



	<p>frozen is not quite so clear because produce starts losing water as soon as it is picked. Therefore if you have something sitting in the refrigerator for 3 weeks (or on refrigerated trucks) before it is consumed, in some cases it has lost a significant percentage of some vitamins (e.g. vitamin C). The same thing happens with frozen vegetables, although more slowly, more water out then less nutritional value; so "freezer-burned" veggies have lost a lot of their water &amp; nutrients. Frozen fruits and veggies *can* be almost equal to fresh with proper handling, things like freezing right away in moisture barrier proof packaging, and consuming within several months.</p>
<p>Is it really energy efficient to store all that produce for so many months? Isn't there a trade-off between energy for long-distance transportation and electrical energy for local refrigeration?</p>	<p>It is surprisingly much more energy efficient to store locally vs. shipping. Using the Climate Trust.org's carbon footprint calculator, I compared trucking in 2000 lbs of fresh broccoli from California (2500 miles) with holding 2000 lbs of MI broccoli in MI in a freezer for an entire year -- trucking in fresh was NINE TIMES the carbon footprint (CO<sub>2</sub> emissions) of running a freezer. And this is not even considering that the fresh broccoli must be in refrigerated trucks and warehouses.</p>
<p>Why not just make the frozen produce available in a grocery store?</p>	<p>Someday! Feel free to suggest your favorite locally-focused retail outlet consider carrying us next year.</p>
<p>Do you take credit cards?</p>	<p>Not yet!</p>
<p>Are you using any additives, sugar or salt?</p>	<p>No salt or sugar is added. Peach halves have been dipped in 1 quart of water with 1 teaspoon of Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) dissolved in it.</p>