

The World of Community Supported Agriculture, by Elizabeth Henderson,
Keynote for Urgenci Kobe Conference 2010,
“Community Supported Foods and Farming”
February 22, 2010

1 Different names but same essence

All the way around the world in countries as diverse as the United States, Japan, France, China or Mali, **people who farm and people who eat are forming communities around locally grown food**. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), Teikei, AMAP, Reciproco, ASC - **the names may be different but the essence is the same**. Active citizens are making a commitment to local farms to share the risks and the bounty of ecological farming. A century of “development” has broken the connection between people and the land where their food is grown and in many countries, north and south, a few decades of free trade have driven family-scale farms to the point of desperation. A long series of food scandals - illnesses from food-borne pathogens, milk and other products contaminated with GMOs and chemical pollutants - have led to a crisis of confidence in imported foods from industrial-scale farms. CSA offers a return to wholeness, health and economic viability.

Human history abounds in examples of specific groups of nonfarmers being connected with specific farms—the medieval manor, the Soviet system of linking a farm with a factory, or the steady attachment of particular customers to the stand of a particular farm at a farmers’ market. In Cuba today, all institutions are obliged to be self-sufficient in food, so companies and schools have farms or garden plots. But none of these is like the form of organization we refer to as CSA.

2 The Japanese Cradle

The modern CSA originated in Japan. In 1971, Teruo Ichiraku (1906-1994), a philosopher and a leader of agricultural cooperatives, alerted consumers to the dangers of the chemicals used in agriculture and set off the movement for an organic agriculture. Three years later, concerned housewives joined with farmers to form the first Teikei projects. That same year, Yoshinori Kaneko realized that his family farm, besides providing for the subsistence of his own family, could also supply other people. He calculated that the farm produced enough rice for ten more families. To recruit local housewives, he invited them to join a reading circle, where they discussed such themes as “Oneness of Body and Environment,” the value of

whole foods, and the healthfulness of the traditional Japanese diet. After four years of “education and communication,” in 1975, **he made an agreement with ten families to provide them with rice, wheat, and vegetables in return for money and labor.** Contracts between groups of highly educated consumers and farmers like Kaneko launched the **teikei (“partnership”) movement** which continues to develop to this day.

Initially, many Japanese adherents of organic agriculture regarded Teikei as the only valid way to connect farms and their customers, but over the next 35 years as the demand for organic food increased and pressure from imports has mounted, Japanese organic farmers have had to diversify their marketing.

3 The Swiss Stage and the German Connection

Within a few years, farmers and consumers formed remarkably similar organizations in **Switzerland, yet no one has found a link proving Japanese inspiration.** Rudi Berli, one of the collective of ten farmers at Les Jardins de Cocagne near Geneva, told me that the founders **were inspired by the collective farms in Chile during the Allende years and by the peasant-worker movement in Brittany in France.** Reto Cadotsch and a few comrades started Les Jardins de Cocagne in 1978 with fifty members. The first year all they ate were turnips. They had poor tools, rented land, no irrigation, and no houses, but their members were very supportive. The farm still rents its land, growing fifty vegetable crops, apples, grapes, and berries on seventeen hectares. The four hundred members do a minimum of four half-days of farmwork a year. Those who do not work pay an additional \$40 for each half-day they miss. Payment is on a sliding scale from \$600 to over \$1,000 for the eleven months of shares. The farm crew packs the bags of produce; members deliver half the shares, and a hired delivery van does the other half. The crew of ten are employees of the farm, earning the average wage for Swiss workers plus benefits. For the past twenty years, 1 percent of the farm’s budget has gone to a North-South solidarity project in the Sahel region of Africa. According to Rudi Berli, **there had been three CSAs in Switzerland for many years, but recently, inspired by the French, six new ones have formed.**

In 1985, **Jan Vandertuin brought the CSA concept from Topinambour near Zurich to the United States where Robyn Van En became its most enthusiastic proponent, spreading the word at conferences of Biodynamic and organic farmers.** At about the same time, Biodynamic farmer Trauger Groh brought his version of CSA from his experiences at Buschberghof in Germany to the founding of Temple-Wilton Community Farm in New Hampshire. Subsequently, Buschberghof has adopted much of Temple-Wilton’s approach, such as the regular membership and the annual

meeting at which members pledge what they can afford to support the farm budget. Wolfgang Stranz, writing about the history of this CSA in the Urgenci newsletter, reports that there are over 1000 box delivery systems in Germany, but only 11 other farms that follow the Buschberghof system, along with 3 in Norway. In 2009, according to Stranz, Buschberghof had 92 member families (320 individuals) who together paid 330,000 Euros to the farm which provided them with almost all the food they need - vegetables, meat, eggs, milk, dairy products and even bread.

4 The North-American CSA Movement

Through the 1980s and 90's, CSAs multiplied slowly but steadily across North America reaching **over 1000 projects by the end of the millenium**. The vast majority of those projects were small family farms, growing organic or Biodynamic vegetables on 3 to 5 acres who recruited members in the nearest urban area. They **averaged from 30 to 50 members and the farms usually retained other markets**.

In the past few years, the **locavore movement, stimulated by many popular books and films**, and the uncertainties of the financial crisis have doubled and tripled that number. **We hear of new CSAs daily with innovative structures and combinations of farms, not-for profit organizations, farmers markets and work places**. The CSAs range in size from large gardens that supply 5 or 6 families to farms of several hundred acres providing shares for thousands of households. The largest CSA that I am aware of that is based on a single farm is Honey Brook Organic Farm in New Jersey with over 3000 shares in the Philadelphia region. Farmer Jim Kinsel and his wife Sherry Dudas are the organizers while much of the production work is done by a family of Mexican migrant workers. There is also a great range in member participation with farms like Peacework and Fair Share at one extreme, requiring that all members either work at the farm and distribution or help administer the core group. At Quail Hill Farm, on Long Island, all of the members pick their own vegetables.

In 12 years, **Just Food**, a non-profit network in New York City, has organized **80 city core groups and matched them up with farms within 2 - 3 hours drive of the city, serving 20,000 households**. In 2010, **they expect to have 100 city CSAs**. In California, Live Power Community Farm has added solar panels to its barns and offers educational programs for city children. In Wisconsin, Vermont Valley has one of the most innovative approaches to the farm labor problem - they recruit **50 members (out of 950 shares) who agree to work 4 hours a week for 20 weeks as the CSA harvest crew**. Just north of Santa Cruz, Freewheelin' Farm delivers its shares with bicycle trailers. Brookfield Farm in Massachusetts invites members to festival/workdays to harvest potatoes

and pumpkins. While many of the CSA farms are small and involve a lot of hand labor, some are highly mechanized – (tractor makes beds at Harmony Valley in Wisconsin, a field of potatoes at T and D Willey Farms in California). Full Belly Farm, a cooperative of four farmers and one of the oldest CSAs in the country, allows some of its 1000 member to pick up at farmers market stands in the city. (photo of Judith Redmond at stand and Full Belly fields)

Diversifying membership to include lower income people has been a priority goal for many CSAs. Our farm and the **Genesee Valley Organic CSA** has charged on a sliding scale since we started in 1989. This year, **members pay from \$240 in food stamps to \$680 in cash for the same 26 weeks of full shares**. Serendipitously, the payments average out to \$480 a season, which is the amount that the farm needs to cover its annual budget. **Other farms that have tried a sliding scale**, such as West Haven Farm in Ithaca, NY, have had the same experience. The Hartford Food System CSA in Granby, Connecticut has been a leader in finding ways to provide CSA shares to low income populations. The farms sells half of its production as regular shares, while the city organization raises the money to cover half the cost of bulk shares for social service organizations that distribute the food according to their missions. For example, **a mental health center provides bags of food to the Hispanic people who come for counseling**. Some of Just Food's CSAs have **revolving loan funds**: the core group collects money from contributions or government health services so that the farmer can receive full payment in advance, while low income members replenish the fund by paying for their food as they are able over the course of the season. The CSAs in the Ithaca area have been holding dinners in the field to raise funds for low income shares. The Food Project in Boston trains young people from both the inner city and the wealthier suburbs to grow food and then distribute some as CSA shares and some through soup kitchens and shelters for battered women. A number of CSAs double as training programs. The Homeless Garden CSA in California offers **training and wages to homeless people**, while Red Wiggler Farm in Pennsylvania provides employment and teaches job skills to mentally retarded people so that they can gain independence.

In the US, **community supported fisheries** is catching on too – starting with **CSA members in Iowa shipping frozen shares from a fisherman in Alaska and then groups of fishermen who have organized around using sustainable fishing practices selling shares of their fresh fish in Maine and Massachusetts**.

In the English speaking regions of Canada, CSA has been spreading on its own, much as in the US. But in Quebec, growth has been faster due to the organizing work of the non-profit Equiterre. Like Just Food, in a decade of steady growth, Equiterre has fostered over 100

projects of ASC (agriculture soutenue par la communauté) encompassing 33,000 households. Equiterre offers farms an excellent deal: **in exchange for a modest fee, Equiterre promotes the CSA concept and recruits all the members for the farms.** In 2000, former coordinator Elizabeth Hunter published “Je cultive, tu manges, nous partageons,” a thorough guide to creating an ASC project. A new edition will be out soon. According to the current coordinator Claire Ruhlmann, the past two seasons have put the risk sharing to the test – cool weather and an epidemic of late blight made it hard for farmers to fill the shares at the same time that the financial crisis hit hard, especially for members of farms who are workers in the forest and automobile industries. Nevertheless, Equiterre persists, educating the public about the value of local food and continues to find more companies where farmers can drop off shares for groups of employees. To meet the demand for more ASCs, they have had to recruit young farmers at Quebec's agricultural schools. (4 photos- logo, farmer with cabbage, 2 Montreal drop-off points).

5 The Danish Box Schemes

During the 1990s, small organic vegetable farms all over England set up **“box schemes,” subscription services where the farm provides regular boxes of produce to people who sign up.** These box schemes **do not require much member involvement in the growing, harvesting, or distributing of the food.** On its website, the Soil Association provides a guide, **“How to Set Up a Box Scheme.”** The **subscription approach is popular in several European countries, but it has taken off like a rocket in Denmark.**

Thomas Harttung, the owner of the Barritskov Farm in western Denmark, told us at the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY) conference in 2004 that his farm started delivering shares to 100 families in 1999. Organized as Aarstiderne, a Web-based organic food delivery service, it had surged to **44,000 customers by 2004.** These days it recruits using Twitter. Although still based at Harttung’s farm, Aarstiderne offers six hundred organic products from over one hundred farms and employs 110 people and thirty delivery trucks. Along with the boxes come recipes from Chef Soren Ejlersen, a key player in the success of this business, and stories about the farms from which the food comes.

Harttung claims that, as in CSA, there is a sharing of the risk because the customers pay in advance, though only for one month at a time.

6. Soil Association and the English CSA

In 2001, George Pilley of the Soil Association did a **feasibility study that concluded that CSA has many benefits** for both farmers and

consumers: *“Consumers have access to fresh food from an accountable source with an opportunity to reconnect with the land and influence the landscape they live in. CSAs deliver environmental benefits of few food miles, less packaging and ecologically sensitive farming, and see the return of local distinctiveness and regional food production with higher employment, more local processing, local consumption and circulation of money in the community enhancing local economies.”* As a result, the Soil Association has been engaging in a project it calls **“Cultivating Communities,”** to facilitate the development of more CSAs in England, and created a **CSA Action Manual, a fifty-seven-page guide to setting up a CSA, which can be downloaded from the project Web site (www.cuco.org.uk).** The manual defines CSA as “a partnership between farmers and consumers where the responsibilities and rewards of farming are shared. . . . CSA is a shared commitment to building a more local and equitable agricultural system, one that allows farmers to focus on good farming practices and still maintain productive and profitable farms.” The manual covers all the relevant topics: how to find land, how to recruit members, sources of funding, production practices, sample operating costs, and profiles of CSAs of different kinds.

In 2005 the Soil Association identified one hundred consumer-farmer partnerships in England, which ranged from the familiar vegetable, meat, and fruit shares to a rent-an-apple-tree project, intentional communities, urban gardens, and conservation based projects. Looking over the profiles, there are several thriving projects—EarthShare in northeast Scotland, Stroud Community Agriculture in Gloucestershire, and Tablehurst and Plaw Hatch CSA in East Essex—having **some novel practices that CSAs elsewhere might consider.** Both Stroud and EarthShare accept payments in LETS (Local Exchange Trading Systems, local alternative currencies). Tablehurst and Plaw Hatch gives people the choice between buying shares and simply investing in the farm to lend it financial support. Kristen Glendinning, who works on the Soil Association CSA project, tells me that there will soon be three new community farms on land owned by the National Trust.

7. The French AMAP Movement and Urgenci

Although I found a box of organic vegetables at my doorstep in La Cadière in July 1977, CSA did not catch on in France until 2001, but then it spread like wildfire, with the number of participating farms reaching three hundred in 2006 and several thousands today. Anyone who has traveled in France and experienced the wonderful farmers’ markets in almost every town would share my surprise that **these markets have not provided the economic support family-scale French farmers need to stay in business.** Competition from cheap imports and fast food (what Jose Bove translates as “mal bouffe”[bouffe is slang for food] has undercut

their markets and pushed them to the edge of bankruptcy. According to farmer Daniel Vuillon, “The social reality of farmers is very hard. The disappearance of small farms is in process. In Bouches-du-Rhone and the Vaucluse some 3,500 farmers are in bankruptcy. . . . In Hyeres, 600 vegetable farms are in severe economic straits.”

Daniel’s farm, Les Olivades, in the town of Ollioules, Provence, was in similar trouble. The Vuillon family has owned and worked the ten hectares of Les Olivades since 1789. Daniel and his wife, Denise, took over in the early 1980s, opening a stand at the farm in 1987 and selling to supermarkets. In 1999 they discovered CSA when their daughter, Edith, traveled to New York and met up with Just Food. The next year, the parents went to see for themselves and toured Roxbury Farm. **When they came home, they met with consumer activists in the nearby town of Aubagne and explained the economics of their situation.** By April 2001 they were distributing their first forty shares to the members of the first Association pour le Maintien d’une Agriculture Paysanne (AMAP), the name they gave to CSA. A television reporter at the opening ceremony asked one of the members whether it wasn’t a lot of trouble to shop this way, and whether she was happy with it. Andre Bregliano, a loyal member to this day, replied: “Oh, yes!!! I am happy to have freshly picked vegetables, I am happy to eat in a healthy way, and if, as a result, the farmer can stay on his farm, that is the most important.”

Within two years, the Vuillons were selling the entire production of their farm to three seventy-household AMAP groups, two picking up at the farm and one in Aubagne. Their improved finances have allowed them to hire four full-time, year-round employees. **They provide their members with a weekly newsletter—two pages with farm news, share list, and recipes.** Members can also purchase bread and chicken/egg shares from neighboring enterprises. **Support from their members has been critical in restraining the municipality from expropriating the farm’s land for a new tramway line.** I was able to visit Les Olivades in the winter of 2005. Within the dense line of trees around the perimeter, you would never know that houses and businesses crowd right up to the edge of the property. An aerial shot would look somewhat like Michael Ableman’s well-known photos of Fairview Gardens in Santa Barbara. Inside this rural oasis, there are 4 hectares of vegetables, 4 hectares of fruit trees, and 1.5 hectares[of greenhouses as well as a picturesque old farmhouse.

After saving their own farm, Denise and Daniel Vuillon have made it their mission to share what they learned with farmers and activists all over France. In May 2001 they founded Alliance Provence, an organization dedicated to helping farms form AMAPs in their province. **The regional government of Provence-Alpes Côte d’Azur soon became a partner in the venture because of the promise of viable economic**

development. At their farm and at meetings around the country, Daniel gives workshops on AMAP production and Denise covers organization. **A national network, has taken up this campaign with impressive energy.** A website lists AMAP projects all over France ("Site National des AMAP" – www.reseau-amap.org) and provides information on how to start a new project, including finding farmers, members, establishing a core group with job descriptions, and many resources from France and around the world. **The text suggests making membership possible for lower-income members through weekly payments and work exchanges.**

The infectious energy and enthusiasm of Denise and Daniel Vuillon and Alliance Provence have also helped bring about **the establishment of Urgenci.** As you know, this is the fourth international conference. The centerpiece of the programs has been **sharing experiences with CSA/AMAP/ASC/Reciproco/Voedselteams/Teikei.** Most of the participants at the first three events came from the United Kingdom and Western Europe, but there was also a scattering of representation from North and South America, Australia, Japan, and Africa. The second conference concluded with the selection of a board charged with writing by-laws and finding a home for the network. The board completed both of these tasks. According to the by-laws, **"The Mission of the Urgenci Network is to further, on the international level, local solidarity-based partnerships between farmers and consumers. We define the solidarity-based partnership as an equitable commitment between farmers and consumers where farmers receive fair remuneration and consumers share the risk and rewards of a sustainable agriculture."** The primary activities have been facilitating exchanges of information and visits among partnership participants in different countries.

8 The Portuguese Reciproco

I had the good fortune to receive an invitation to be one of the speakers at the 2005 CSA conference in Palmela, near Lisbon, Portugal. Before the meetings, **we spent three days observing the first steps of Reciproco,** the Portuguese word for Community Supported Agriculture. **Organizations dedicated to rural development are facilitating Reciproco with funding from Leader,** a European Union-wide initiative that has set in motion 1,000 projects in local areas in the twenty-five member countries. On the preconference tour, we visited ADREPES and TAIPA, two of the fifty-two rural action groups in Portugal. **As pilot projects, ADREPES and TAIPA are helping farmers connect with consumers through CSA, an approach that fits the Leader model.**

The economic pressures of global competition and the European Union's Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) in Portugal resemble the forces that have

brought so many French farmers to adopt AMAP. Unable to compete with large-scale industrialized farms, farmers in periurban areas are selling their land to developers. In more isolated rural areas, the younger generation is abandoning their elders on their subsistence farms to seek opportunity in the cities. **Reciproco provides markets for these farms and new hope that may give farm children reasons to stay in their villages.**

Just before the 2005 conference, **Carlos was in his 7th week of Reciproco - the number of baskets had grown to thirty-two a week.** Previously, Carlos had spent his life growing vegetables for the wholesale market in Porceirao changing his crop mix to match market opportunities. In recent years he had seen his sales to Lisbon supermarkets shrink as lower-priced vegetables flooded in from other parts of Europe. With support from ADREPES, he began supplying baskets of vegetables that consumers pick up at an attractive Lisbon store, the Portugal Rural Shop, which sells regional farm products. Carlos had a goal of fifty baskets, although on his seven hectares of sandy loam soils, where he works with his wife and two hired helpers, he believed he could supply as many as one hundred. Each week, the basket included fourteen products, some from exchanges with neighboring farms. Consumers paid by the week. Carlos was hesitant to ask for payment in advance because he feared that he might not be able to fill the baskets with everything he had promised. On our visit to the store, we saw two basket sizes filled to the brim with lettuce, turnips, cauliflower, lemons, cilantro, cabbage, potatoes, and tomatoes. The previous week, Carlos told us, he forgot the turnips and his customers complained.

Farther south in the Odemira region, **TAIPA organized a group of farmers in the tiny village of Corte Brique to provide baskets of vegetables and eggs to local consumers.** The farmers made the baskets by hand and grew the vegetables using traditional methods. They brought their products to a central distribution point, combined them in baskets of three sizes of different weights, and then took turns delivering to pickup points in three neighboring towns. Like Carlos, they did not expect payment in advance, but their customers signed a six-month contract in which they agreed to pay every week. The baskets were less expensive than similar, high-quality fresh vegetables would have been in a store. The three young women who staffed the TAIPA project told us that it is hard for the farmers to change and that an important aspect of their project was to raise the farmers' self-esteem. During the years of the Salazar regime, many rural people remained illiterate. The TAIPA project provides the farmers with literacy and business training and the technical methods they would need to convert to organic production. TAIPA also promotes the Reciproco concept among consumers and organizes farm visits and olive-picking days.

We visited three very small farms where most of the work is done by hand. The fields we saw were more like big gardens planted with a diversity of crops: broccoli, cauliflower, kale, lettuces, radicchio, and carrots. At this late point in the season, weeds were abundant, but that did not seem to worry the farmers. Each farm had fruit trees, oranges, lemons, and apples, olive and cork trees, and an assortment of poultry and hogs. One of them also had a family of wild boars in a cage. Farmer Andre Anastas told us that he puts manure in the trenches he digs with the help of a donkey. When pest pressure gets too heavy, he uses synthetic pesticides. Before Reciproco, he fed surplus crops to his hogs because he had no markets. **The largest farm we saw had one hectare of land shared by three generations of one family.** The men work off the farm, planting and cutting eucalyptus trees and harvesting cork. They till their large garden with a rototiller and a donkey. Most of their production feeds the family.

Anyone fortunate enough to live in the market shed of these farms could eat very well. The Odemira organizers hosted two sumptuous meals of local products for the two busloads of conference participants on the tour. They regaled us with fine wines, cheeses, smoked meats, an assortment of sausages, honey, preserves, and breads as well as salads, vegetable dishes, and fresh citrus fruit. The farmers, who had apologized for their old-fashioned methods when they showed us their farms, shared their products with us with quiet pride. The success of these pilot projects has led to the initiation of a Portuguese national network that promises future support for Reciproco and rural development it brings.

9 Urgenci Dissemination Missions

Besides organizing four international CSA conferences, the Urgenci network has completed 24 missions sending pairs of French AMAP farmers and activists to countries in Eastern Europe and Africa and bringing farmers from those countries to learn from successful farms in France. I have read through all the reports on the Urgenci website from missions to Slovenia, Bulgaria, and Hungary, Mali, Togo and Morocco. Some of the obstacles to CSA that the French teams have encountered are surprising and instructive about the impacts of historical experience. In several of the Eastern European countries, citizens do not have checking accounts so it is hard for them to make payments in advance and, as in Portugal, the farmers are hesitant to reach out for that kind of trust. Government food safety regulations create serious impediments to direct sales, and in rural areas, there is little knowledge about or support for biological methods of farming. **In all of the mission countries in Europe and Africa, the internal market for organic produce is almost non-existent. CSA appears to be farther along in Mali, Morocco, Benin and Togo than in Poland or Czechoslovakia.**

10 CSA-like efforts elsewhere in the world

Tidbits of information about CSA-like efforts elsewhere in the world have trickled to my attention. In Hungary, a group of people connected with the Institute of Environmental and Landscape Management at Godollo Agricultural University set up the **Open Garden Foundation (Nytott Kert Alapitvány)**, though I have since heard that it folded. In Holland, Strohalm, the Social Trade Organization, has helped organized what it calls "Pergola." Other farms sell "Green Guilders": customers pay 1,000 guilders in advance and then shop at their chosen farm. In Denmark the Landbrugslauget (agricultural cooperative) owns the Brinkholm Farm (35 ha = 86 acres) which employs farmers and sells the products to the consumer shareholders, and other interested consumers. The shareholders select an executive committee of both farmers and consumers to manage the cooperative, while the **day to day running of the farm is managed by the farmers**. Twice a year farmers and members together discuss production at a general meeting. Each shareholder has one vote no matter how many shares he/she has. At the 2005 Palmela Conference, Patrick deBuck from Belgium told us about the **Food Teams (Voedselteams) approach to CSA. Patrick works as an organizer, going from town to town forming groups of consumers. When he signs up twenty households, he connects them with the nearest farm**. In 2005 there were **sixteen hundred households in ninety Food Teams in Flanders**. At that conference, I heard stories of CSA efforts "downunder." Robin Segrave and Kess Krabbe, a couple from Australia, came to the conference to learn more about CSA. Kess is a farmer from Holland; his wife is trying to persuade him to try CSA. They reported that shortage of water was a major hardship for the few CSAs they knew of in Tasmania. My Web searches for CSAs in Australia led me to Mimsbrook Farm CSA, launched as a not-for-profit in 2005, and Food Connect in Brisbane, which offers products from multiple farms, much like the consumer-run Farm Direct Coop in Marblehead, Massachusetts. They both appear to be thriving to this day. Friends tell me they have heard of CSAs in both Israel and Palestine, but I have not been able to get details. The same for Guatemala City and Buenos Aires. **I have read that there are a few dozen CSA farms in Spain, but perhaps we need some Urgenci missions to Latin America.**

11 Asian Movements

At meetings of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) in Asia in the early nineties, teikei farmers like Shinji Hashimoto made presentations about their farms and marketing, yet not many Asian farmers outside of Japan have tried to replicate the teikei model. With the help of IFOAM contacts, I was able to hunt down one CSA-like farm fifty kilometers south of Kuala Lumpur

in Malaysia. GK Organic Farm was founded in 1994 by Gan, a university graduate who gave up a career as an agrochemical dealer to become an organic farmer. According to Gan, the **organic farmers in Malaysia are educated people like himself, not the peasants who make up the vast majority of the people who work the land**. In 1996, Kazumi joined Gan, and thus their farm name, GK Farm. Although Kazumi has moved on, Gan continues to farm, selling shares and supplying an organic store in Malaysia.

A young American named Keefe Keeley, who spent 2007 traveling around the world visiting organic farms, sent me this description of a **CSA-like farm in India**: At Vasant and Karuna Futane's farm, they market almost all their crops through CSA. Their lifestyle is profoundly influenced by Gandhi, Vinoba, and Fukuoka.... They have a 30 acre farm where they have been adapting Fukuoka's philosophy of natural farming to the conditions of central India. ... Around 90% of the food they consume (and serve to the frequent and numerous guests) is grown at the farm, and the rest is sold to friends in towns within a moderate radius of the farm. At the beginning of each year, they ask their friends how much of which crops they will want that year, and plant accordingly.

Ironically, **CSA reached the Beijing area of China via the US**. Two years ago, Shi Yan, a doctoral candidate at the Renmin University School of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, spent 6 months at Earthrise Farm in Minnesota learning how a CSA is run. Upon returning home, she was able to convince her school and assorted authorities to transform Dondon farm, a production-study research base for the Rural Development Institute, into a CSA. **The management team is the Guoren Urban-Rural Mutual Coop, which was founded by Shi Yan's teacher, Professor Wen, who has been promoting ecological agriculture for many years**. Within a year, Little Donkey CSA was up and running with two types of members, a creative mixture of CSA and community garden. One group has ordinary shares. Every week, the farm delivers fresh and organic produce to their homes. The variety and quantity of the produce changes weekly depending on what is ripe for harvest. The others have work shares. Each household has a 30-square-meter plot of land on the farm. Every weekend, they tend their land and harvest whatever is ready to pick. Both types of customers have to sign a 20-week contract with the farm before each planting season and pay in advance, thus the risks are shared by the farm and customers. Little Donkey CSA does not lack workers: besides five managers and 12 farmers, some of them peasants from the village, the farm also has a dozen committed interns. I learned about Little Donkey from Cheng Cunwang who visited my farm in the fall of 2009 and together with Shi Yan is translating my book *Sharing the Harvest* into Chinese. It will be very interesting to see if this CSA continues to flourish and if other farms in China replicate the CSA model.

At the Urgenci conference, during a fleeting encounter in the lady's room, a Korean farmer told me she runs a CSA in Seoul, South Korea.

12 Conclusion

Although consumers in the developed countries of the North are grasping the importance of eating locally grown food, and alternative economic projects based on solidarity, fair trade, and social and economic justice are springing up in many places around the world, the tide of multinational corporate globalization has yet to turn. The emergence of Teikei/CSA/ASC/AMAP/Reciproco/Voedselteams shows how consumers and farmers in many different localities are responding to the same global pressures. **That one form of organization has so many names is an encouraging sign. Once they seize upon the basic principles, farmers and citizen-consumers in each culture are adapting CSA to their local conditions. Each local food project takes its shape from the tastes, talents, needs, and resources of its creators. The more we can learn from and support one another, the faster we will move toward sustainable and peaceful communities.**