Demographics and food waste trends of Common Ground Garden CSA members in Central Minnesota

Kendra M. Butkowski
College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, kmbutkowski@csbsju.edu

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Demographics, Consumption, and Food Waste Trends of Common Ground Garden CSA Members: A Pilot Study

Kendra Butkowski
CSB Nutrition Major- ‘17
Introduction to Community Supported Agriculture

- Community supported agriculture (CSA) has increased in popularity over the last few decades
- Over 4000 CSA programs in the US (Local Harvest, 2016)
- Produce consumption increases during CSA participation (Uribe et al., 2012)
- CSA programs increase produce consumption in underresourced communities (Quandt, 2013)
- 30-40% of US food supply is wasted (USDA, 2017)
- Overall, limited research has been conducted on CSAs
CSA promotes healthy eating, but accessible to all?

- Fruit and vegetable consumption → related to decreased chance for chronic
disease (Boeing et al., 2012)

- Existing research on CSA member profile (Uribe et al., 2012):
  - White/Caucasian
  - Well-educated
  - Income well above poverty
  - CSAs as an option for low-resource communities
Common Ground Garden

- 3 acre vegetable CSA in Saint Joseph, MN
- Founded 1991
- Strong community presence
- Outreach to low-resource community
Goal of Study at Common Ground Garden

Previously, the only data collected from this CSA comes from an end-of-year survey.

Survey inquires about CSA member satisfaction

Our study:

Goal 1: To investigate social and health demographics of CSA members

Goal 2: To investigate vegetable consumption of CSA shares

Goal 3: To investigate vegetable waste of CSA shares
Methods

**Recruitment**: participants were recruited via flyers and email in May/June 2016

**Design**: participants completed surveys throughout the CSA season:

1. Initial Survey (demographics, anthropometrics)
2. Four vegetable consumption and food waste surveys (every other week)
3. End of Season Survey
Example Survey: Vegetable Consumption/Waste

https://www.csbsju.edu/forms/YC0JB14Y70.aspx
Study Participant Demographics (n = 36 total adults, 19 half shares)

- Majority of respondents were women.
- Race: 94% White/Caucasian
- BMI (kg/m²) was normal to overweight:
  - Average Male: 26.6
  - Average Female: 25.7

Education:
- AA (2)
- BA (21)
- MA (11)
- PHD (12)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetable</th>
<th>July 14</th>
<th>Jul 28</th>
<th>Aug 11</th>
<th>Aug 25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Half</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zucchini</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad Greens</td>
<td>Small bag</td>
<td>Small bag</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>2 heads</td>
<td>1 head</td>
<td>2 heads (1 lb)</td>
<td>(broc or kale)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>&quot;larger&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;smaller&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Cabbage</td>
<td>1 head</td>
<td>1 head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumbers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans (G/T/DT)</td>
<td>2 lb</td>
<td>1 lb</td>
<td>2 lb</td>
<td>1 lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kohlrabi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggplant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet Peppers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet Potato</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaves</td>
<td>1 bag</td>
<td>1 bag</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad Turnips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td>3 lb</td>
<td>1.75 lb</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How much of each vegetable was not consumed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>July 14(^{th}) (n = 19)</th>
<th>July 28(^{th}) (n = 17)</th>
<th>August 11(^{th}) (n = 14)</th>
<th>August 25(^{th}) (n = 19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Most Consumed</strong></td>
<td>Zucchini (5)</td>
<td>Cucumber (3)</td>
<td>Sweet Pepper (3)</td>
<td>Zucchini (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Least Consumed</strong></td>
<td>Cabbage (9)</td>
<td>Chinese Cabbage (11)</td>
<td>Sweet Potato Leaves (8)</td>
<td>Potatoes* (15)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not enough participants or vegetables to assess change over time, statistically.
Differences in Vegetable Waste: Knowledge or Preference?

Sweet Potato Leaves

- 10/14 didn’t consume all
- 8/10 threw away

Broccoli

- 4/14 didn’t consume all
- 3/4 threw away
Differences in Vegetable Waste: Timing Issue?

Chinese Cabbage

11/17 didn’t consume all
2/11 threw away

Zucchini

9/17 didn’t consume all
3/9 threw away
Overall vegetable waste was lower than national average

24 total vegetable options

Average person had 9 vegetable options not completely consumed \((36\% \pm 16\%)\)

Average person had 3 vegetables options thrown away \((12.5\% \pm 6\%)\)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percentage of Vegetable Options Not Consumed</th>
<th>Percentage not consumed thrown away</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BMI</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underweight/Healthy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36.2% ± 20.5%</td>
<td>35.7% ± 37.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overweight</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36.3% ± 13.9%</td>
<td>31.8% ± 27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obese</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36.3% ± 14.1%</td>
<td>15.8% ± 10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;$100K</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.3% ± 11.9%</td>
<td>19.1% ± 13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100-150K</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30.8% ± 21.9%</td>
<td>53.7% ± 43.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;$151K</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39.7% ± 22.0%</td>
<td>15.3% ± 5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA/BS</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40.7% ± 17.7%</td>
<td>19.7% ± 24.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.7% ± 14.5%</td>
<td>32.4% ± 30.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD/MFA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31.3% ± 19.9%</td>
<td>43.5% ± 40.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANOVA revealed no significant differences
Participant Perception of Food Waste

True/False: My vegetable consumption increases during the CSA season.

16/19 True
3/19 False

True/False: My food waste awareness increased while participating in the study this CSA season.

16/19 True
3/19 False
Efficacy vs. Behavior - No Significant Differences

Participants were asked on the end of season survey:

*True/False This year I wasted less of my CSA share than previous years.*

Answer: True (n = 8)
- 7.5 out of 24 Vegetables Options weren’t completely consumed (SD: 4.5)
- 5 Vegetable Options were thrown away (SD: 8)

Answer: False (n = 11)
- 9.5 out of 24 Vegetables Options weren’t completely consumed (SD: 3.5)
- 5 Vegetables Options were thrown away (SD: 5)
Discussion

Small sample size

Member Profile and Demographics are similar to existing data

No trends in vegetable consumption or food waste from this study

CSA outreach to the community (churches, EBT) → what can we do to make more feasible?
Limitations To Study

Pilot Study

Small, homogeneous population

Timing of Surveys vs. Freshness of CSA components
Future Research

Surveying CSA members every week → does repetition of vegetable impact consumption?

Determining amount of time allowed for consumption to best assess food waste

Including FFQ to better understand dietary habits

More participants!
Acknowledgments

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Kate Ritger

Common Ground Garden
Questions?
References


