

January 26, 2016

Greetings Folks,

Here at the Farm we have settled into a good winter rhythm, with the outer activity of the Farm being a little bit quieter this time of year. As the life of the Farm turns inward during these winter months it is a time for us farmers to spend some time reflecting on the past season and starting to envision and plan ahead for the season to come. It is also the time of year that we have to put on our business hats and calculate and crunch numbers to give us a clear picture of the farm budget as we move forward.

This past year was officially our get off the ground year--or more literally get on the ground--as we moved onto this property in North Boulder last February. It has been a very full and successful year in so many ways. We cleaned up the property, started putting up some new infrastructure and animal systems, and built up our herd share membership substantially, getting us closer to our projected viable size. We are excited that the Farm has have cultivated so much support in such a short time. This gives us much inspiration as we set out to make plans to move this community farm initiative forward this coming season.

As we look over our numbers from this past season we have realized that we need to make some adjustments and increases in our herd share prices to reflect the true cost of what the farm offers. A price increase is not something we take lightly, as we strive to offer a product from the farm that is created with the utmost quality and integrity, as well as being affordable to our community. In the end the numbers have to add up to make this whole thing work and be economically viable for the long haul.

The most obvious and immediate change is moving from a one time Jar Fee of \$12/share to an annual Jar Fee of \$12/share. Inevitably there is wear and tear on the jars, and particularly the lids over many repeated washings. The metal lids are rusting out much more quickly than we anticipated, which I am sure some of you have noticed. We just invested in a bulk quantity of the BPA free plastic lids. While they do not seal quite as tight as the metal lids, they will hold up longer with the frequent washing. The glass jars hold up longer with repeated washing, but again over time some break and many turn up missing and do not make it back into the regular reuse cycle. Offering milk shares in glass jars that are returned and reused each week is really very impressive on both ends to create such an ecologically sustainable system. We are happy to continue to procure and maintain the glass jar system. But the cost of replacing the lids and jars regularly is something that needs to be built in as an annual fee. This is something many other herd share programs already have built in as well.

You will find this annual jar fee of \$12/share included in your February Herd Share invoice, with the exception of anyone who recently joined the herd share in the past 3 months since you just recently paid your first jar fee. Going forward this fee will be applied to invoices at the beginning of each calendar year.

We have also determined that the monthly herd share price is not quite covering the actual costs of the dairy. As the farmers it is our responsibility to make sure we produce a high quality product with a cost effective and efficient system. As a small scale grass based dairy our prices will not be comparable to milk you buy in the store. We produce artisan quality, nutrient dense, living raw milk on a holistically and sustainably managed farm. Our small scale allows us to micro-manage our animals and dairy practices in a way that is not so accessible on a larger scale. We nurture optimal health in our dairy herd with a grass-based diet and access to high quality minerals and organic sea kelp as nutritional supplements for the cows. Healthy cows translates into healthy milk. A grass-based dairy does not yield the same production of milk as even organic dairies feeding some grain and concentrates. But our goal is not to produce large quantities of milk, rather to produce milk that is not only nourishing, but also healing in its nutritional profile and quality. Our herd share price needs to reflect this cost so that we can maintain this kind of quality going forward.

As of March 01, 2016 we will be increasing our herd share price as follows:

\$60/month per share

\$30/month per half share

\$52/month per share for families receiving 3+ shares a week.

(delivery fee of \$5/member for Fort Collins and Loveland members will stay the same)

Please feel free to contact us or talk with us at the farm if you would like more information or understanding about why we need to make these increases. We want our milk to be affordable for all our of herd share members/families and we also need to be sure that it is reflecting the true cost of what it takes to produce so that we can keep providing it to the community. IF this change will make your milk share unaffordable for your family please talk with us about possible sliding scale options.

Warmly,
Cameron and Daphne