

## **Summer Meadows Farm Goat Share Program**

### **Our Story**

My name is Lynn Selness. Our story began when I conceived my first child 33 years ago. I was very young and I was awed by the miracle of life within me. I dreamed of nourishing my daughter with the fruits of my own hands. I planted my first garden and bought my first goat. I grew up a city girl so this was a great adventure! I've been milking goats ever since to raise my seven healthy children. I love our goats and their milk passionately. Our lives have become richly entwined.

When we moved to California, we brought two milking does, a flock of chickens, dogs, cats, birds, and our family of thirteen in our caravan! In 2000, our Nubian doe birthed twin girls and we moved onto our own land. In 2002, those three goats birthed seven more females, no males! God gave me a milking herd and it seemed a sign we should keep them all and start sharing our healthy milk with others. Actually, I just fell in love with those sweet goats and needed you all to help me raise them! So that's when our idea of a goat share program was birthed!

Now it is 2008, and we are down to just a crew of three: at present I operate Summer Meadows Farm with the help of my two youngest children, Forest and Meadow.

### **Our Belief**

At Summer Meadows Farm, we believe there is beauty and dignity in each animal. We care well for our goats and gratefully receive the affection and bounty they return. We honor and support nature's idea of goats living as a herd, resulting in amazing glimpses of their interactions.

### **Our Care of Goats**

We keep our milking does for their natural lifespan. Unlike more efficient farms, we don't "cull" them when their production drops or their "usefulness" to us wanes. We keep the newborns with the does for at least the first month; after that, the kids sleep together at night separate from the does, so we get the morning milk. You should see the sight of the kids streaming out the gate to rejoin and rapturously nurse their moms every morning! They nurse their moms until *she* weans them – sometimes yearlings are still at it!

We keep our herd small so that we can love each goat and take good care of them. They trust and love us back. We always try to find good homes for our young goats if we have to sell them. Having too many kids would make this tough, which keeps me in check every spring when I want to keep all of the adorable kids. We don't sell our goats for butchering. We love selling kids to new goat keepers, and joyfully teach and assist them in caring for their goat family. Some of the questions are so fun, like 10 yr. old Emily, who took on goat keeping for a home-school project. "I think my newborn kid is biting his nails!" (hooves)

We have had very little disease or illness over the years. We try to use natural healing methods and rarely use an antibiotic, maybe twice here in CA. We have an herbal

wormer and feed lots of fresh garlic. We always seek wholesome ways to heal. At times we've even had to splint little crooked legs on newborns and a couple broken bones, but they've always healed so wonderfully. We are constantly in awe of the miracle of nature.

Our goats have a well-rounded, healthy diet too. Their main feed is alfalfa and oat hay, but as often as possible we get them out in the pastures and for browsing up in the woods where they love it! They are like deer in their tastes, not grazers. Their diet is also supplemented by leftover organic veggies and fruits from Live Earth Farm. Our milking does' diets are supplemented with a grain mix for added protein. We are currently investigating a new feed option called "Chaff Hay," a partially fermented feed stock which is not only more economical than alfalfa and oat hay (much less waste), but it also appears to be more nutritious for the goats.

### **Milk Care**

We are very cleanliness conscious: a lot of hand washing! We milk our goats by hand, washing each goat's udders with an iodine spray before milking. Milk is strained immediately and chilled in the barn, then re-strained and chilled in the house. We keep it at 34 degrees until delivered. When we make cheese, the milk goes right into the sterilized pot and cultures are added. For kefir, the fresh milk is poured right into the glass jars with the kefir buds. The milk for yogurt is heated gently with yogurt starters so there's no time lapse between goat and product. We use stainless steel equipment for all milk handling. We make our natural healthy products with pride.

### **Finance History**

I believe our first year we made no income whatsoever, but our second we proudly earned \$1/day for the whole family's labor! We were committed to our dream! By last year we brought in \$25,000 from goat shares, selling kids, fees for breeding, and renting goats for eating brush. But our feed costs were high and after expenses, we earned at most \$1,000 per month for the combined labor of my two children and I.

So we are raising our costs this year, to help us live, and to keep our hearts encouraged through all the long hours we work on the farm. We are committed to tending our herd, as well as to nourishing and healing those of you who find us in our small corner of this beautiful earth we share.

### **Goat Shares**

Each milking goat is divided into ten 'Ownership Shares' (hereinafter simply called "Shares"). We only sell two Shares in each goat, and retain eight Shares for the right of control and ownership of her offspring. This year we are expecting 23 does to kid, so as the milk comes in above the kids' needs, we will be doing that delicate balancing act between selling shares and anticipating the milk supply throughout the milking season. Last year we were able to provide about 50 families with the goat's bounty.

As a shareholder, you can receive your share's proportion of goat's milk either directly from the farm or via our deliveries.

There is a one-time-only \$20 Share buy-in, which buys your goat share for as long as you like to retain the ownership\*. We will send you a picture of your goat and tell you her story. You must also pay a weekly fee which covers boarding your goat, her feed, housing, fencing, breeding, birthing, milking, grooming, and all the care required to wisely keep her. In exchange for these fees, you are able to receive goat milk “Options”, as follows:

Option packages differ according to two criteria: *how* you plan to obtain your milk and *what* goat product you choose.

HOW: You may pick up your milk three ways: from Summer Meadows Farm, through Live Earth Farm’s CSA membership delivery, or by picking up from my Friday Soquel delivery.

WHAT: Each Option is equal to 1 gallon of milk per week, or an equivalent proportion of products. Our ‘products’ (i.e. anything that is not just straight milk) consist of yogurt, kefir, and 2 cheeses: ricotta and chevre. Equivalents work by milk volume: 1 qt. milk = 1 qt. yogurt or kefir; 1 gallon milk = 1 lb. cheese (note: cheese is packaged in no smaller than ½ lb. bags).

Here are the Option packages to choose from (At the urging of many, this year I am also adding a service fee for labor and ingredients for making the products.):

OPTION A - \$20/week: you pick up 1 gal. milk at Summer Meadows Farm

OPTION B - \$23/week: 1 gal. milk is delivered through Live Earth Farm’s CSA or via my Soquel delivery

OPTION C - \$25/week: 1 gal. milk with 1 product processed from it, with delivery, (note: chevre is the only product available to Soquel delivery) [example: 1 lb. cheese, or ½ gal milk + ½ lb. cheese, or ½ gal. milk + ½ gal. kefir]

OPTION D - \$28/week: 1 gal. milk with 2 or more products processed from it, with delivery to Live Earth Farm CSA members [example: 1qt milk + 1 qt yogurt + ½ lb. cheese, or ½ gal kefir + ½ gal yogurt, or 1 qt yogurt + 1 qt kefir + ½ lb. cheese]

OPTION E - \$20/week: ☺ You adopt a goat and sponsor our work and desire no milk return!

Combinations, splits, and alternating weeks:

OPTION B and D - \$51/week: 1 gal. milk (share B) + ½ gal. yogurt or kefir + ½ lb. chevre or ricotta (share D)

OPTION ‘Half a B’ - \$12/week: ½ gal. milk only

OPTION 'Half a C' - \$14/week: ½ lb. cheese only

Alternating weeks: If you want to alternate product each week [ex: kefir one week, yogurt the next], add \$2/week to the option cost to cover the additional logistics.

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*\*Since most shareholders do not wish to pay weekly board-and-keep fees through the winter, when the goats are not producing milk, the \$20 Share buy-in is renewed at the beginning of each season. If you choose OPTION E, above, the Share buy-in is waived.*

### **Visiting the farm**

We also offer educational opportunities: you can come and experience a dairy farm and the lives of goats. We welcome families to visit; many have come and learned to milk, seen births, made cheese, worked on the farm or just basked in the sunny meadows watching the grazing does and the frisking, dancing kids. We are available for many creative choices!

### **Payments**

A shareholder's initial Share buy-in is due up front, and can be combined with your first fee payment. The weekly boarding fees (as determined by your choice of Options, above) are due in advance, monthly, and can be paid in 3 ways: Live Earth Farm CSA members pay me the same way they pay Live Earth Farm for their CSA shares (one full season check; 2 payments - half now, half August 1<sup>st</sup>; or post-dated monthly checks, to be cashed on the first of each month throughout the season.) Other shareholders (i.e. my customers who are *not* members of Live Earth Farm) can make monthly payments or post-dated monthly checks, since the season depends on longevity of goat's milk production, which we can't predict!

### **How to sign up**

Please call me, Lynn, at 831.786.8966 to set you up with a Goat Share. Once we have settled on your chosen Option package and a start date, you will need to print out and sign the Agreement on the next page, and include it with your checks. Unless agreed otherwise, delivery of milk cannot begin until I receive your payment. I reserve the right to suspend milk delivery upon lack of payment.

Make checks payable and mail to:

Summer Meadows Farm  
405 Webb Rd.  
Watsonville, CA 95076

## Purchase and Sale Agreement

This agreement between Lynn Selness of Summer Meadows Farm (seller) and \_\_\_\_\_ (buyer) is entered into on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_', \_\_\_\_\_.  
name month day year

The buyer purchases \_\_\_\_\_ shares in our herd of goats at Summer Meadows Farm at \$20 per share, giving buyer a limited interest shared with others of co-ownership in the herd.

Buyer agrees to pay a weekly fee for care and boarding of the goats and any services they choose in their Share. Buyer is entitled to receive weekly a proportional share of milk produced by the herd as long as their fee is paid. Buyer chooses their payment and delivery options from seller's share plans.

Buyer may visit the herd as arranged with seller. Seller will offer reasonable educational opportunities for buyer to understand and appreciate the herd and dairy farming.

Buyer's Assumption of Risks and Waiver of Claims. Buyer understands and acknowledges that there may be risks of harm encountered in consuming raw milk; in visiting and/or interacting with the Herd and/or other animals that may be found in the vicinity; in visiting or entering upon the type of premises where the Herd is found; and in being on the same premises as the types of equipment, tools, etc. that are likely to be found upon the type of premises where the Herd is found. By signing this agreement Buyer hereby knowingly and voluntarily assumes the risk of any and all such harm and also hereby waives any and all right to make, file, or pursue any claim, demand, suit, action, cause of action, damages, etc. against Seller or any of Seller's agents, employees, lessors, lessees, vendors etc. that arises out of or relates to any harm encountered or caused, in whole or in part, by, consuming raw milk; visiting and/or interacting with the Herd and/or other animals that may be found in the vicinity of the Herd; visiting or entering upon the premises where the Herd is found, or encountering equipment, tools, etc. that are found upon the premises where the Herd is found.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Seller: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lynn Selness

Buyer: \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(print name)