



## VMP Produce & Produce Bag FAQ

### Where are CSU's VMP Produce Stands located?

Below are the current site days, times, and locations – we will be adding more – check <http://www.csuinc.org> for updates.

#### Magnolia Place

1910 Magnolia Avenue

Los Angeles, CA 90007

Thursdays, 10:30 am - 1:30 pm

Directions: Stand is located in the courtyard of the entrance to the Magnolia Place Family Center, in front of the parking lot at the corner of Magnolia Ave and Washington Blvd.

Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/Bap6F>

### Where does the produce at CSU's stands and in the bags come from?

Our produce is grown at CSU's urban mini-farms or by local family farmers from whom we purchase directly.

### Is it organic? What is "beyond organic"?

CSU produce is grown organically, meaning naturally, without the use of artificial chemicals or fertilizers, but most of what we sell is not certified organic. The certification process is onerous and expensive and difficult for small growers to participate in. Many small farmers who have grown organically for years have found it hard to become certified. At CSU we call our produce "beyond organic" to signify that it is not only grown organically, but has benefits that go beyond those measured by the USDA organic standard, including its production benefits the local economy, being local it reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and buying from local farmers and local food businesses strengthens local food security. Beyond Organic recognizes that that we **choose** not to participate in the USDA certification process. Our buyers can visit our mini farms on many different occasions and participate with us to see for themselves how we grow our food.

### Why does CSU emphasize local produce as much as organic?

Some organic produce is grown many miles away and shipped or trucked long distances. So even though it is not sprayed it is still picked before it is ripe and maybe even frozen.

Furthermore, the transporting process leaves a significant carbon footprint. Local produce is picked when it is at its peak, so it has more taste **and** more nutrition, it travels much shorter distances and the environmental impact is significantly reduced. The best combination for your health and for the planet is local and organic.

### **Why does CSU's produce look different?**

The produce that most of us are used to purchasing and eating is grown on huge corporate farms and then shipped many miles. It is picked before it is ripe and is often sprayed and/or frozen to stay "good looking." Produce begins to lose its nutrients as soon as it is picked. We work hard to harvest our produce the day we make your bags and to buy from local farmers the day they harvest their produce. But many of the farmers we work with don't have refrigeration (and of course we don't use sprays to dye or otherwise preserve the produce). So your greens may look a little limp and your fruits and veggies may not all be the exact same size. But (as proven by several studies) local beyond organic food has more nutrients and more taste. So, if the plums feel softer than the rock hard fruit you are used to purchasing at the grocery store, it's because they are ripe and ready to eat! Give them a try, and taste the difference!



### **How do I subscribe to the Produce Bag program?**

Email [vmp@csuinc.org](mailto:vmp@csuinc.org) or call (213) 746-1216 for information on how to sign up.

### **What produce will I receive in my bag?**

Subscribers to the Village Market Place Produce Bag Subscription Program receive a bag of local, seasonal fruits, vegetables and herbs depending what is currently being grown and on the type of bag subscribed to. We currently offer three different types of bags:

- *Original*: Includes a wide range of seasonal fruits and vegetables from CSU's mini urban farms and from regional small farmers.
- *Diabetic Friendly*: This bag will emphasize items that are good for diabetics, such as nopales, and will not contain items diabetics are advised to avoid, such as potatoes and oranges.
- *Snack*: This bag is designed for those too busy to cook who still want to get their fruits and veggies. The bag will contain items that can be enjoyed without cooking.

Along with the produce, subscribers receive a weekly newsletter with cultural, nutritional, and cooking information for the items in their bag.

### **Can bags be customized; if I don't like turnips can you give me something else instead?**

We don't do any customizations, one of the reasons we can keep our bag prices so low is that we keep administrative costs minimal. We have also heard from many subscribers that when they get an item in their bag along with nutritional information and a recipe, they try it and find that they actually like it and in this way have eaten things they would not have thought of trying previously.

### **What happens if I don't pick up my bag?**

Produce bags not picked up from their designated location during their scheduled time are forfeited and will be donated. Subscribers are charged for bags that are not picked up.

### **Can I have a break in receiving paid bags?**

If you are unable to pick up your bag on any given week, you may place your subscription on hold. Holds must be placed by midnight on Sunday in order to go into effect for the coming week. Holds for future weeks can be placed at any time.

### **How many people does one bag feed, what do we get and is it good value?**

This really depends on how much produce you use. On average, the Small bag can provide enough produce for one to two people for a week. The Large bag can do the same for 3 to 4 people. There are an assortment of vegetables and fruits depending on the season and what is at its best locally. In an independent study by a group of USC business students, CSU's produce bag was found to be the best value produce available locally, even better value than much of the non-organic produce.

### **Can you deliver the bags?**

We have offered delivery in the past and are working to offer it again. Stay posted for updates.

### **What payment methods do you accept?**

We currently accept payment with Cash, Credit, Check, and EBT.

**Where can I pick up my produce bag?**

We currently offer produce bag pick-up at the Magnolia Place Produce Stand, and will be expanding the locations through the summer of 2018. Check <http://www.csuinc.org> for updates.

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