

Farm share grows cheap vegetables for low-income communities

By [Kumasi Aaron](#), The Grio

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It's a Wednesday afternoon, and for Dominique and her son Dominick, that means one thing: fresh organic produce.

"Well my favorite vegetable is carrots," said Dominick, "because they're crunchy."

They get those crunchy carrots and other organic vegetables every week at the Flatbush Farm Share, one of the newest Community Supported Agriculture groups - or CSAs - in New York City.

Dominique buys "shares" of vegetables from a local farm before it's harvest season. Then the farm delivers a variety of fresh foods - like carrots, onions and squash - to her neighborhood.

"I've been eating more vegetables since I've been here. And I've been introducing my son to different varieties," said Dominique.

That's because now she can afford to buy them. This year the Flatbush Farm Share is the only new CSA in New York City that allows members to pay for shares based on their income, and even supplement the cost by using food stamps or farm share volunteer hours. Organizers say their produce is half the price of vegetables sold in chain grocery stores.

For many members, just finding organic vegetables like these in this community is hard enough, and in a tough economy, paying for them is even harder.

Flatbush resident Amy Seek wanted to make it a little easier. After attending a CSA meeting she decided to start one herself, for people who needed it most.

"There's a lot of low-income communities that don't have the luxury to choose the food that they eat, and so we wanted to provide an option for affordable organic fresh produce," said Flatbush Farm Share founder, Amy Seek.

To make that happen, Amy teamed up with several non-profits including NYCCAH, The New York City Coalition Against Hunger. NYCCAH's executive director Joel Berg says the partnership addresses a serious problem.

Berg said, "In 2007, even before the national economic downturn, there were more than 36.2 million Americans living in households that couldn't afford enough food."

"I'm glad you know, they chose my community, I'm very glad for that, very grateful," Dominique said.

Grateful that she and little Dominick can eat a little healthier.