Welcome to week six of the Veggie Box! July is National Blueberry Month, and we’re excited to help you celebrate with fresh blueberries this week! You’ll also find a variety of other mid-summer classics perfect for making your favorite dishes or trying new creations. Enjoy, and have an amazing week!

What's in the Box?

Sweet Onion, Peckham Farms, Lansing
Green Cabbage, Lansing Roots Farm, Mason
Parsley, Urbandale Farm, Lansing
Basil, Bourne Fraiche Farms, Lansing
Kohlrabi, Titus Farms, Leslie
Blueberries, Monroe Family Organics, Alma
Cherry Tomato, Ten Hens Farm, Bath
Beets, Urbandale Farm, Lansing

Add-Ons:
Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt
Sweet Treat, Rooted Home, Lansing
Meat Variety, Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston

Crop Profile: Blueberries

Blueberries are native to North America and include a variety of species from the section Cyanococcus in the genus Vaccinium. Blueberry shrubs can vary in height from about four inches to 13 feet. In commercial cultivation, the smaller species are called "lowbush blueberries" and include managed collections of wild blueberries, while the bigger species are known as "highbush blueberries." The large, plump berries we know so well today are relatively new. Around 1910, Elizabeth White, a New Jersey cranberry producer, and the USDA botanist Frederick Coleman began breeding wild blueberries. By 1916, their work created the very first domestic varieties, which had larger, sweeter fruits and turned blueberries into a valuable commercial crop. Today, Michigan is the number one state in highbush blueberry production with over 100 million pounds harvested each year. Blueberries have also become one of the most well known superfoods, and are now icons of a healthy lifestyle. In the 1990s, scientists began studying the health benefits related to the blueberry's high level of antioxidants that produce its deep blue color. The antioxidants in red/purple fruits and vegetables have been shown to have multiple effects, including supporting the integrity of blood vessels and reinforcing the collagen in skin.

Producer Spotlight:

Urbandale Farm a.k.a The Lansing Urban Farm Project (LUFP), is a rapidly growing non-profit farm. In 2010, Linda Anderson and Laura B. Delind (co-directors) realized that there was a need for more intensive food production in Lansing. They began their work in Urbandale on Lansing's Eastside, a neighborhood that lies within the city's 100 year floodplain, has numerous vacant lots, and lacks (for many) easy access to a full service grocery store. Urbandale Farm continues to thrive and has quickly become a Lansing food staple. Today they grow and sell fresh vegetables, flowers, and herbs on five separate fields. In 2011, Urbandale Farm began an apprenticeship program designed to teach selected area residents how to farm in an urban area and engage with the local food system. The majority of their apprentice program graduates have become active urban farmers and food leaders. By developing local talent and providing affordable produce, Urbandale Farm works to build a secure food system that serves and belongs to Lansing’s Eastside residents.
Fresh Summer Tomato Sauce  
*Submitted by Ruthanne Sudderth*

1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved  
2 sweet onions, grated  
4 leaves of basil cut into ribbons  
1 clove garlic, grated or minced  
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar  
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
Salt and pepper.  

In a small sauté pan, heat olive oil over medium-low heat. Add garlic and onion, simmering for 3-4 minutes.  
Add cherry tomatoes and season with salt. Allow to cook until the tomatoes have released their liquid.  
Add balsamic vinegar and stir to combine. Finish with basil. Enjoy warm or at room temp over pasta, vegetables or as a bruschetta topping!

Kohlrabi & Cabbage Slaw  
1/2 hd cabbage, shredded  
1 ea kohlrabi, peeled and cut into matchsticks  
1/2 ea sweet onion, thinly sliced  
1/2 lemon, juiced  
1/4 cup apple cider vinegar  
1/2 tsp whole grain mustard  
1/2 garlic clove, minced  
1/4 cup dried cranberry  

Combine the lemon, vinegar, and mustard (if you would like a little sweet, add a touch of honey). Add all the remaining ingredients and let the slaw rest for about 30 minutes in the refrigerator. I like to store it in a mason jar, it gets better with age!

Roasted Beet and Blueberry Salad  
2 ea beets, roasted and cut into large dice  
1/2 cup blueberries  
4 oz mixed greens  
2 Tbsp Gorgonzola (or blue) cheese  
1/4 cup almonds, chopped  
1/2 cup olive oil  
1/4 cup balsamic vinegar  
1 Tbsp honey  
Salt & pepper  

Roast the beets in aluminum foil in a 350 oven until tender (about 30-45 minutes). Peel the beets while warm and allow to cool. Make the vinaigrette by streaming the oil into the vinegar/honey mixture. If you would like a little tart, add a squeeze of lemon juice. When the beets are cooled, add everything together and toss with the vinaigrette. Add a little cheese on top to garnish and enjoy.

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What do I do with that?  
Veggie Box Q & A

*Can I use the beet tops for anything?*
Yes! The beet greens are a great addition to a big pot of greens—mix them up with collards, kale, turnip or any other hearty green. They can also be tossed into a mixed greens salad and dressed with your favorite vinaigrette. The flavor profile is similar to a spinach or chard, sweet and surprisingly deli.

*What is the difference between sweet white onions and Vidalia onions?*
Vidalia onions are a specific variety of sweet onions that are grown in Georgia (in and around Vidalia, GA). There is a committee that recommends the varieties (the hybrid yellow granex and others) that can be named Vidalia onions and then the US Secretary of Agriculture approves the recommendation. The variety we have this week is Ailsa Craig White Sweet Onions which is an English heirloom that is wonderfully sweet and mild. Have it raw or caramelize for a sweeter flavor.

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This week we have included the Taste the Local Difference guide to local food in Southeast Michigan! You will find us on page 23 complete with a picture of last year’s Veggie Box interns. We are happy to be a part of this wonderful publication showcasing local providers. Supporting local not only helps the local economy but also the flavor of local is so fresh...think about how long it took that salad mix or other produce to get from California to Michigan (on a truck).

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Comments, Questions, Suggestions?  
We would love to hear from you!  
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