Welcome to week eight! August has arrived, and the beginning of this sunny month brings not only a Veggie Box packed with summer treats, but also the celebration of National Sandcastle Day this Saturday. After you spend a few hours building a castle by the water or reflecting on past creations, there's no better way to recharge than with a fresh meal eaten under the sun with family and friends!

What's in the Box?
- **Sage**, Magnolia Farms, Lansing
- **Spring Mix**, Monroe Family Organics, Alma
- **Zephyr Squash**, Bourne Fraiche Farms, Lansing
- **Roma Tomatoes**, Peckham Farms, Lansing
- **Yellow Onion**, Ten Hens Farm, Bath
- **Rainbow Carrots**, CBI Giving Tree Farms, Lansing
- **Garlic**, Green Eagle Farm, Onondaga
- **Shallots**, Green Eagle Farm, Onondaga
- **Peaches**, Phillips Orchard & Cider Mill, St. Johns
- **Swiss Chard**, Titus Farm, Leslie

Add-Ons:
- **Bread**, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt
- **Sweet Treat**, Good Eats Diva, Lansing
- **Meat Variety**, Grazing Fields, Charlotte

**Crop Profile:**
**Shallots**

Shallots (*Allium cepa var. aggregatum*) are classified as a variety of onion, but unlike common onions (*Allium cepa*), shallots have smaller, slimmer bulbs that grow in clusters rather than individually. Shallots also have a slightly sweeter flavor similar to a cross between onions and garlic. Due to these subtle differences, shallots and onions are often used interchangeably. Both can be eaten raw, pickled, dried, or cooked and caramelized. In classic French cuisine, however, shallots are preferred for their subtle flavor, and they routinely season sauces, soups, and vinaigrettes. Shallots are also used widely in many Southeast Asian cuisines. In Thai cooking, shallots are used in curry pastes and salads, and deep-fried shallot slices garnish a variety of dishes. People often prefer the taste of shallots over onions, and as a result, they have been called the onion for people who don’t like onions. Shallots are prized not only for their unique flavor, but also their nutritional value, which can actually surpass that of common onions in a few ways. Shallots have a slightly higher mineral content and more antioxidant compounds, which have anti-inflammatory properties and help to reduce the risk of certain cancers. Shallots also replace salt as a garnish in many recipes, helping people with high blood pressure or heart disease reduce their sodium intake. Like common onions and garlic, whole shallots will stay fresh and crisp the longest in a dry, well-ventilated storage area. Once cut, they can be stored in the refrigerator where they will keep for a few days.

Producer Spotlight:

Steve and Chela of Green Eagle Farm are 20 year veteran farmers and stewards of the land. They take great joy in growing a wide variety of crops and experimenting with new and unique products, all while being earth friendly in their practices. You know they care about what they do when you see the lemon and mature fig tree carefully protected from the Michigan winters in one of their hoop houses. Not long after Steve and Chela met, the two knew they were destined to be together as life partners and land stewards. Now they grow a large selection of vegetables, flowers, and herbs, including heirloom and open-pollinated varieties. But their specialties are greens, garlic, and potatoes. Keeping the health of the land as their top priority, all of Green Eagle Farm’s produce is ecologically-grown and follows organic standards.
Tomato Gratin
2 roma tomatoes, cut in half
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil
1 garlic clove, minced
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 1/4 cups coarse fresh bread crumbs
1/3 cup grated parmesan
Preheat oven to 500°F.
Arrange tomato halves in an oiled gratin dish or shallow casserole. Season with salt and pepper and sprinkle with basil. Cook garlic in oil in a small skillet over moderate heat about 1 minute. Remove from heat and stir in bread crumbs, cheese, and salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle over tomatoes. Bake in middle of oven until crumbs are golden, about 15 minutes. Do not walk away from the oven- they burn quickly!!

Classic French Vinaigrette
2 Tbsp shallots, finely chopped
2 Tbsp red wine vinegar
1/4 tsp fine sea salt
2 tps Dijon mustard
5 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
In a small bowl, whisk together the shallots, vinegar, and 1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt; let the mixture stand 10 minutes. Whisk in the mustard, then add the oil in a very slow, thin, steady stream, whisking constantly until the dressing is emulsified. Season with fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Spicy peach salsa
Submitted by Ruthie Sudderth
2 ripe peaches, pitted and peeled
2 Roma tomatoes, seeded
1/2 a jalapeño (love a lot of spice? Leave the seeds and ribs in! Want a milder flavor? Remove the seeds and ribs)
1/4 minced onion
2 tbsp chopped cilantro
Juice of 2 limes
1/2 tsp kosher Salt
Dice your peaches and tomatoes into 1/3" (roughly) cubes. Mince jalapeño and onion
Combine everything in a bowl with salt, lime and cilantro. Let chill in fridge for 1 hour. Enjoy as a chip dip, or it goes great on grilled chicken or fish!

Honey Glazed Carrots
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 pounds carrots, cut into 1-inch lengths
1 cup water (or chicken broth)
1/2 cup honey
2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
Coarse salt and ground pepper
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
Saute the carrots in a cast iron skillet until slightly browned. Deglaze the pan with the water and add the vinegar and honey to the pan. Reduce the heat to a simmer for about 10 minutes until the liquid is syrupy. Add the butter to the pan and swirl around to create a sauce (similar to a buerre blanc). Add the salt and pepper to taste and enjoy!

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

What is the difference between a shallot and an onion?
Shallots are milder than an onion with a hint of garlic. They are nice to use in dressings or other recipes raw. They also saute very nice, I like to use them in my green beans a la mondine as they add a beautiful flavor to the dish.

How do you peel a peach?
To peel a peach, you just drop them in a pot of boiling water for about 30 seconds. Remove with a slotted spoon and plunge the peach in an ice bath for about 10 seconds. The skin will just slip off and you will have a perfectly peeled peach, ready for canning or pie! Enjoy!

Please be sure to return your box every week! or bring a reusable bag for your fruits & veggies!

Comments, Questions, Suggestions? exchange@allenneighborhoodcenter.org
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