

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 4: October 11

Welcome to week 4 of the Fall Veggie Box! By being a member of our multi-farm CSA, you are a major part of our local food system! A local food system is a collaborative network that integrates sustainable food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management in order to enhance the environmental, economic, and social health of an area. Increasingly, communities are organizing “food hubs” around co-ops or other community wealth building enterprises to anchor local food systems. Food hubs help provide wider access to markets for small to mid-sized producers, and increased access to fresh healthy food for consumers, including underserved areas and food deserts. In 2011, ANC committed to create a multi-functional food resource center and food hub: the Allen Market Place. As envisioned, this would build upon our previous decade of food-related initiatives and allow creative bundling of additional programs to strengthen the food system of the Eastside and, indeed, the mid-Michigan region. It is through the Allen Market Place Food Hub that the Veggie Box is possible, and in return, our local food system is strengthened. Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Tomac Pumpkin Patch

What started as a 4-H and FFA project selling a few pumpkins has now grown into an on-farm and traveling market. The Tomac families have been involved in farming in the Chesaning area for the last four generations. For 30 years, the family farm has grown primarily corn, soybeans and wheat. The pumpkins and squash started with a couple different varieties for carving and ornamental uses. Since then, they have grown to include many distinct and unique varieties including almost 200 different pumpkins, gourds and squashes.

Crop Profile

Acorn Squash

Squashes such as the Green acorn are part of a group of crops known as “the three sisters.” Native American cultures relied on corn, beans, and squash as their main food source and grew them together as these crops have a mutually beneficial relationship and can boost nutrients in the soil to increase yields. Indigenous communities would commonly roast or boil squashes and would then preserve the flesh in syrup. The leaves, blossoms, and young shoots were also consumed as a source of nutrients. In addition to consumption, acorn squashes were dried and used as small containers.



What's in the Box?

Mint, *Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing*
Bok Choi, *Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing*
Snap Peas, *Borne Fraiche Farms, Mason*
Cherry Tomatoes, *Peckham Farms, Lansing*
Bull's Horn Peppers, *Owosso Organics, Owosso*
Beets, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*
Celery, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*
Jalapeño Peppers, *Owosso Organics, Owosso*
Acorn Squash, *Tomac Pumpkin Patch, Chesaning*

Add-Ons

Bread, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*
Meat, *Grazing Field Cooperative, Charlotte*
Sweet Treats, *Stonehouse, Mason*

ANC Happenings

Interested in getting some hands-on experience and helping out here at ANC? Come volunteer with us! If interested check out our website and fill out a volunteer form. Once you have completed the form, you can send it to: volunteer@allenneighborhoodcenter.org. Some of our volunteer opportunities include: our Hunter Park Garden House, our Farmers Market, Youth Service Corps, and so much more!

Recipes

Beet Salad with Arugula & Balsamic Vinaigrette

Balsamic Vinaigrette:

- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon dijon mustard
- 1 garlic clove finely minced
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper

Veggie Box Beets

- 5 oz (6 cups) baby arugula, rinsed and spun dry
- 1/2 cup pecans
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup feta cheese

Preheat oven to 400 F. Line a baking sheet with foil. Wrap each beet in a sheet of foil. Bake in oven for about an hour. Remove from oven, allow to cool, then peel skin and slice into halves then wedges. Toast 1/2 cup of pecans in a dry skillet, tossing until golden. Add arugula to large mixing bowl, along with beets, cheese, pecans, and cranberries.

Balsamic Vinaigrette Dressing:

In a mason jar, combine all dressing ingredients (1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil, 3 Tbsp balsamic vinegar, 1 Tbsp dijon mustard, 1 pressed garlic clove, 1/4 tsp salt and 1/8 tsp pepper) and shake well to combine and add to the salad to taste. If not serving salad right away, shake the dressing again just before drizzling over the salad.



Rice & Beans Stuffed Acorn Squash

Veggie Box Acorn Squash

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 cup long grain brown rice
- 1 cup cooked black beans
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Preheat oven to 350 F. Half acorn squash and scoop out insides. Brush the squash with olive oil and place on lined baking sheet cut-side down. Roast 30-40 minutes or until cooked through. Meanwhile combine rice, beans, cumin, paprika, and toasted sesame oil. Cool until all water is absorbed into the rice. Once tender, remove squash from oven. Scoop out until there's about 3/4 inches of squash left in the halves. Mix the squash with the rice and season to taste. Fill squash with rice mixture and serve.

Green Chutney

- 2 cups Fresh Coriander Chopped
- Veggie Box Mint Chopped
- 3-4 Green Chillies Chopped
- 1 inch Ginger Chopped (from last week's box!)
- 6-8 cloves Garlic (from last week's box!)
- 1/4 tsp Hing
- 1/2 tsp Cumin Seeds
- Salt to taste
- 3 tbsp Lemon Juice

Blend all the ingredients in a blender until smooth. Try not to use water, but if it's getting difficult to blend, add a tablespoon or two of water and then blend. Serve this chutney with sandwiches or wraps, or with chaat, samosas, or other types of Indian snacks!