



Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 7: April 18

Many of you have probably encountered the phrase "urban farming," not only because you are dedicated participants in your local food system, but because the term has been gaining popularity in recent years. Simply put, urban farming is growing or producing food in a heavily populated town or municipality. It often involves using small plots of land such as vacant lots, gardens or rooftops in the city, and can take many forms, from small "microfarms" to larger operations. Urban farming has been promoted as a way to minimize the environmental impact associated with food production and distribution. This type of farming also seeks to make healthy food both affordable and accessible to those who need it, addressing issues of urban food insecurity. Every week, typically at least one urban farm is represented in your Veggie Box. The following is a list of urban farms who participate in the Veggie Box: Highwater, Magnolia, Half Barn, Beewise, The Feral Field, Hunter Park GardenHouse, and Urbandale farms. Thank you for supporting local food and urban farming!

Producer Spotlight

Tomac Pumpkin Patch

Tomac Pumpkin Farm is a four-generation family run operation located in Chesaning, Michigan. They started as a non-profit and FFA project selling a few pumpkins, but have grown to primarily raise corn, soybeans, and wheat over the last 30 years. They also now offer almost 100 different pumpkins, gourds and squashes as well as other traditional fall decorations like corn stalks, straw, and Indian corn.

Crop Profile

Maple Syrup

Maple syrup, a natural sweetener with depth and complexity, goes well with way more than breakfast. The maple flavor is a little toasty, maybe floral, and is truly best described by its own name, "maple," since it's so unique. The pure maple syrup that is found in your box has a higher price tag than the standard pancake syrup found in the supermarket, partly a result of the labor involved (it takes 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of maple syrup). Sugarmakers (yes, that's what they're called and it's a wonderful title) insert spouts into maple trees and collect the sap in buckets hanging below the spout. The sap is then taken to a sugarhouse, where it is boiled down so it evaporates until it reaches a thick and syrupy consistency. Pancake syrup, on the other hand, is made with corn syrup and artificial maple extract. So enjoy, and we hope you have a newfound respect for maple syrup!



ALLEN
HORTICULTURAL CENTER

Veggie Box

What's in the Box?

Dill, *Hunter Park GardenHouse*, Lansing
Salad Mix, *Hunter Park GardenHouse*, Lansing
Organic Spinach, *Monroe Family Organics*, Alma
Maple Syrup, *Tomac Pumpkin Patch*, Chesaning
Organic Collard Greens, *MSU Student Organic Farm*, Holt
Beets, *Hillcrest Farms*, Eaton Rapids
Pea Shoots, *Monroe Family Organics*, Alma & *Half Barn Farm*, Lansing

Add-Ons

Bread, *Stone Circle Bakehouse*, Holt
Meat, *Heffron Farms Markets*, Belding
Pork, *Grazing Fields Cooperative*, Charlotte
Beef, *Heffron Farms Markets*, Belding
Chicken, *GCC Organics*, Mt. Pleasant
Cheese, *Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery*, Onondaga
Chevre, *Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery*, Onondaga
Cold Brew, *Rust Belt Roastery*, Lansing
Eggs, *Grazing Fields Cooperative*, Charlotte
Sweet Treats, *Rooted Home Farm & Goods*, Lansing

ANC Happenings

Register for Healing with Plants: Herbs, Oils, Spirits:
Saturday, April 20, 12-2pm, Hunter Park GardenHouse, \$12. Basics of holistic healing explored through use of home and garden plants of our area. Workshop facilitated by K'Anna Burton, former GardenHouse Program Director and current Holistic Health practitioner and educator. Register at <https://herbz.eventbrite.com>

Recipes

Short-Cut Collard Greens

Veggie Box collard greens
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 small onion, chopped
1 tablespoon cider vinegar
1 tablespoon Veggie Box maple syrup
1/8 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes
3/4 cup vegetable broth

Remove the stems and center ribs from the collard greens and discard. Cut the leaves into 1/2-inch strips. Place the greens into a large, microwave-safe bowl with the water and cover tightly. Microwave on high for 5 minutes. In the meantime, heat the oil and add onion to the pan and cook until onions have softened, about 2 minutes. Add the collard greens and stir in the vinegar, maple syrup, red pepper flakes, and broth. Bring to a simmer and cook, covered, for 30 minutes. Season with salt.

Greek Spinach and Rice: Spanakorizo

Veggie Box spinach
Juice of half lemon
1-2 onions (from last week's Veggie Box!)
2 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon dry mint
2/3 cups water
1/3 cup medium grain rice
1-2 tablespoons chopped Veggie Box dill
1 tablespoon tomato paste (optional); Salt and pepper to taste

In a large pot wilt the Veggie Box spinach with the lemon juice and 1 teaspoon olive oil. Set aside to drain. In another pot sauté the onion with the rest of the olive oil until soft. Add the Veggie Box Spinach, dry mint, Veggie Box dill and 2/3 cup warm water and bring to a boil. Add the rice, salt (as needed) and pepper and simmer for about 20 minutes until rice is soft. Add additional warm water as needed. Serve warm or at room temperature with a squeeze of lemon juice and a bit of olive oil and feta.

Pea Shoots with Garlic and Ginger

Veggie Box pea shoots
1-2 cloves of garlic (from a previous Veggie Box!) minced
1/2 inch slice of ginger peeled and minced
1-2 teaspoon olive oil
Salt to taste

Thoroughly wash pea shoots in cold water several times and trim them into 2-3 inch pieces. Add 1 teaspoon of olive oil to frying pan and sauté ginger and garlic until fragrant. Add pea shoots and sauté for 2-3 minutes.

Maple Glazed Beets

Veggie Box beets, peeled and cubed.
3 tablespoons butter, divided
2 tablespoons Veggie Box maple syrup
1 lemon, zested and juiced

Heat the oven to 400 degrees F. Place the beets in a roasting pan. Dot with 1 tablespoon of butter, and roast the beets, covered, for about 30 minutes. Melt the other 2 tablespoons of margarine in the microwave. Stir in the maple syrup and 1 tablespoon of the lemon juice. Pour this mixture over the beets. Bake, covered, for another 30 minutes, or until the beets are tender and the sauce is thick. Sprinkle with the lemon zest and serve.

Lemon Pasta with Parmesan and Pea Shoots

Veggie Box pea shoots
Zest of 1 large lemon
1/4 cup lemon juice
1/3 cup good-quality extra virgin olive oil
1 cup grated parmesan cheese, plus extra for garnish
Fresh ground black pepper, to taste
1/2 lb. spaghetti
1/2 cup pasta water (reserved from when you cook the spaghetti)

If your pea shoots are particularly long, chop them into halves or thirds so they're a bit easier to manage. Set aside. In a large bowl, whisk together lemon zest, lemon juice, olive oil, grated parmesan cheese, and a generous amount of fresh ground pepper. Cook spaghetti in salty water until al dente. Reserve 1/2 cup of the pasta water. Drain spaghetti and immediately add it to the mixing bowl with the lemon-olive oil mixture. Add reserved pasta water and toss to combine. The heat from the pasta will warm the sauce and melt the parmesan cheese. Add pea shoots to pasta and toss until parmesan has melted into a smooth sauce and pea shoots have softened slightly. Taste pasta and add a pinch of kosher salt to taste. Top pasta with additional parmesan cheese.

