

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 9: May 2

The season for foraging for fiddleheads, ramps, dandelions, and morel mushrooms in the woods has just begun, and free healthy food will continue to be available for those willing to forage for it. Michigan woods and waters are full of edible foods waiting for consumption. Did you know a cup of morel mushrooms have 44 percent iron and 34 percent of Vitamin D and if grown in full sun can contain 50 percent of your daily value of Vitamin D? Ramps and Fiddleheads contain a high percentage of Vitamin A - in fact, most wild foods have a higher percentage of nutrients. In the summer there are the popular blueberries, raspberries, blackberries and sumac berries. Other plants that are edible are nettle leaves, lamb's quarters, cattail roots, and sheep sorrel. If you are not privy to owning acreage or wooded area then remember to harvest only on state land or parks, national forests or private property with landowner permission. Avoid over harvesting, leaving some behind for others and for sustainability for future growth - don't be greedy! The most important aspect of foraging for food is getting out in the woods! Finding someone local who is a skilled forager to take you is a great first step. It's also important to remember that though foraging can be a fun, healthy, and natural way to appreciate truly local food, most foods that are foraged have been an important part of indigenous cultures for generations! Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Magnolia Farms

Magnolia Farms is a three quarter acre urban farm located on Lansing's Eastside. Founded in 2016 by Egypt Krohn, Magnolia Farms now serves as an incubator farm—providing space for emerging local farmers to develop their farm business. This year, the farm is being managed by Aliza Ghaffari and Nathaniel Kermiet. Aliza and Nathaniel have a combined 20 years of experience growing fruits and vegetables in urban and rural settings. They have both completed organic farming certification programs at MSU and worked on a diverse array of small farms in Georgia, Kentucky and Michigan. Nathaniel and Aliza are passionate about building soil health and focus their growing methods around limiting tillage and usage of gas powered machinery. They believe that health disparities must be addressed through an approach that centers food justice and racial equity and they carry that belief with them in their work as farmers and small business managers.

Crop Profile

Ramps

A foraged delicacy, ramps are like a wild leek but with a more pungent and garlicky taste. Their leaves, stalk, and bulb are edible, and they only appear for about a month or so in the spring, making them a pricey treat. You may be able to find ramps under the shade of deciduous trees in rich soil. Ramps are also important in indigenous cultures - they have long been foraged by indigenous populations (like the Anishinaabeg and Cherokee) as food and medicine, and are even part of folklore. However, the present foraging techniques and the quantities being harvested have consequences that are of concern to botanists, environmentalists, and naturalists. Ramp populations and their preferred habitats are declining in many areas. When foraging for ramps, you should only take the largest ramps from a cluster, and only a handful per cluster at that, and cutting them above the roots to ensure more can grow! Ramps are consumed raw or cooked in soups, pesto, accompanying egg dishes, and sautéed with seasonal foraged wild greens or morels!



What's in the Box?

- Potted Lemon Thyme**, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing
- Organic Hakurei Turnips**, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing
- Yellow Onions**, Titus Farms, Leslie
- Shunryo Radishes**, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing
- Ramps**, Magnolia Farms, Lansing
- Organic Spinach**, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing & Monroe Family Organics, Alma
- Green Enchilada Sauce**, Zumo Eco Farm, Williamston
- Organic Parsley**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt
- Shiitake Mushrooms**, Titus Farms, Leslie

Add-Ons

- Bread**, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt
- Meat**, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte
- Sweet Treats**, Teff-rific, Lansing
- Pie**, Rooted Home Farm & Goods, Lansing
- Cold Brew Coffee**, Rust Belt Roastery, Lansing
- Pork**, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte
- Chicken**, GCC Organics, Mt. Pleasant
- Beef**, Heffron Farms Market, Belding
- Cheese**, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga
- Chevre**, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga
- Eggs**, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte
- Organic Navy Beans**, Ferris Organic Farm, Eaton Rapids

Recipes and Tips!

Wild Ramp and Shiitake Mushroom Risotto

1 1/2 cups dry arborio rice
7-8 cups warm vegetable broth
Veggie Box ramps, rinsed and cleaned
1/3 cup of Veggie Box onion, diced
2 T butter
1/2 cup dry white wine
1/3 c grated Parmesan cheese
Veggie Box shiitake mushrooms, sliced
2 cups coarsely chopped Veggie Box spinach
juice of one lemon and all of its zest
salt and pepper to taste
Veggie Box parsley to taste.

Cut leaves off of ramps, starting at the stem. You should have two piles, one with leaves, one with stems. Coarsely chop the stems, then do the same with the leaves, keeping them separate. In a saucepan, melt the butter, then add the onion, pinch of salt, and stems of the ramps. Cook for about 2 minutes, until both are translucent. Then stir in rice and mushrooms, cooking for another 2 minutes. Add white wine, bring to a simmer and stir until absorbed. Add one cup of warm stock and stir until absorbed. Continue adding stock by the cup and stir, stir, stir, each time letting it absorb into the rice. (If you don't let it all absorb the rice will get gummy) Cook until rice is al dente, then stir in spinach and ramp leaves. These will only take about a minute to cook down. Finish the risotto by mixing in the lemon juice, lemon zest, and Parmesan. Add salt, pepper, and chopped parsley by 1/4 teaspoon to taste until flavors pop!



Sautéed Turnips with Ramps and Egg

1/2 of Veggie Box ramps, chopped
Veggie Box turnips, sliced
Veggie Box turnip greens, chopped
2 eggs
salt and pepper to taste

Slice the turnip, and chop the greens, Chop the ramps, stem and all. Sautee the turnips in butter, covered, for a few minutes until they begin to soften. Then add the ramps and turnip greens, cooking for a few minutes more. Fry two eggs and place on top, and season with salt and pepper. Enjoy!

What's the Difference Between a Turnip and a Radish?

Radishes come in many shapes and sizes. Some favorites include the "French Breakfast" radish, long and thin and often served with salted butter, the daikon (also known as a Japanese radish) which is pale white and suitable for more long-term storage, this week's Shunkyo which are both spicy and slightly sweet, Watermelon radishes, and numerous others that are all crunchy and delicious. Radishes are best served raw and are great companions to any kind of dip or dressing.

Turnips are similar root vegetables that have firm, white flesh but the greens are also edible. Side note: rutabagas (yet another delicious root vegetable) originated as a cross between a cabbage and a turnip; they're a little sweeter, but can be treated in most all the same ways. Turnips are often harvested when they're small for human consumption, but larger varieties are used as feed for cattle and livestock. Turnips are often boiled and sometimes pickled, sautéed in salt and soy sauce!

Spring Frittata with Charred Ramps

4 eggs (preferably at room temperature)
2 egg whites (also ideally at room temp)
1 tbs milk
1/3 of Veggie Box ramps
Veggie Box shiitake mushrooms, sliced
1 medium Yukon gold potato, thinly sliced
Cheese!
Handful of fresh chives, chopped
Veggie Box spinach
Salt
Black pepper

Preheat your oven to 400. Whisk together eggs, egg whites, milk, salt, and pepper. Set aside on your counter. In a skillet over medium heat, add some olive oil, and when hot, sauté the ramps whole (make sure they're dry when they go in) until softened. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt. Remove from heat and set aside. While ramps are cooking, warm a cast iron skillet over medium-high heat. When hot, add enough olive oil to coat the bottom of the pan. Add in potatoes and a sprinkle of salt. Cook for a few minutes, covered and stirring occasionally, and then turn the heat down to medium and add mushrooms with a pinch of salt. Cook, stirring gently until mushrooms have softened, and then add spinach and cook a minute more. Add the chopped chives, salt, and pepper to the waiting eggs, and give a good whisk. Pour over mushrooms, spinach, and potatoes. Tilt the pan so eggs cover vegetables and settle into any nooks. When the eggs start to set, arrange the ramps on top and crumble the cheese over everything. Bake for 10-15 minutes, or until the eggs have set. Enjoy!