

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 3: June 20

Welcome to week 3 of the Summer Veggie Box! Chefs, health experts, and Veggie Box staff encourage eating seasonally and locally, when produce is at the peak of its freshness, flavor, and nutrition. Among the many benefits of buying locally, it means that your veggies haven't had a chance to lose flavor or health benefits by sitting in a shipping container for a trip across the country or ocean. Buying seasonal produce also means you are buying it at its peak supply, so it will be cheaper than at other times of the year. Before farming advancements and grocery stores, seasonal eating was the norm - our bodies actually naturally crave these seasonal foods! In the fall and winter, our bodies begin to crave heavier, warm foods; the cold dries out the earth and our bodies, and to counteract these drying effects, we rely on warm, heavy, oily foods to replenish our moisture reserves (stews with potatoes, and rutabagas, roasted root vegetables, etc.). The spring brings bitter greens, which helps detox our liver from the fatty foods from winter. In the summer, since we are more active and are outdoors more often, our bodies crave added energy from sugars and carbohydrates in the summer's bounty (ex. corn, peas, peaches, cantaloupe, strawberries). We also need a higher water intake due to heat in the summer, so foods like watermelon and cucumbers help to sustain us. What are other benefits to eating seasonally? Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Hillcrest Farms

Hillcrest Farms is a four season farm in Eaton Rapids that offers an extensive selection of fresh produce. Owner, Mark Kastner, started farming in 2008 gaining inspiration from his grandmother, a fantastic chef and farmer with whom he spent summers with as a child. Now he is known around town for his deliciously unique spinach and salad mix, as well as for the impeccable quality of the rest of his produce. His sustainable farming practices assure customers that products are safely produced with regards to environment and human health.

Crop Profile

Garlic Scapes

Garlic scapes are the slim, serpentine flower stems that grow from the tops of hardneck garlic. Farmers have long known that removing them in late June encourages the plant to direct its energy toward growing a plump underground bulb, but only recently has this byproduct begun to find itself into farmers markets, stores, and even CSAs (like the Veggie Box!). Raw garlic scapes have an assertive garlic flavor that's less fiery than raw garlic cloves, and when cooked, scapes become more muted and sweet, like roasted garlic. Garlic scapes are very hardy, and can be refrigerated in a plastic bag, left slightly open, for up to three weeks!

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Veggie Box

What's in the Box?

Cucumber, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*
Caraflex Cabbage Heads, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*
Garlic Scapes, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*
Bok Choi, *Hillcrest Farms, Eaton Rapids*
Organic Head Lettuce, *Monroe Family Organics, Alma*
Organic Snap Peas, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*
Organic Green Kale, *Monroe Family Organics, Lansing*
Zucchini, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*

Add-Ons

Sweet Treats, *Rooted Home Farm and Goods, Lansing*
Bread, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*
Meat, *Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston*
Chevre, *Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga*
Cheese, *Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga*
Coffee, *Rust Belt Roastery, Lansing*
Cold Brew, *Rust Belt Roastery, Lansing*
Chicken, *Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston*
Beef, *Heffron Farms Markets, Belding*
Pork, *Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte*
Eggs, *Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte*

Recipes and Tips!

Veggie Box Stir Fry

Veggie Box snap peas
Veggie Box bok choy
Veggie Box zucchini
1 1/2 tablespoon peanut oil (or vegetable oil)
Veggie Box garlic scapes, chopped
Soy sauce to taste
1 tablespoon of lemon juice
Red pepper flakes to taste

Chop the bok choy and zucchini. Heat oil in wok or large pan, and add the peas, choy, and zucchini. After a few minutes, add garlic scapes, as well as soy sauce and red pepper flakes. Cook for a few moments longer until it is fragrant, and the zucchini is soft.

Roasted Caraflex Cabbage Wedges

Veggie Box caraflex cabbage cut into 8 wedges, core intact
1/2 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper
1 lemon, cut into wedges

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Arrange cabbage on a rimmed baking sheet. Brush both sides of wedges with oil. Season with salt and pepper. Roast, flipping halfway through, until edges are brown and crisp, 25 to 30 minutes. Squeeze lemons over cabbage.

Snap Pea Cucumber Salad

Veggie Box snap peas, halved
1/2 cup green peas
Veggie Box cucumber, diced.
1/2 of a red onion (sliced thin)
chopped fresh dill (to taste)
2 cups of Veggie Box lettuce, chopped.
salt/pepper to taste
Balsamic Vinaigrette:
3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 1/2 tbsp Dijon mustard
1 tbsp pure maple syrup
salt/pepper to taste

Add all the salad ingredients to a medium bowl and toss well. Whisk the vinaigrette ingredients in small bowl. Pour the vinaigrette over the salad and toss well. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

Veggie Box Pasta

1/4 cup olive oil
Veggie Box zucchini, cut into 1 inch cubes
Veggie Box garlic scapes, minced
Veggie Box kale, chopped
4 medium sized tomatoes, diced
1/4 cup chopped fresh basil
1 pound cooked spaghetti
Gratd Parmesan cheese, optional

In a large skillet set over medium high heat add olive oil. Once the oil is hot add in zucchini. Cook for a few minutes until the zucchini starts to soften but is not mushy. Add in garlic and kale and saute for a few minutes more. Remove the vegetables from the heat and throw in tomatoes, basil and fresh pasta. Toss to combine and drizzle with addition olive oil if the pasta is too dry. Serve as is or with a sprinkle of Parmesan cheese.



Japanese Vegetable Pancakes

1 tablespoon avocado oil, coconut oil, ghee or butter
2 cups very thinly sliced Veggie Box cabbage
Veggie Box garlic scapes, thinly sliced
Pinch of sea salt
Pinch of red pepper flakes
4 eggs
1 teaspoon soy sauce
1/2 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds
1/2 cup flour
Avocado oil, coconut oil, ghee or butter, for sautéing
1/2 lemon

Heat a tablespoon of oil or butter in a large sauté pan, stir in the cabbage and scapes. Add a pinch of salt and red pepper flakes. Sauté for 3-4 minutes. In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, soy sauce, sesame oil, and sesame seeds. Whisk in the almond flour until smooth. Stir in the vegetables. Using the same pan, heat more oil or butter over medium-high heat. Drop 1/4 cup portions of the batter into the pan. Squash them flat as they cook and spread the vegetables to the edges. Cook for a couple of minutes, and then flip and cook until the second side is brown, just another minute. Sprinkle with salt. Squeeze a little lemon on top.