

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 4: June 27

Welcome to week 4 of the Summer Veggie Box, which happens to be the week of Allen Neighborhood Center's 20th Birthday! Founded in 1999, ANC grew out of a four year old 'healthy communities' initiative called the Eastside Summit. This summit began as an effort between Sparrow Hospital, the Eastside Neighborhood Organization, and community members to create a "healthy community" on the Eastside. One of those members, Joan Nelson, helped in facilitating the summit, and many neighbors joined task forces focusing on health, housing and neighborhood stability. Eventually, the Eastside Summit morphed into a non-profit organization, the Allen Neighborhood Center! We have a wide array of programs, including: Outreach & Engagement, BreadBasket Pantry, the Allen Farmers Market, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Youth Service Corps, the Take Root Garden Club, the Exchange Food Hub, our Incubator Kitchens, the Senior Discovery Group, Market Walk, and of course, Veggie Box. Over 500 volunteers contribute over 10,000 hours every year to make this work possible. Together, we are building a more vibrant Eastside. If you'd like to celebrate by supporting our work, donate by bringing cash or check to Veggie Box pickup, or by making a donation at [paypal.me/allennbcenter](https://paypal.me/allennbcenter). Thank you for all the support over these past 20 years, and thank you supporting local food!

## Producer Spotlight

### *Hunter Park GardenHouse*

The Hunter Park GardenHouse, a project of Allen Neighborhood Center, is a hub for year-round farm & garden education, where neighbors volunteer to grow food, flowers, and community, and youth develop job and life skills in service to the neighborhood. Since 2008, the Hunter Park GardenHouse has empowered neighbors to grow, prepare, and eat healthy food to better their health and become better connected with the community.

## Crop Profile

### *Beets*

Beets are said to have grown in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. Humans originally ate beet greens but not the thin and fibrous roots, which were occasionally used in medicine. The large beet leaves and stalks were consumed like chard, a close relative. The Elizabethans enjoyed them in tarts and stews. Thomas Jefferson planted them at Monticello. Medieval cooks stuffed them into pies. The colorful, sweet root vegetable known as the beet tends to spark an impassioned response from folks who either love it or loathe it. Beets contain a substance called geosmin, which is responsible for that fresh soil scent in your garden following a spring rain. Humans are quite sensitive to geosmin, even in very low doses, which explains why our beet response ranges from one extreme to the other. Today, around 20 percent of the world's sugar comes from sugar beets. Furthermore, Beets are a source of folic acid, vitamin C and potassium, which is important for the health of your bones, kidneys and muscles.



## What's in the Box?

**Basil**, *Ten Hens Farm*, Bath

**Organic Beets**, *Owosso, Organics*,  
*Owosso*

**Garlic Scapes**, *Farm and Forest*, Mason

**Organic Carrots**, *Monroe Family*  
*Organics*, Alma

**Organic Chard**, *MSU Student Organic*  
*Farm*, *Holt & Magnolia*, Lansing

**Salad Mix**, *Hunter Park*  
*GardenHouse*, Lansing

**Cucumbers**, *Peckham*, Lansing

## Add-Ons

**Sweet Treats**, *Hobie's Catering*, Lansing

**Bread**, *Stone Circle Bakehouse*, Holt

**Meat**, *Grazing Fields Cooperative*,  
Charlotte

# Recipes and Tips!

## Lentils with Roasted Beets and Carrots

2 1/2 cups French lentils (also called Puy lentils)  
Veggie Box carrots  
Veggie Box beets  
2 tbsp. olive oil  
Veggie Box basil, chopped  
1/3 cup chopped Veggie Box carrot tops  
Grated zest of one lemon  
1/2 cup feta cheese  
*For Eggless Aioli:*  
1/2 cup olive oil  
3-4 garlic scapes  
Fresh-squeezed juice of one large lemon (about 1/4 cup)  
1/2 tsp. salt

**Remove the leafy tops from the carrots and beets. Wash and scrub the carrots and beets, removing any soil, leaving their skins on. Place the whole carrots and beets in a large French oven or enamelled iron pot and mix in the 2 tbsp. olive oil, fully coating the vegetables in oil. In a 375 F oven, roast the vegetables for about 30 to 45 minutes, until tender when pierced with a fork. If you wish, once the beets are cool enough to handle, you can remove the skins from the beets by gently rubbing them off with your fingers. Meanwhile, rinse the lentils and place them in a medium saucepan. Cover them with water and bring to a boil. Simmer on medium heat, uncovered, for about 30 to 40 minutes, until tender but not falling apart or turning mushy. Drain the lentils and place them in a large shallow serving bowl. In a blender or food processor, puree the garlic scapes, lemon juice, and salt to make the aioli. Add the olive oil and puree until thick and opaque and no chunks of garlic remain. Pour this mixture over the lentils. Add the chopped carrot tops, chopped basil, and grated lemon zest and toss it all together. Season with a bit of salt and pepper. Place the roasted carrots and beets on top, then crumble the feta all around.**

## Sautéed Swiss Chard

Veggie Box Swiss Chard  
2 Tbsp olive oil  
2 Veggie Box garlic scapes, diced.  
Pinch of dried crushed red pepper  
A splash of lemon juice

**Cut away the thick stalks from the Swiss Chard leaves. Cut the stalk pieces into 1-inch pieces. Chop the leaves into inch-wide strips. Keep the stalks and leaves separate. Sauté garlic and crushed red pepper flakes: Heat the olive oil in a sauté pan on medium high heat. Add garlic slices, crushed red pepper, and coriander seeds (if using), and cook for about 30 seconds, or until the garlic is fragrant. Add the chopped Swiss chard stalks. Lower the heat to low, cover and cook for 3 to 4 minutes.**

## Asian Cucumber and Carrot Salad

Veggie Box cucumbers  
Veggie Box carrots  
2 tbsp rice vinegar  
2 tbsp lime juice  
2 tbsp honey  
2 tsp sesame oil  
1 tsp salt  
1 tsp red pepper flakes  
1 tbsp cilantro, chopped  
1 tsp sesame seeds, plus more for topping

**Spiralize the cucumbers and carrots. If you don't have a spiralizer, use a vegetable peeler to create 'noodles'. Place into a large bowl. In a small bowl, combine rice vinegar, lime juice, honey, sesame oil, salt, red pepper flakes, cilantro, and sesame seeds. Pour mixture over the cucumbers and carrots. Mix together well. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit in the refrigerator for 20 minutes to let flavors mix together. Mix well before serving. Top with extra cilantro, sesame seeds, and dressing from the bowl, if desired. Serve and enjoy!**

## Simple Roasted Beets

Veggie Box beets  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
Kosher salt

**Preheat the oven to 425 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Wash the beets and use a vegetable scrubber to wash the outside. Remove the stem and root end with a sharp knife. Use a vegetable peeler or paring knife to peel the beets. Slice the beets into 1/4" thick rounds and place them in a small bowl. Drizzle the olive oil over the sliced beets and then toss to combine. Place the sliced beets in a single layer on your prepared baking sheet and sprinkle with kosher salt. Roast in the hot oven until the beets are fork tender, 10-15 minutes. Enjoy hot with additional salt to taste.**

