

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 7: July 18

Welcome to Week 7 of the Summer Veggie Box! The South is distinctive in its customs, dialect, and cuisine. It's made up of many different peoples who came to the region in a variety of ways, each contributing to what is now called Southern cuisine. For example, indigenous peoples had a strong influence in the early beginnings of Southern food: crops like corn, and techniques like frying and barbecuing. However, Spanish explorers in the 1500s brought pigs with them, introducing pork to the region. West Africans carried some of their traditional foods with them, such as watermelon, eggplant, collard greens, and okra, when they were brought by force as slaves beginning in the 1600s. Creoles, known for their unique use of spices, are descended from French and Haitian immigrants who later mingled with Spanish settlers in the New Orleans area. "Cajuns," also recognized for their unique style of cooking, were originally Acadians, French settlers in Nova Scotia who were driven out by the British in the 1700s and made their way to New Orleans. However, African slaves have had the largest impact on this cuisine by far: the intersections of African food preparations, class status, laws that prevented equal access and innovative survival prevailed and mixed with other cultures to create what we consider Southern Cuisine. Another interesting fact - much of the distinct nature and flavors of Southern foods come from preservation methods. Using salt and frying foods were used to make food last longer without refrigeration, as was drying meats to make jerky. Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

CBI's Giving Tree Farm

CBI's (Community Based Interventions) Giving Tree Farm is a seven acre, non-profit CSA farm just north of Lansing, MI between Old Town and Dewitt. The farm originally began as a community garden for people with disabilities. As it's volunteer base grew, so did the available programs. The farm has established a heated greenhouse and eight hoop houses for year-round horticultural therapy programs. Monday through Friday, the farm provides vocational training for people who have suffered from traumatic brain injuries, allowing them to organically cultivate the produce provided to provide to the community.

Crop Profile

Tart Cherries

If you've never heard of them or tasted them, you're not alone. The fact of the matter is that sour cherries are just too perishable and the season too short to be a viable commercially harvested fruit, so they are quite hard to come by! Michigan grows 75 percent of all U.S. tart cherries making it 1st in the nation. The state also leads in cherry processing, as 99 percent of tart cherries (mostly the Montmorency variety) are canned, frozen, dried or in juice form. Beyond featuring tart cherries in pies, try them in jams, salsas, compotes, bread puddings, compotes for pancakes and ice cream, and ultra-refreshing granitas. Tart cherries also contain nine times more vitamin A than blueberries. The powerful antioxidants found in tart cherries are linked to a variety of health benefits, including anti-inflammation, heart health, pain relief and muscle recovery.

ALLEN
MICHIGAN CENTER

Veggie Box

What's in the Box?

Blueberries, Felzke Farms, Dewitt

Organic Kohlrabi, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing

Green Tomatoes, Ten Hens Farm, Bath

Organic Collard Greens, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

Thyme, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing

Tart Cherries, Hillcrest Farms, Eaton Rapids

Organic Summer Squash, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing

Onions, Ten Hens Farm, Lansing

Add-Ons

Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt

Meat, Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston

Sweet Treats, Rooted Home Farm & Goods, Lansing

Chevre, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga

Cheese, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga

Chicken, Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston

Pork, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte

Beef, Heffron Farms Market, Belding

Cold Brew Coffee, Rust Belt Roastery, Lansing

Coffee, Rust Belt Roastery, Lansing

Eggs, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte

Recipes and Tips!

Blueberry Cherry Pie

2 cups Veggie Box pitted cherries
Veggie Box blueberries, rinsed and drained
1 cup white sugar
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
1 tablespoon butter
1 recipe pastry for a 9 inch double crust pie

Mix sugar, flour, and cinnamon in large bowl. Add fruit. Add lemon juice and vanilla and stir well. Pour into a 9 inch unbaked pie shell. Dot with the butter or margarine. Cover with top crust and flute edges. Cut small slits in the top. Bake at 375 degrees F for 1 hour. Put a baking sheet under mine to catch any liquid that might bubble over.

Southern Collard Greens

Veggie Box collard greens washed, and cut
1 medium sized ham hock (optional)
1 1/2 cups broth
1 tsp seasoning salt
1/4 tsp ground black pepper
1 Veggie Box onion, diced
1/2 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp vinegar white or apple cider vinegar will do
1/2 tbs garlic minced

Start off by placing the smoked ham hock and the water into a slow cooker. Set the slow cooker on high, and let cook for 2 hours, or until tender. Next, transfer the ham hock, and the liquid to a large pot. Place the pot over medium high heat, and start adding in the collard greens. Once all of the collard greens are in the pot, add in the onions, garlic, and seasonings. Give everything a nice stir, then add in the vinegar. Reduce the heat to medium, and let the greens cook for about an hour, or until tender. Serve with cornbread. Enjoy!



Southern Fried Green Tomatoes

Veggie Box green tomatoes
1 egg mixed with a splash of buttermilk (or regular milk)
A shallow bowl of flour
A shallow bowl of cornmeal
paprika, salt, and pepper to taste

Slice the tomatoes into 1/4 inch slices, and sprinkle with salt, pepper, and paprika on both sides. Next, dredge the tomato slices in flour, then the egg/milk mixture, and finally the cornmeal. Heat oil 1/4 - 1/2 an inch of oil in a cast iron skillet until hot, and then fry each side until golden brown. Commonly, fried green tomatoes are served with a mayonnaise/ ketchup dipping sauce (flavored with cayenne or paprika and garlic powder). Enjoy!



Southern Squash and Onions

1 Veggie box Onion, sliced
Veggie Box squash, sliced
2 Tablespoons Butter
1/4 teaspoon Black Pepper
1/4 teaspoon Salt

Melt butter over medium-low heat in a skillet. Add squash, onions, salt, and pepper and cook until onions are translucent and squash has become fork tender, about 8-10 minutes.

