

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 11: May 16

Welcome to Week 11 of the Fall Veggie Box!

Are you looking for things you can do to improve your garden this season or ways to live a more sustainable lifestyle? Composting can meet both of those goals. Homemade compost builds the health and disease resistance of the plants in your garden while diverting organics from the landfill which reduces methane emissions.

Composting requires 3 basic ingredients: browns, greens and water. Your compost pile should have an equal amount of browns and greens. Browns consist of dead leaves, branches, and twigs. Greens consist of grass clippings, vegetable waste, fruit scraps, and coffee grounds. Water provides moisture to help break down the organic matter.

Adding compost to your garden soil will improve its fertility, consistency, drainage and health. It builds up the beneficial microorganisms in the soil leading to healthier garden overall.

Composting also helps stop soil loss and helps save water. Organic material retains at least 18 times its weight in water.

There are multiple ways that you can compost outside and indoors. Visit <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home> to get more information on the various methods of composting. You can find a method that can work with the space you have at home.

Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

MSU Student Organic Farm

The MSU Student Organic Farm is a 15 acre year-round educational, organic farm located in Holt, MI about 3 miles south of the Michigan State University campus. Started in 1999 by students who desired a more hands-on learning experience, the farm now offers a nearly year-long intensive program for those interested in learning everything they can about organic farming. Not only do the students tend to the fields, but the program also involves caring for the farm's livestock. MSU's multiple cafeterias source as much produce as they can from the MSUSOF and they also offer a weekly farm stand in the middle of campus for students and public alike.

Crop Profile

Mint

Originating in Asia and the Mediterranean region, mint has been used for centuries. It is used in cooking, baking, candy-making, coffee, tea, toothpaste and many other products. It's a perennial and spreads quickly. Rich in Vitamins A and C, it also contains smaller amounts of Vitamin B2 and minerals including iron, calcium, zinc, copper and magnesium, potassium, and phosphorus. It has one of the highest antioxidant capacities of any food. Mint can provide breastfeeding benefits, and can aid with upset stomach, IBS, and cold/seasonal allergy symptoms, due to its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. It is best stored in a plastic bag or loose plastic wrap in the refrigerator for up to approximately one week. You can even add it to some ice water with some fruit or cucumbers for a refreshing and healthy summer drink!



What's in the Box?

Organic Popcorn, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing

Basil Plant, Ten Hens Farm, Bath

Mint, Hunter Park Gardenhouse, Lansing

Salad Mix, Hunter Park Gardenhouse, Lansing

Radishes, Hunter Park Gardenhouse, Lansing & Monroe Family Organics, Alma

Organic Spinach, Monroe Family Organics, Alma

Organic Arugula, Owosso Organics, Owosso

Organic Onions, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

Add-Ons

Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt

Meat, GCC Organics, Mt. Pleasant

Sweet Treats, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt

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

Recipes and Tips!

Basil Mint Spinach Pesto

1 cup fresh basil leaves
1 cup fresh mint leaves
1/3 - 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
lemon
2 cloves garlic - optional
1 cups fresh baby spinach
1-1/2 cups loosely packed basil leaves
1/2 cup chopped walnuts or pine nuts, toasted
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
a dash of pepper

Place garlic in a food processor; pulse until finely chopped. Add spinach, basil and walnuts. Pulse until chopped. Add cheese, salt and pepper. Continue processing while gradually adding oil in a steady stream.

Freeze option: Freeze pesto in freezer containers. To use, thaw in refrigerator.



Easy Mango Basil Salsa

2 cups of mango, peeled and cubed
1/4 large red onion, diced
1 Jalapeño seeded and diced
Juice of a large lime
3 tablespoons fresh basil, julienned (cut into short, thin strips)

Mix all the ingredients together in a large bowl and toss lightly to combine.

Let sit for a few minutes for all the flavors to meld.

Serve with chips and enjoy!

Lemon-Mint & Tabbouleh Salad

1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
3 large garlic cloves, minced
1 cup bulgur (cracked wheat)
1 cup boiling water
1 cup chopped tomatoes
1/2 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
1/4 cup onion, chopped
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint

Position racks in the upper and lower thirds of your oven and preheat the oven to 350°F. Whisk oil, lemon juice, and garlic in small bowl to blend; set aside. Place bulgur in large bowl. Mix in 1 cup boiling water. Let stand until bulgur is tender and water is absorbed, about 15 minutes. Mix in tomatoes, parsley, green onions, and mint. Add oil mixture; toss to blend. Season with salt and pepper. Let stand at least 30 minutes to blend flavors. (Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover; chill.)



Sautéed Radishes with Spinach

2 bunches of trimmed and halved radishes
1 sliced onion
Olive oil
Salt
Pepper
5 ounces baby spinach
Juice of 1/2 a lemon

Cook 2 bunches of trimmed and halved radishes and 1 sliced onion in a skillet with olive oil over medium-high heat, stirring, until tender, about 8 minutes; season with salt and pepper. Stir in 5 ounces baby spinach, the juice of 1/2 lemon and a pinch each of salt and pepper; cook until wilted, about 1 minute.