

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 2: September 24

Welcome to the second week of the Fall Veggie Box, and the second day of autumn! The term 'Harvest' originates from the Old English word *hærfest*, meaning 'Autumn'. It then came to refer to the season for reaping and gathering grain and other grown products from the land. The time of Harvest is one of the most important phases of the agricultural calendar, since it marks a point in time when the crops have grown into maturity and are ready to be gathered in. The period in late summer, just before the Harvest, was traditionally a time of limited food supply and often famine, due to poor harvests the preceding season or an inability to store food from the last harvest. With this in mind, it is not surprising that Harvest became a time of celebration and festivals, for they heralded the end of seasonal famine and ushered in a time of plenty. Before the days of refrigerators and freezers being the norm, jarring, drying and preserving food was more than just a delightful hobby, it was one of the few ways of storing food during the cold season or a long journey by sea or land. 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

Tomatillos

Tomatillos, also known as the Mexican husk tomato, is a plant of the nightshade family bearing small, spherical and green or green-purple fruit. Tomatillos have a slightly more acidic, slightly less sweet flavor than ripe and unripe tomatoes. Overall, the flavor is more vegetal and bright, and the interior texture is denser and less watery. Prepping a tomatillo is pretty straight forward. The husks can be easily removed with your hands and discarded. From here, you decide what you want to do with them. If you want to keep the flavor bright and play up their bracing acidity, use them raw. If you want to mellow out that acidity a bit and access the fruit's deeper, more savory qualities, then try cooking them! Tomatillos have diverse uses in salsas, stews, soups, salads, curries, stirfries, baking, cooking with meats, marmalade, and desserts.



What's in the Box?

- Rutabaga**, *Titus Farms, Leslie*
- Sweet Onions**, *Green Eagle Farm, Onondaga*
- Organic Pears**, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*
- Green Tomatoes**, *Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing*
- Organic Tomatillos**, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*
- Jalapeños**, *Hillcrest Farm, Eaton Rapids*
- Mini Spaghetti Squash**, *Tomac Pumpkin Patch, Chesaning*
- Microgreens**, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*

Add-Ons

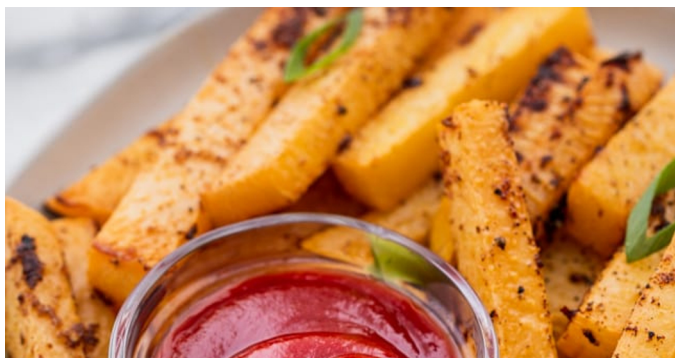
- Bread**, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*
- Honey**, *Bee Wise Farms, Lansing*
- Meat Variety**, *Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte*
- Sweet Treats**, *Hobie's Catering, Lansing*

Recipes and Tips!

Rutabaga Fries

1 Veggie Box rutabaga cut into spears
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 teaspoons paprika
1 teaspoon garlic powder
Salt & pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Combine rutabaga spears with oil and spices, and toss until evenly coated. Lay rutabaga spears onto a baking sheet, leaving space between. Bake for 30 minutes, flipping halfway through; they should be cooked through and crisped on the outside.



Roasted Tomatillo and Green Tomato Salsa

Veggie Box tomatillos, husked and halved
1 Veggie Box onion, peeled and quartered
1-2 cloves garlic, peeled (from last week's box!)
Half of your Veggie Box green tomatoes, quartered
1-2 Veggie Box jalapeños, halved
1/2 cup fresh lime juice
1/2 cup fresh chopped cilantro
2 TBL olive oil
salt, to taste

Mix the peppers, olive oil, tomatillos, onion, garlic, and green tomatoes. Pour the veggies out onto a baking sheet, and roast in a 400 to 425 degree oven until they are "wilted" with dark brown flecks. (Alternatively, place them in a grill basket and grill them, keeping the kitchen cool!) Puree the veggies in a blender or food processor with the cilantro and lime juice. Taste, and add salt as desired. The salsa can be served immediately, but if you want to store it, it will have better keeping quality if simmered (in a stainless steel, not aluminum!) pan for about 20 minutes. Then it can be cooled and refrigerated.

Dutch Baby Pancake with Caramelized Pears and Toasted Almonds

2 tablespoons sliced almonds
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 large eggs, at room temperature
½ cup whole milk, at room temperature
½ cup all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons granulated sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon, divided
⅛ teaspoon kosher salt
⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
Veggie Box pears, peeled, cored and sliced ¼ inch thick
2 tablespoons light brown sugar
Confectioners' sugar, for dusting
Lemon wedges, for serving

Position the rack in center of the oven and preheat it to 350°. Place the almonds on a foiled-lined baking sheet and bake until golden brown, 8 to 10 minutes. Set aside. Increase the oven to 450°. Place 2 tablespoons butter in a 10-inch cast-iron skillet and place in the oven until the butter is melted and the skillet is very hot, 2 to 3 minutes. In a blender, mix together the eggs, milk, flour, sugar, vanilla, ½ of the cinnamon, salt and nutmeg until smooth. Carefully pour the batter into the preheated skillet and place it in the oven. Bake until the edges of the pancake are golden brown and have puffed up, 12 to 15 minutes. Meanwhile, in a medium skillet over medium heat, melt the remaining butter. When the butter begins to foam, add the pears, brown sugar and remaining cinnamon, and cook until the pears are caramelized and just tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Gently nestle the caramelized pears into the Dutch baby. Top with toasted almonds and confectioners' sugar, and serve with lemon wedges.

