

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 6: October 24

Welcome to the sixth week of the Fall Veggie Box! ANC has officially opened registration for the Spring Veggie Box! For the 2020 Spring Veggie Box, there will be two different distribution days: for those who would like to pick up their box from the Allen Market Place, their distribution day is Tuesday; for those who would like their box delivered to their workplace, their box will be delivered on Thursdays. The Spring Season of Allen Neighborhood Center's Veggie Box program runs for 12 weeks, from March until May, with registration closing on February 21st. A subscription to our 12-week, multi-farm CSA is \$270, with add-on items available for an additional cost. The Spring Veggie Box includes a seasonal assortment of fresh, locally grown vegetables & fruits. Projected items include: asparagus, cooking greens, lettuce, peas, radish, herbs, beets, carrots, onions, winter squash, potatoes, garlic, rhubarb, strawberries, & more. To register or find out more information, visit bit.ly/springveggiebox2020. Spots are filling up fast so sign up soon! Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Tomac Pumpkin Patch

Tomac Pumpkin Patch is a 4-generation family run operation located in Chesaning, Michigan. They started as a 4-H and FFA project selling a few pumpkins, but have grown to primarily raise corn, soybeans, and wheat over the last 30 years. They also now offer almost 100 different pumpkins, gourds and squashes as well as other traditional fall decorations like corn stalks, straw, and Flint corn.

Crop Profile

Rutabaga

The rutabaga is a root vegetable that originated as a cross between the cabbage and the turnip. The root can be prepared in a variety of ways, and the leaves can be eaten as a leaf vegetable. Various European countries have a tradition of carving them into lanterns at halloween, similar to the way we carve pumpkins! The first known printed reference to the rutabaga comes from the Swiss botanist Gaspard Bauhin in 1620. Introduction to North America came in the early 19th century with reports of rutabaga crops in Illinois as early as 1817. Finns cook rutabaga in a variety of ways: roasted, baked, boiled, as a flavor enhancer in soups, uncooked and thinly julienned as a side dish or in a salad, and as the major ingredient in the popular Christmas dish lanttulaatikko (swede casserole). The flavor of raw rutabaga tastes milder than turnips almost like a carrot without sweetness. It's crisp, juicy, and just a tiny bit piquant. Rutabagas truly shine in baked dishes.



What's in the Box?

- Baby Romaine**, *Ten Hens Farms*, Bath
- Organic Asian Pears**, *MSU Student Organic Farm*, Holt
- Organic Celery**, *MSU Student Organic Farms*, Lansing
- Yellow Onions**, *Hunter Park GardenHouse*, Lansing
- Sweet Potatoes**, *Titus Farms*, Leslie
- Organic Rutabagas**, *CBI's Giving Tree Farm*, Lansing
- Organic Potatoes**, *Monroe Family Organics*, Alma
- Pie Pumpkin**, *Tomac Pumpkin Patch*, Chesaning

Add-Ons

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

Recipes and Tips!

Veggie Box Soup with Wild Rice

6 cups vegetable stock
2/3 cup uncooked wild rice
*8 ounces baby bella mushrooms, sliced
4 cloves garlic, minced (from last week's box!)
2 medium carrots, diced (from last week's box!)
2 ribs Veggie Box celery, diced
2/3 of Veggie Box sweet potato, diced
1 1/2 cup of cubed Veggie Box rutabaga
1 Veggie Box onion, peeled and diced
1 bay leaf
1 1/2 tablespoon Old Bay seasoning
3 tablespoons butter
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 1/2 cups milk
1 large handful of kale, roughly chopped with thick stems removed
Kosher salt and freshly-cracked black pepper

Heat (an extra) 1 tablespoon butter in a large stockpot over medium-high heat. Add onion, mushrooms, rutabaga, and sweet potato and sauté for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until onion is soft and translucent. Stir in the garlic and cook for an additional 1-2 minutes, stirring occasionally, until fragrant. Add in the vegetable stock, wild rice, carrots, celery, bay leaf and Old Bay seasoning. Stir to combine. Continue cooking until the soup reaches a simmer. Then reduce heat to medium-low, cover and simmer for 45 minutes, or until the rice is tender, stirring occasionally. Meanwhile, during those final 10 minutes, prepare your cream sauce in a separate saucepan on the stove. In it, cook the butter over medium-high heat until melted. Whisk in the flour until combined, and cook for 1 minute. Gradually add in the milk, and whisk until combined. Continue cooking, stirring frequently, until the mixture nearly comes to a simmer and has thickened. (It should be very thick.) Add the cream sauce and kale to the soup, and stir gently until combined. Taste and season with salt and pepper (plus any extra Old Bay seasoning, if you would like) as needed.



Stuffed Pumpkin

1 Veggie Box Pumpkin
Salt & freshly ground pepper
1/4 pound of stale bread, thinly sliced and cubed
1/4 pound of cheese (of your choice), cubed
2 Veggie Box garlic cloves (from last week!),
1/3 cup of diced Veggie Box onion
1/3 cup heavy cream
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg

Center a rack in the oven and preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with a silicone baking mat or parchment, or find a Dutch oven with a diameter that's just a tiny bit larger than your pumpkin. Using a very sturdy knife cut a cap out of the top of the pumpkin. Clear away the seeds and strings from the cap and from inside the pumpkin. Season the inside of the pumpkin generously with salt and pepper, and put it on the baking sheet or in the pot. Toss the bread, cheese, garlic, and herbs together in a bowl. Season with pepper- and pack the mix into the pumpkin. Stir the cream with the nutmeg and some salt and pepper and pour it into the pumpkin. Put the cap in place and bake the pumpkin for about 2 hours. Check after 90 minutes or until everything inside the pumpkin is bubbling and the flesh of the pumpkin is tender enough to be pierced easily with the tip of a knife. Because the pumpkin will have exuded liquid, remove the cap during the last 20 minutes or so, so that the liquid can bake away and the top of the stuffing can brown a little.

Greek Style Oven Roasted Rutabaga

Veggie Box rutabaga
2 tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
1 tbs. Dijon mustard
1 tbsp lime juice
2 tsp. fresh thyme, finely chopped
1 tsp Himalayan salt
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp onion powder
1 tsp dried oregano
½ tsp smoked paprika
½ tsp chili pepper flakes

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Peel the rutabaga and cut into 2" chunks; place them in a large mixing bowl. Add the rest of the ingredients to a separate bowl and mix vigorously with a whisk until well combined. Pour that sauce over the rutabagas and toss. Spread the rutabaga in a single layer across a broiler pan. Cover with aluminum foil and bake in the oven for 30 minutes, then remove the foil, lower the heat to 375°F and continue baking, stirring 2 or 3 times during the process, until the rutabaga is fork tender, about 25 minutes.