

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 5: March 31

Welcome to week 5 of the Spring 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

Monroe Family Organics

Monroe Family Organics is very much the fruition of a dream set in motion almost 20 years ago, & finally realized in 2011. After having a stall at the local Alma farmers market the summer he was 16, Fred Monroe was hooked on organic vegetable production. So off he went to Michigan State to earn his bachelor's degree in horticulture & agribusiness. During this time he worked at MSUSOF and interned at Angelic Organics, a very large CSA farm south of Chicago (where he met his wife Michele). In 2010, Fred & Michele set to work acquiring land, buying a house, & rounding up equipment for the first farm season. Over the next few years, they continued to add more crops, more animals, more CSA drop-offs, more delivery options, and more local mid-Michigan store and restaurant partners. 2019 marks Monroe Family Organics' ninth season.

Crop Profile

Kossak Kohlrabi

Kohlrabi is a hardy, annual vegetable that is primarily consumed in some European countries, although it has also become a staple vegetable in northern India. It is actually a cultivar of cabbage and was specifically bred as a hardier version of cruciferous vegetables, which often can't grow in as harsh of conditions. The kossak variety grows incredibly huge, at least twice the size of other kohlrabi and yet the white flesh maintains its sweet, delicate flavor with no trace of woodiness. Kohlrabi can be cooked, but are often used in salads in a similar way as carrots or broccoli.

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Veggie Box

What's in the Box?

Organic Carrots, *Monroe Family Organics*, Alma
Organic Onions, *MSU Student Organic Farm*, Holt
Rosemary, *Hunter Park GardenHouse*, Lansing
Organic Potatoes, *Cinzori Farms*, Ceresco
Kale, *Ten Hens Farm*, Bath
Salad Mix, *Hunter Park GardenHouse*, Lansing
Kossak Kohlrabi, *Titus Farms*, Leslie

Add-Ons

Bread, *Stone Circle Bakehouse*, Holt
Meat Variety, *Overland Lamb and Wool*,
Jonesville
Sweet Treats, *Stone Circle Bakehouse*, Holt
Cheese, *Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery*, Onondaga
Chevre, *Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery*, Onondaga
Eggs, *Grazing Fields Cooperative*, Charlotte
Organic Black Turtle Beans, *Ferris Organic
Farms*, Eaton Rapids
Coffee, *Rust Belt Roastery*, Lansing
Kombucha, *Apple Blossom Kombucha*, Lansing
Pork, *Grazing Fields Cooperative*, Charlotte
Chicken, *Trillium Wood Farm*, Williamston
Beef, *Heffron Farms*, Belding
Cold Brew Coffee, *Rust Belt Roastery*, Lansing

Recipes and Tips!

Kohlrabi Fritters

2 cups packed Veggie Box Kohlrabi, peeled, shredded, and drained
3 Eggs
1/2 cup Veggie Box onion, diced
1/3 cup Parmesan, shredded
1/2 cup Breadcrumbs
1 cup Flour
1/2 tsp. Pepper
1/2 tsp. Salt
1/2 tsp. Garlic Powder
1 - 2 Tbsps. Olive Oil for sautéing.

Mix all ingredients in a large bowl until combined. It will resemble a sticky dough. Using your hands, form mixture into patties. Heat olive oil on a skillet on medium-high heat. Place patties on hot skillet, and sear on one side until brown, approximately three minutes. Flip patties and leave on medium high heat for another two minutes. They should be lightly browned. Reduce heat to low and leave on skillet until patties are cooked through, another five to seven minutes. Remove from skillet and eat warm. You can eat them solo or serve them with a side of sour cream for dipping.



Kohlrabi Risotto

1 1/2 cups of diced Veggie Box kohlrabi
7 to 8 cups well-seasoned vegetable stock
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup minced Veggie Box onion
1 1/2 cups arborio rice
1 to 2 garlic cloves (to taste), minced
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1/2 cup dry white wine, like pinot grigio or sauvignon blanc
1/4 to 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
2 to 3 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley

Peel the kohlrabi, making sure to remove the fibrous layer just under the skin, and cut into 1/2-inch dice. Put your stock or broth into a saucepan and bring it to a simmer over medium heat, with a ladle nearby or in the pot. Turn the heat down to low. Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a wide, heavy nonstick skillet or a wide, heavy saucepan. Add the onion and a pinch of salt, and cook gently until it is just tender, about 3 minutes. Do not brown. Add the diced kohlrabi and the garlic and cook, stirring, until the kohlrabi is crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Add the rice and stir until the grains separate and begin to crackle. Add the wine and stir until it has evaporated and been absorbed by the rice. Begin adding the simmering stock, a couple of ladlefuls (about 1/2 cup) at a time. The stock should just cover the rice, and should be bubbling, not too slowly but not too quickly. Cook, stirring often, until it is just about absorbed. Add another ladleful or two of the stock and continue to cook in this fashion, adding more stock and stirring when the rice is almost dry. You do not have to stir constantly, but stir often. After 15 minutes, stir in the greens from the kohlrabi. When the rice is just tender all the way through but still chewy, in 20 to 25 minutes, it is done. Taste now, add pepper and adjust salt. Add another ladleful of stock to the rice. Stir in the Parmesan and the parsley and remove from the heat. The mixture should be creamy (add more stock if it isn't).

