

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 8: April 21

Welcome to week 8 of the Spring Veggie Box! Food traditions that have been passed through your family are more than just recipes – they're windows into the culture and history of those who came before you. For most people, there are specific foods and recipes that help to connect us to a culture or history that has been handed down for generations. The intersection of food with culture and history is understood through the study of foodways. Foodways are all of the traditional activities, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors associated with the food in your daily life. Foodways include customs of food production, preservation, preparation, presentation, gathering, marketing (both buying and selling), uses of food products other than for eating and food folklore. Foodways connect people to a geographic region, a climate, a period of time, an ethnic or religious group, and a family. New foodways are being created or revived all the time - for example, there is a renewed interest in canning and preserving as a result of foodways being rediscovered. The first week of the season we asked in what ways has colonialism disrupted indigenous foodways. Removed from their lands and forced to assimilate into the so-called "mainstream" culture, many Native people no longer live in their traditional territories, nor do they eat their traditional foods. Today, many traditional foods are on the verge of extinction. Others are more abundant, but due to tremendous land loss are inaccessible to Native communities. Other foods may be available; however the traditional knowledge of how to utilize and prepare them has been severely diminished. Despite these setbacks, Indigenous people around the world are finding unique and innovative ways to adapt and revitalize their foodways on reservations, on public land, in rural parks, and in urban gardens. Have you heard of any of these initiatives? Thank you for supporting local food!



## What's in the Box?

**Microgreens**, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing  
**Organic Onions**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt  
**Fennel**, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing  
**Organic Potatoes**, Cinzori Farms, Ceresco  
**Kale**, Ten Hens Farm, Bath  
**Lettuce**, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing  
**Green Garlic**, Half Barn Farm, Lansing  
**Organic Popcorn**, Ferris Organic Farm, Eaton Rapids

## Add-Ons

**Bread**, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt  
**Meat Variety**, Overland Lamb and Wool, Jonesville; Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte; Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston  
**Sweet Treats**, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt  
**Eggs**, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte  
**Pork**, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte  
**Chicken**, Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston  
**Beef**, Heffron Farms, Belding

## Producer Spotlight

### Half Barn Farm

Ben Linsemier founded Half Barn Farm in 2012 on Lansing's Eastside when a large plot of scrubby land on the 600 block of South Clemens became available through the Ingham County Land Bank's Garden Program. On nearly an acre of land, and with a hoop house on-site, Ben grows a variety of local produce. Half Barn Farm wants to help nourish a vibrant healthy community and local food system while being a good steward of the land for those that follow.

## Crop Profile

### Fennel

Fennel is a flowering plant in the carrot family that is native to the Mediterranean region. There are two main types of fennel: herb fennel and Florence fennel, or the Italian finocchio. Herb fennel's stems, seeds, and feathery leaves that look just like its cousin dill are all harvested and used. Florence fennel, however, is grown primarily for its large, bulb-like bottom that is eaten as a vegetable. Typically, the trimmed off green tops only garnish dishes. Regardless of type, fennel has a strong anise or licorice flavor. The leaves have a mildly sweet flavor and are a pleasant addition to salads, slaws, and dressings, while the seeds can be used in baking. As a medicinal herb, leaf fennel seeds are used in teas and tinctures to ease digestive complaints.

# Recipes and Tips!

## Sweet Fennel Butter

1/2 pound (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened  
3 tablespoons chopped fresh fennel fronds  
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed orange juice  
2 teaspoons freshly grated orange zest  
1 teaspoon honey  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

**Mix together butter, fennel or dill, orange juice, zest and honey until smooth, either in a food processor, in an electric mixer, or by hand. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Scrape butter into a decorative small bowl and serve.**

## Latkes

Veggie box Potatoes  
1 cup of diced Veggie Box onion  
1 egg  
1/4 cup of flour or matzo meal  
1 clove of Veggie Box garlic, minced  
1 1/2 teaspoons of kosher salt, to taste  
Canola or peanut oil, for frying  
Applesauce and sour cream, for serving

**Shred potatoes and place in a bowl of water and let sit for 1 hour. A layer of potato starch will form in the bottom of the bowl - you will want to remove potatoes and pour off water, but reserve the starch. Wrap shredded potatoes in a cheesecloth or tea-towel. Twist bundle until water flows out, and squeeze all potatoes until dry. Transfer potatoes to a large mixing bowl along with diced onion. Mix starch into potato and onion mixture with your hands. Mix in egg, salt and matzo meal/flour until latke mix can be formed into patties that just stick together in your hands. Heat 1/2 inch oil in a cast iron skillet over medium-high heat until a shred of potato immediately bubbles when added to pan. Form latke mix into patties and slide into pan, cooking no more than 4 at a time. Fry until a golden-brown crust forms on bottom, then flip with a slotted spatula and fork until same color is achieved on other side. Serve with either sour cream or applesauce on top.**

## Spicy Chickpea Kale and Potato Curry

1 tbsp vegetable oil  
1 1/2 cup of Veggie Box onion, chopped  
Veggie Box green garlic (the white and the light green parts), minced  
2-inch fresh ginger root, minced  
1 tsp ground turmeric  
1 tsp ground cumin  
1 tsp ground coriander  
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon  
1/4 tsp ground cayenne pepper  
1/4 tsp ground black pepper  
28 fl oz canned whole tomatoes  
19 oz canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed  
2/3 Veggie Box potatoes, chopped in 1 1/2-inch chunks  
Veggie Box kale, stems removed and chopped into small pieces  
1/2 - 3/4 cup water (or coconut milk for creamier texture)  
Salt, to taste

**In a small bowl, combine the spices (minus the salt) and set aside. In a blender, puree the whole tomatoes (with juice) and set aside. In a large saucepan, heat the oil over medium-high heat and add onions with a small pinch of salt. Stir occasionally until onions are browned, 5-6 minutes. Add in the garlic and ginger and stir to combine with the onions for 15 seconds (do not allow the garlic to burn). Then stir in the spice blend until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Mix in the pureed tomatoes, chickpeas, and potatoes, making sure to scrape the bottom of the pan to get the brown bits. Stir in 1/2 - 3/4 cup of water (or coconut milk) if necessary (enough to just cover the top of the chunky ingredients). Bring the mixture to boil and then cover and simmer for 15 minutes. Next, stir in the kale and cover for another 5 minutes, until the kale is tender. Taste for additional salt. Serve immediately with rice.**

