

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 12: May 21

Welcome to the final week of the Spring Veggie Box! We are so glad that all of you decided to join this community of local food supporters. Over the past 12 weeks, the Veggie Box program has sourced over 5,000 pounds of fresh, in-season produce from Mid-Michigan farmers.

This has not only lead to improved health and culinary knowledge for you and your family, but has also resulted in impressive economic impacts. You have helped to make small-scale, family farming a more viable way of life, and have put thousands of dollars back into our local economy! Buying local food is cool and we can all do our part by pushing for schools, restaurants, hospitals, etc. to shop locally too. Their purchasing power has the potential to drive our local economy forward. We hope you've enjoyed trying an array of produce that you may not have tried before like black spanish radishes, kohlrabi, rutabaga, cup plants, ramps and more! If you or your family members enjoyed a specific type of produce or recipe, we would like to know: email us at exchange@allenneighborhoodcenter.org. As always, thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Owosso Organics

Owosso Organics is a family owned, certified organic vegetable and cut flower farm located four miles west of Owosso. Starting from a small postage stamp garden in 1978, Richard Bowie, Pooh Stevenson and their daughters Cody and Taylor now farm over seven acres of their eighty acre farm, along with eight greenhouses of over 15,000 square feet. They have been certified organic since 1994, and are currently certified with Global Organic Alliance. Their mission is to provide specialty artisan produce and flowers grown with great care and impeccable service available locally to enrich the lives and palates of all people who seek their business assisting in bridging urban and rural communities together.

Crop Profile

Komatsuna

Komatsuna (*Brassica rapa* var. *perviridis*) is deliciously spicy green that's often referred to as Japanese mustard spinach. Popular in (you guessed it) the Japanese region, komatsuna isn't actually related to spinach, but a member of the brassica family, sharing similar properties to cruciferous vegetables such as cabbage. Komatsuna is also popular in other Asian regions, and is grown almost exclusively in Japan, Taiwan, and Korea. It's known to have been grown during the Edo period in Japan. Its name comes from the region in Japan in which it's grown: the Komatsugawa district of Japan. Known for its impressive nutritional properties, komatsuna is chock full of vitamin C, calcium, and beta carotene. Like the other members of the brassica family, komatsuna has a compound called sulforaphane that helps our bodies fight cancer.



What's in the Box?

Head Lettuce, *Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing*
Organic Cooking Greens Mix, *Owosso Organics, Owosso*

Organic Onions, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*
Organic Easter Egg Radishes, *Monroe Family Organics, Alma*

Bok Choi, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*

Organic Komatsuna, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

Asparagus, *Felzke Farms, Dewitt*

Organic Swiss Chard, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

Add-Ons

Bread, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*

Meat Variety, *Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte*

Sweet Treats, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*

Recipes and Tips!

Sesame Ginger Bok Choi and Komatsuna

1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
2 cloves garlic crushed and chopped
1 teaspoon fresh ginger
Veggie Box baby bok choy
Veggie Box komatsuna
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1 Tablespoon soy sauce
1 Tablespoon water
1/4 teaspoon chili flakes
sesame seeds for garnish

Combine sesame oil, soy sauce, water and chili flakes in a small bowl. Set aside. Heat the oil in a large skillet and cook the garlic and ginger until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Mix in the bok choy and komatsuna and cook 3-4 minutes. Add soy sauce mixture and cook for a few minutes more or until heated through and leaves are gently wilted. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and serve.

Wilted Chard with Shallots and Vinegar

Veggie Box Swiss chard, ribs and stems separated from leaves
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 cup Veggie Box onions, thinly sliced into rings
2 garlic cloves, grated
Kosher salt
2 teaspoons Sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar

Cut Swiss chard stems into very small pieces. Tear leaves into 2" pieces and rinse well (you'll want some water still clinging to the leaves). Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Add chard stems, onions, and garlic and season with salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are starting to soften but haven't taken on any color, about 2 minutes. Add chard leaves, season with salt, and cook, tossing occasionally, until leaves are tender and have released some liquid, about 3 minutes (stems will have a bit of crunch). Mix in vinegar; taste and season with more salt if needed.

Sauteed Scallions, Mushrooms and Asparagus

Veggie Box asparagus
1 pound fresh mushrooms
Salt and pepper to taste
1/3 of Veggie Box onions
Veggie Box cooking greens
1 teaspoon white-wine vinegar
1 tablespoons olive oil
2 stalks of Veggie Box green garlic (from last week, and using up to the lightest green part of the stalk)

Thinly slice mushrooms. In a large nonstick skillet, heat oil over high heat. Add mushrooms; cook, tossing often, until browned, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, bring 3 cups salted water to a boil in a small saucepan; add asparagus. Cook until crisp-tender, 3 to 5 minutes; drain. To mushrooms, add asparagus and scallions; season with salt and pepper. Cook, tossing, until scallions have wilted and pan is dry, about 2 minutes. Stir in vinegar; serve immediately.

Simple Swiss Chard Pasta

6 ounces pasta
1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
Veggie Box Swiss chard, stems diced, leaves coarsely chopped
1/2 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
1 cup canned fire roasted diced tomatoes
2 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 cup cooked white beans, drained and rinsed
Shaved parmesan cheese
1/4 cup pine nuts (optional)
Sea salt & fresh black pepper

In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook pasta until al dente. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add chard stems and a pinch of salt. Give them a stir, then add the chard leaves and gently toss until they begin to wilt. Add the balsamic, tomatoes, garlic, white beans, freshly ground pepper, and toss. Once the chard is cooked down, add pasta and remove from heat. Serve with shaved pecorino cheese and pine nuts on top.