

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 6: July 8th

Buy local- you hear this phrase all the time, but why is it so important? Local produce is often much fresher and tastier since it is picked when in-season, compared to produce grown miles away that had been picked before it was ripe. Produce that is in season can be picked at peak ripeness and transported to local grocery stores or farmers markets usually within 24 hours. Produce grown locally also has greater nutrient value, since less time passes between harvest to your table. Food imported from far away can lose its nutrient value as it ages during transport. Similarly, food that requires fewer steps from farm to table has a smaller risk of becoming contaminated, which leads to a safer food supply.

Another major benefit of buying locally is the environmental impact. Local foods require less travel, thus cutting down on fuel consumption and air pollution that long truck drives cause. Shopping at a farmers market also eliminates the need for packaging facilities and refrigeration. Supporting our local farmers helps keep their operations running, which prevents their farmland from being sold by developers who could destroy the land and its wildlife. Your support will also help prevent big businesses from buying out the farm and using non-eco-friendly farming practices. Thank you for shopping local and helping save our planet!

Producer Spotlight

Ten Hens Farm

Adam and Dru Montri have been farming in Bath, Michigan since 2007 with their two daughters and three employees. Their produce is grown on three acres, in six hoopouses totaling over 17,000 sq ft and in one heated greenhouse. Dru and Adam both went to Michigan State and Penn State to study horticulture and worked together on numerous farms before starting Ten Hens Farm. They grow produce for the ANC Veggie Box program, Bath Farmers market, numerous Lansing area restaurants as well as CSA boxes in the greater Flint area. They are proud to have provided produce for the Veggie Box since the program started.

Crop Profile

Lavender

Lavandula (common name lavender) is a genus of 47 known species of flowering plants in the mint family, Lamiaceae. Lavender has been shown to be one of the most preferred flowers to many pollinators, including bees! Historically, lavender has been used to treat depression, insomnia, anxiety, and fatigue. Current research supports the calming, soothing and sedative effects of lavender when inhaled. While both the foliage and flowers are fragrant, typically flower buds are harvested and dried to scent potpourri, sleep pillows, and other projects. The flowers are also used in teas, cookies, and other confections as well as savory dishes!



What's in the Box?

Fresh Garlic, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*

Organic Summer Squash, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

Organic Red Romaine, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

Tomatoes, *Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing*

Organic Cucumbers, *CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing*

Organic Lavender, *CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing*

Recipes and Tips!

Lavender Cookies

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup shortening
1-1/4 cups sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
Veggie Box lavender flowers
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 375°. Cream butter, shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in extracts. In a separate bowl, whisk flour, lavender, baking powder and salt; gradually beat into creamed mixture.



Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 inches apart onto baking sheets lightly coated with cooking spray. Bake until golden brown, 8-10 minutes. Cool 2 minutes before removing to wire racks. Store in an airtight container.

Honey Lavender Syrup

1/2 cup water
1/2 cup honey
2 tablespoons Veggie Box lavender leaves

Add water and lavender leaves to a small saucepan. Bring to a boil. Stir in honey until dissolved. Turn heat down, and allow to simmer for 15 minutes. Remove from heat, and let steep for 30 minutes. Strain lavender leaves out of the syrup, and into an airtight container. Syrup will keep in the refrigerator for up to two weeks. Use in your morning coffee, cocktails, or even lemonade!

Summer Veggie Pasta

1/2 pound uncooked linguine
Veggie Box summer squash
Veggie Box tomatoes, finely chopped
2/3 cup finely chopped onion
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons champagne or white wine vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 cloves Veggie Box garlic, minced
3 tablespoons panko (breadcrumbs), toasted
1/3 - 1/2 bunch of fresh basil
1 ounce Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, grated (about 1/4 cup)

Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain. While the pasta cooks, shave squash into thin ribbons using a vegetable peeler; place in a large bowl.



Add tomatoes, onion, oil, champagne/vinegar, sugar, salt, pepper and garlic to bowl; toss to combine.



Let stand 15 minutes, stirring occasionally to coat. Add pasta to vegetables, tossing gently to combine. Top with panko, basil, and cheese. Serve while the pasta is still warm!

