



Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 8: July 22nd

Welcome to week 8 of the Summer Veggie Box! The South is distinctive in its customs, dialect, and cuisine. It's made up of many different people who came to the region, each contributing to what is now called Southern cuisine. For example, indigenous peoples had a strong influence in the early beginnings of Southern food: crops like corn, and techniques like frying and barbecuing. However, Spanish explorers in the 1500s brought pigs with them, introducing pork to the region. West Africans carried some of their traditional foods with them, such as watermelon, eggplant, collard greens, and okra, when they were brought by force as slaves beginning in the 1600s. Creoles, known for their unique use of spices, are descended from French and Haitian immigrants who later mingled with Spanish settlers in the New Orleans area. "Cajuns," also recognized for their unique style of cooking, were originally Acadians, French settlers in Nova Scotia who were driven out by the British in the 1700s and made their way to New Orleans. However, African slaves have had the largest impact on this cuisine by far: the intersections of African food preparations, class status, laws that prevented equal access and innovative survival prevailed and mixed with other cultures to create what we consider Southern Cuisine. Another interesting fact - much of the distinct nature and flavors of Southern foods come from preservation methods. Using salt and frying foods were used to make food last longer without refrigeration, as was drying meats to make jerky. Thank you for supporting local food!

What's in the Box?

- Organic Celery**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt
- Organic Amaranth**, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing
- Organic Rosemary**, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing
- Organic Cucumber**, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing
- Organic Kohlrabi**, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing
- Blueberries**, Felzke Farms, Dewitt
- Organic Potatoes**, Lake Divide Farm, Stockbridge

Producer Spotlight

Felzke Farms

Felzke Farms is a family farm located in Dewitt, Michigan that was founded in 1960. They are the largest producer of strawberries in mid-Michigan, offering both U-Pick opportunities as well as pre-picked options at their indoor farm market that has been in operation since 1978. Felzke Farms also grows a variety of vegetables such as asparagus, summer squash, cucumbers, peppers, and more!

Crop Profile

Amaranth

Amaranth greens are nutritious, edible leafy vegetables of Central American origin. Amaranth leaves and grains were one of the staple foods of Aztecs and Incas in pre-Columbian times. Presently, its growth is mainly concentrated in tropical climates of Latin Americas, Asia and Africa. There are several cultivars of amaranth grown meant either for vegetable leaves or grain. Botanically, amaranth species meant for its leaves are different from those grown for the purpose of grains (pseudocereals). Most similar in taste to spinach, amaranth greens have a deep flavor and a hearty yet tender texture that makes it ideal for use in stir-fries and sautés.

Recipes and Tips!

Rosemary Roasted Potatoes

Veggie Box potatoes
1 1/2 tbsp. olive oil
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoons minced garlic (3 cloves)
2 tablespoons minced Veggie Box rosemary leaves

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Cut the potatoes in half or quarters and place in a bowl with the olive oil, salt, pepper, garlic and rosemary; toss until the potatoes are well coated. Dump the potatoes on a baking sheet and spread out into 1 layer; roast in the oven for at least 1 hour, or until browned and crisp. Flip twice with a spatula during cooking to ensure even browning. Remove the potatoes from the oven, season to taste, and serve.



Sauteed Amaranth

Veggie Box amaranth
3 cloves garlic, crushed
3 tablespoons cooking oil or butter
1/2 an onion
Salt to taste

Sautee onions and garlic in oil until softened. Add amaranth greens, season, and cook until tender. Enjoy!

Potato Celery Soup

2 cloves garlic (finely chopped)
1 medium size onion (finely chopped)
2 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
Veggie Box potatoes roughly chopped
6 stalks Veggie Box celery
6 cups vegetable broth
1 1/2 cup 2% milk
1 1/2 tsp. of fresh Veggie Box rosemary
salt and pepper to taste

Boil potatoes until cooked through. Meanwhile, in a large pot over high heat, add olive oil, garlic and onions. Cook for 2-3 minutes, until onions are translucent. Add chopped celery stalks and cook for another 3 minutes. Add vegetable broth and rosemary, stir and bring to boil. Cover and simmer on low (should still be slightly bubbling) for 30 minutes. Turn the heat off, add potatoes to broth and blend until smooth. Add milk and stir well. Season with salt and pepper.

Kohlrabi Fritters

Veggie Box kohlrabi, peeled and chopped
1 large egg
2/3 cup all-purpose flour, divided
1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
1/3 cup olive oil
1 1/2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives

Using the grating disc attachment of a food processor (or you could simply use a cheese grater), process kohlrabi until finely shredded. Squeeze grated kohlrabi between paper towels to remove excess liquid. Place squeezed kohlrabi in a medium bowl. Add egg, 2 tablespoons of the flour, and 3/4 teaspoon of the salt to kohlrabi, and stir to combine. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Using floured hands, pat kohlrabi mixture into 12 (3-inch) flat discs. Sprinkle remaining flour on both sides of discs. Fry fritters in two batches until golden and crisp, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a paper-towel lined plate to drain. Sprinkle with chives and remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt; serve with sour cream and applesauce for dipping.