

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 8: July 23

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!

## 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

### *Winter Savory*

It is a mystery why Winter Savory is relatively unknown compared to its sister plant, Summer Savory. It is durable and has the same strong spicy flavor. Winter Savory is a one-foot, dark green, semi-woody, herbaceous perennial that is hardy in zones 5 to 11. It is easy to grow, and makes an attractive border plant for any herb garden. It makes for a great mixing herb. It blends well with different oreganos, thymes and basil, and it also cooks well meat, poultry or fish. Its small leaves are the perfect compliment to herb cheeses or as last-minute additions to sautés. It has a strong flavor when fresh, but does not hold up well in prolonged stewing.

## What's in the Box?

**Organic Beets**, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*  
**Organic Cucumbers**, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*  
**Salad Mix**, *Hunter Park Garden House, Lansing*  
**Winter Savory**, *Hunter Park Garden House, Lansing*  
**Cherry Tomatoes**, *Peckham Farms, Lansing*  
**Garlic**, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*  
**Organic Summer Squash**, *Lake Divide Farm, Stockbridge*  
**Blueberries**, *Felzke Farms, Dewitt*

## Add-Ons

**Bread**, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*  
**Meat Variety**, *Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte*  
**Sweet Treats**, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*

# Recipes and Tips!

## Soup Seasoning Blend with Winter Savory

1 tsp. peppercorns  
2 tsp. dried basil  
3 tsp. dried thyme  
6 tsp. marjoram  
6 tsp. dried parsley  
1 Tbsp. dried Veggie Box winter savory  
4 Tbsp. dried celery leaves  
6 bay leaves

**Mix together and divide among 6 cheesecloth bags, with one bay leaf per bag. Add a bag to a pot of homemade vegetable or bean-based soup.**

## Beet Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette

Balsamic Vinaigrette:

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil  
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar  
1 tablespoon dijon mustard  
1 Veggie Box garlic clove, finely minced  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon black pepper

For salad:

Veggie Box Beets  
Veggie Box Salad mix  
1/2 cup pecans  
1/2 cup dried cranberries  
1/2 cup feta cheese



**Preheat oven to 400 F. Line a baking sheet with foil. Wrap each beet in a sheet of foil. Bake in oven for about an hour. Remove from oven, allow to cool, then peel skin and slice into halves then wedges. Toast 1/2 cup of pecans in a dry skillet, tossing until golden. Add salad mix to large mixing bowl, along with beets, cheese, pecans, and cranberries.**

**Balsamic Vinaigrette Dressing:**

**In a mason jar, combine all dressing ingredients (1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil, 3 Tbsp balsamic vinegar, 1 Tbsp dijon mustard, 1 pressed garlic clove, 1/4 tsp salt and 1/8 tsp pepper) and shake well to combine and add to the salad to taste. If not serving salad right away, shake the dressing again just before drizzling over the salad.**

## White Beans with Winter Savory & Sage

2 cans cannellini beans  
1 bay leaf  
2 fresh Veggie Box winter savory sprigs  
10 fresh sage leaves  
1 medium yellow onion, cut into 1/2 inch pieces  
Salt and pepper  
3 Veggie Box garlic cloves, finely chopped  
1/3 cup dry white wine  
1/2 teaspoon parsley

**Put the beans into a saucepan with the bay leaf, savory and two of the sage leaves. Warm gently until you need them, so that they take in the herb flavors. Remove the herbs and bay leaf, leave the beans in their broth. While the beans cook, chop the remaining sage leaves. Saute the onion with a little water, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and a few pinches of pepper. Saute over medium heat until the onion begins to release its juices. Add the garlic and sage; saute for about 10 minutes, then add the wine and cook for a minute or two, until the pan is nearly dry. Add the beans and their broth to the onions along with 1/2 teaspoon salt and a few pinches of pepper. Lower the heat and cook for 20 minutes, adding a little water if needed to keep the beans saucy. Add salt and pepper to taste. Add the parsley just before serving.**

## Blueberry Compote

Veggie Box blueberries  
3 tablespoons water  
1/4 cup sugar  
2 teaspoons lemon juice

**Combine 1 cup of the blueberries, water, sugar and lemon juice in a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat for about 10 minutes. Add the rest of the blueberries and cook for 8 minutes more, stirring frequently. Serve warm on pancakes, or over ice cream!**

