

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 9: July 29

Wondering what you can do at home with surplus fruits or veggies? Canning is a great way to preserve the nutritional content of vegetables without compromising the quality and enjoy them well into winter. You can can almost anything--from peaches to carrots to tomatoes to beans - basically anything that you can think of! Fresh produce starts to lose its nutritional value soon after harvesting, so canning is an ideal way to preserve that plant goodness and enjoy those foods out of season. Canning is an important, safe method of food preservation if practiced properly. The canning process involves placing foods in jars and heating them to a temperature that destroys microorganisms that could be a health hazard or cause the food to spoil. Canning also inactivates enzymes that could cause the food to spoil. Air is driven from the jar during heating, and as it cools, a vacuum seal is formed. The vacuum seal prevents air from getting back into the product bringing with it microorganisms to recontaminate the food. Canning was first documented as a method of food preservation in the early 1800's, when a man named Nicholas Appert was the first person to introduce his method of heat-treated produce in sealed glass jars, preventing microbacteria from spoiling the food. Fifty years later, John Mason invented the familiar glass jar with screw on threads that we all know and love today. Thank you for supporting local food!



What's in the Box?

- Sweet Onions**, *Ten Hens Farm*, Bath
- Organic Garlic**, *Owosso Organics*, Owosso
- Organic Tomatoes**, *MSU Student Organic Farm*, Holt
- Organic Bell Peppers**, *MSU Student Organic Farm*, Holt
- Green Beans**, *Felzke Farms*, Dewitt
- Organic Kale**, *CBI Giving Tree Farm*, Lansing
- Organic Summer Squash**, *MSU Student Organic Farm*, Holt
- Organic Beans**, *Ferris Organic Farm*, Eaton Rapids
- Eggs**, *Grazing Fields Cooperative*, Charlotte

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

Green Beans

Green beans are often called “string beans” for the long fibrous stem that runs along the outside of the bean, or “snap beans” due to the loud SNAP! they make when they are opened. They are actually immature kidney beans harvested young before their pods become too fibrous to eat. Both the pods and the beans inside are edible! Not only are green beans a nice, crunchy, low-calorie food but also they provide many key nutrients. Young, tender green beans are a good source of vitamin C, dietary fiber, folate, vitamin K and silicon. Green beans contain no cholesterol. Although your body needs some cholesterol for healthy cell growth, too much is bad for you. High cholesterol may lead to a build-up of fat deposits in your arteries. This can decrease blood flow to your heart and brain and cause a heart attack or stroke.

Recipes and Tips!

Green Beans with Tomatoes

Veggie Box green beans
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 Veggie Box onion finely chopped
pinch crushed red pepper flakes
2 cloves Veggie Box garlic, minced
Veggie Box tomatoes, crushed
1-2 sprigs of fresh basil chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

Wash and trim the ends of the green beans. Set aside. In a large skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and sauté for about 4-5 minutes or until the onion is translucent. Make sure to give it a few stirs. Add the red pepper flakes and the minced garlic and sauté for about 1 minute. Add the tomatoes, and crush them as they cook. Bring to a boil and then reduce heat to obtain a vigorous simmer. Simmer for about 10 minutes or until the sauce begins to thicken. In the meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to boil. Cook the beans for about 5 minutes. Beans should still be crisp. Drain and add to simmering tomatoes. Simmer, uncovered, until beans become tender but still firm (not mushy). If the sauce appears dry, add some water. Add the herbs during the last few minutes of cooking. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

Veggie Box Fried Rice

3 Veggie Box eggs
1 Tablespoon oil
Veggie Box onion, peeled & chopped
2 - 3 cloves Veggie Box garlic, peeled & chopped
1 1/2 cup chopped Veggie Box summer squash
Veggie Box peppers, chopped.
Veggie Box kale, chopped
3 tablespoons of soy sauce
2 cups cooked rice

In a small bowl, whisk the eggs and sprinkle with salt & pepper. Heat a frying pan over medium heat and add 1/2 Tablespoon of the oil. Scramble the eggs, but take them out of the pan while they are still very wet. (This keeps the eggs moist—they will finish cooking when added to the rice.) Set aside. Rinse out the pan to clean off the eggs, then add the rest of the oil and heat over medium heat again until the pan is hot. Add the onion and garlic and saute for a few minutes until the onion is translucent, then add the peppers and zucchini and saute a few minutes more. Put the kale on top of the veggies and add a splash of soy sauce. Cover the pan for a minute or two, until the kale starts to wilt, then stir to mix the kale in with the other veggies. Add the rice and stir for a few minutes to “fry” it a bit and mix the rice in with the veggies. Add more soy sauce. Remove from heat and add the eggs, chopping them up and stirring them into the rice. Serve hot, with more soy sauce if desired.

Simple Lemon Green Beans

Veggie Box green beans, de-stemmed
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 Veggie Box garlic clove, grated or finely minced
juice of ½ lemon plus ½ teaspoon zest
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. In a small bowl mix together the olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, zest, salt, and pepper. Boil the beans until tender but still vibrant green and a little bit crunchy, about 2 to 4 minutes. The timing will depend on their size. Drain the green beans in a colander, and rinse under cold water. Transfer to a kitchen towel and pat dry. Transfer to a serving dish and toss with the dressing. Season to taste and serve.

Veggie Box Braised Beans

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 Veggie Box onion, thinly sliced
6 Veggie Box garlic cloves, 3 minced
1/2 teaspoon sweet paprika
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
Veggie Box green beans
Veggie Box tomatoes, finely diced
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a deep skillet, heat the vegetable oil. Add the sliced onion and cook over moderate heat until translucent and softened, about 5 minutes. Add the minced garlic, paprika and cayenne pepper and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the green beans and 3 whole garlic cloves and cook for about 2 minutes, tossing to coat the beans. Pour the diced tomatoes and their juices into the skillet and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover the skillet and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the green beans are very tender, about 30 minutes. Season the braised green beans with salt and pepper. Transfer them to a platter and serve warm.

Kale Chips

Veggie Box Kale
1 Tbsp olive oil
salt

Preheat the oven to 275°F. Tear the kale leaves into 1” - 2” pieces, discarding the ribs, and place in a bowl. Drizzle with olive oil and toss with your hands until evenly coated. Arrange the leaves in a single layer (with NO overlap) on ungreased cookie sheets. Sprinkle with salt, and bake for 20 minutes or until leaves are crispy - make sure to check them often to prevent burning!