

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 13, August 26

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Veggie Box

Welcome to week 13 of the Summer Veggie Box! Did you know that the average conventional food product travels about 1,500 miles from farm to consumer? By choosing to eat locally grown foods, you can drastically cut down on these “food miles.” Not only do fewer transport miles mean fewer emissions and larger benefits for local economies, but also results in less food waste. Around 40 percent of food grown in the United States is wasted during the process of transporting it from the farm to our table, according to research from the Natural Resources Defense Council. Some food waste we can control, some we cannot. We have a nation that demands perfect, soil- and blemish-free food. Many of these not-so-perfect specimens often wind up in the landfill rather than recycled or creatively used. From the “yucky” bits we trim off during our own cooking to the large portions that are discarded at restaurants, we are throwing away 50% more food than we did 40 years ago. Learning how to store fruits and vegetables properly allows them to stay fresh longer. Avoid food waste by freezing produce to preserve it longer or even canning surplus fruits and vegetables - especially abundant seasonal produce. Another great way is to meal prep, this idea helps you buy only the food you need for the week, reduce waste and organize what you purchase. What are other ways you can reduce food waste and prioritize sustainability? Thank you for supporting local food!

## What's in the Box?

**Organic Shiitake Mushrooms**, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing

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

**Organic Potatoes**, Lake Divide Farm, Stockbridge

**Cherry Tomatoes**, Magnolia Farms, Lansing

**Organic Tomatillos**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

**Organic Lettuce**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

**Corn**, Tomac Pumpkin Patch, Chesaning

**Leeks**, Mac's Market, Laingsburg

## Producer Spotlight

### CBI's Giving Tree Farm

CBI's (Community Based Interventions) Giving Tree Farm is a seven acre, non-profit CSA farm just north of Lansing, MI between Old Town and Dewitt. The farm originally began as a community garden for people with disabilities. As it's volunteer base grew, so did the available programs. The farm has established a heated greenhouse and eight hoop houses for year-round horticultural therapy programs. Monday through Friday, the farm provides vocational training for people who have suffered from traumatic brain injuries, allowing them to organically cultivate the produce provided to provide to the community.

## Crop Profile

### Shiitake Mushrooms

Shiitake, when translated from Japanese, refers to the shii tree on which these mushrooms originally grew, while také means mushroom. They are used in both the fresh and dried state. Shiitake are now widely cultivated all over the world, and contribute about 25% of total yearly production of mushrooms. Shiitakes have been utilized for their health benefits in traditional Asian healing systems for centuries. They are high in minerals such as selenium, which is high in antioxidants and may have anti-inflammatory properties. The mushrooms are naturally low in fat and calories, and are cholesterol-free. They are a good source of fiber, and provide vitamins A, B2, B12, C, and D, and minerals like magnesium, potassium, and zinc.

# Recipes and Tips!

## Veggie Box Stir Fry

6 tablespoons oil  
1-2 inch piece of ginger, minced or grated  
4 garlic cloves, sliced  
Veggie Box leeks, cleaned and sliced  
2 tablespoons of hot peppers  
Veggie Box eggplants  
Veggie Box shiitake mushrooms, diced  
3 tablespoons soy sauce  
3 tablespoons rice vinegar  
2 tablespoons water  
1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil (optional)  
handful minced cilantro leaves (optional)

**Heat a heavy saute pan over medium high heat until a drop of water sizzles and disappears on contact. Pour in 2-3 tablespoons of oil and stir fry the garlic and ginger for about 30 seconds. Add the leeks and hot peppers, then the eggplant. Stir fry, adding a little more oil as needed, until the eggplant skin browns and the eggplant is softening, about 3 or 4 minutes. Add the mushrooms, dribbling in more oil as needed (don't add too much or the whole dish will become oily) and stir until softened. Mix soy sauce, rice vinegar and water. Pour over the vegetable mixture, stir, and heat until the sauce bubbles. Turn down the heat to medium low, cover, and cook for about 8 minutes. Check to be sure the vegetables are not sticking and add a little more water if you need to but you don't want it to be soupy. When the eggplant (your rate limiting vegetable) is soft, turn the heat off. Sprinkle over the toasted sesame oil and the cilantro leaves and stir again. You're done! Serve with brown rice.**



## Roasted Tomato and Tomatillo Salsa

Veggie Box cherry tomatoes  
Veggie box tomatillos  
1/2 Veggie box leeks  
1 garlic clove  
1-2 jalapenos (or serranos)  
10-12 sprigs cilantro  
1 ear of Veggie Box Corn  
pinch of salt  
squeeze of lime

**Husk the tomatillos and then rinse both the tomatoes and tomatillos. Roast the tomatoes and tomatillos in a 400F oven for 20-25 minutes. Add the roasted tomatoes and tomatillos to a blender along with leeks, 1 peeled garlic clove, 1 rinsed and de-stemmed jalapeno (or less for a milder version), 10-12 sprigs rinsed cilantro. Combine well (I usually leave it a bit chunky.) Add the corn. Take a taste for seasoning. I added another 1/2 jalapeno, a pinch of salt, and a generous squeeze of lime. Serve immediately or chill in the fridge for a bit before serving. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the fridge where they will keep for a few days.**



## Garlic Sauteed Shiitake Mushrooms

4 tablespoons unsalted butter  
2 large cloves garlic, minced  
Veggie Box shiitake mushrooms, stems removed  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1 tablespoon chopped parsley

**Combine butter and garlic in saute pan. Heat until butter is melted and garlic starts to sizzle, about 30 seconds. Do not let garlic brown. Add mushrooms and saute 3 to 4 minutes, turning until lightly browned. Season to taste with salt and pepper, sprinkle with parsley and serve.**