

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 13, August 27

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!

Producer Spotlight

Lake Divide Farm

Helen and Jim, the owners of Lake Divide Farm, farmed in New Jersey for four years on leased land before deciding to buy a farm in Michigan. In 2016, they found a farm in Jackson County and began the arduous process of moving everything and making the house livable while maintaining the farm in New Jersey. They are also a first generation family farm. They fell in love with growing food because of the satisfaction of an honest days work and the joy of doing something constructive and tangible for our community and the environment. They believe in food equality, that farming is an essential profession, and that producing food doesn't have to abuse the natural world. They plan on forging a business that affords the farmers, and those who work with them, a living wage, while making nutrient dense, fresh food available to all members of our community.

Crop Profile

Watermelon

Watermelon was originally domesticated in West Africa. It is a highly cultivated fruit worldwide, having more than 1,000 varieties. Watermelons are mostly water — about 92 percent — but this refreshing fruit is soaked with nutrients. Each juicy bite has significant levels of vitamins A, B6 and C, lots of lycopene, antioxidants and amino acids. There's even a modest amount of potassium. Plus, this quintessential summer snack is fat-free, very low in sodium and has only 40 calories per cup.

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Veggie Box

What's in the Box?

Tomatoes, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing
Organic Jalapenos, Owosso Organics, Owosso
Corn, Tomac Pumpkin Patch, Chesaning
Organic Watermelon, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt
Organic Bull Horn Peppers, Owosso Organics, Owosso
Organic Basil, Lake Divide Farm, Stockbridge
Organic Kale, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing
Organic Potatoes, Monroe Family Organics, Alma

Add-Ons

Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt
Sweet Treats, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt
Meat Variety, Heffron Farms Market, Belding
Beef, Heffron Farms Market, Belding
Chicken, Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston
Pork, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte
Cheese, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga
Chevre, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga
Coffee, Rust Belt Roastery, Lansing
Cold Brew, Rust Belt Roastery, Lansing
Kombucha, Apple Blossom Kombucha, Lansing
Eggs, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte
Organic Pinto Beans, Ferris Organic Farm, Eaton Rapids

Recipes and Tips!

Watermelon Slushie

Veggie Box watermelon
2 leaves of Veggie Box Basil
Splash of lime juice
Dollop of honey (to taste)
splash of water

First, freeze seeded watermelon cubes for at least an hour. Then, add the Watermelon, honey, lime juice, basil, and water to a high-speed blender. Pulse the blender until the watermelon starts to break up some, then blend to form a thick, slushie consistency. Adjust the honey to taste, adding more if necessary. If the mixture is too thick for your liking, you can also add in extra water.

Italian Potatoes

Veggie Box Potatoes
1 onion thinly sliced
1 and 3/4 cups of crushed Veggie Box tomatoes
1/2 cup water
4-5 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 teaspoon oregano dried
1 teaspoons paprika
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil extra virgin
1 tablespoons Italian flat leaf parsley fresh
2 tablespoons of Veggie Box basil
finely chopped pecorino romano cheese or parmesan cheese to garnish, if desired

Peel and cut potatoes into wedges. Thinly slice the onion. Mince the garlic. Preheat oven to 425° F. Place oven grate on the lower center rack. Put crushed tomatoes and water in large bowl. Add the minced garlic, dried oregano, paprika and salt and pepper. Add the sliced onions. Toss the sliced onions with the potato wedges in a large deep baking dish (10.5 x 14.75 inches). Arrange the potatoes and vegetables in a single layer, in the baking dish. Drizzle olive oil over the top. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for about 45-60 minutes or until a knife can easily pierce through the potato. Gently move the potatoes in the baking pan. Bake for another 15-20 minutes, without the foil or until most of the moisture has evaporated from the tomato sauce. Stir occasionally. Transfer to a serving dish, garnish with fresh chopped parsley and basil and serve. OPTIONAL: Garnish with grated pecorino romano cheese or parmesan cheese.

Buttermilk Cornbread With Jalapeño Peppers and Corn

1 1/2 cups yellow cornmeal
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
3 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 scant teaspoon salt
3 to 4 tablespoons sugar (or to taste)
1 or 2 Veggie Box jalapeno peppers (to taste)
2 Veggie Box ears of corn, kernels cut off the cob
1 cup Mexican blend cheeses (finely shredded)
1 2/3 cups buttermilk
2 large eggs
6 tablespoons butter (melted)

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Grease and flour a 9-inch square baking pan. In a mixing bowl, combine the cornmeal, flour, baking powder, soda, salt, and sugar. Add the chopped jalapeño peppers, corn kernels, and shredded cheese. Stir the mixture to combine thoroughly. Set aside. In another bowl, whisk together the buttermilk, eggs, and melted butter. Add the wet mixture to the dry ingredients; stir until well moistened. Spread the batter in the prepared baking pan. Bake the cornbread for about 20 to 25 minutes, or until it is firm and browned around the edges.

Skillet Potatoes with Greens

Veggie Box potatoes, cubed
Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper
Veggie Box kale, chopped
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 clove garlic, thinly sliced
Pinch red pepper flakes

Bring potatoes to a boil in a medium saucepan of well-salted water. Reduce heat and simmer until tender, about 10 minutes. Stir in kale and cook until wilted, 1 to 2 minutes. Drain. Heat oil in a large pan over medium-high heat. Add potatoes and kale. Cook, stirring, until potatoes are golden brown, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and red pepper flakes and cook about 1 minute. Season with salt and pepper; serve warm or at room temperature.