

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 14, September 1

Welcome to the final week of the Summer Veggie Box! Shopping local is fairly easy during the warmest months when fresh produce is abundant and farmers markets pop up all over Michigan. However, buying local foods may not seem as easy as we move into the colder months. In reality, many farmers markets are open year-round for a wide selection of winter produce, including our own Allen Farmers Market. Michigan farmers can use hoop houses to plant cold-hardy crops in the late summer and keep them growing into winter. Some Michigan crops that often grow in hoop houses include salad greens, spinach, kale, swiss chard, carrots, parsnips, beets, and other root crops. Some of these crops actually gain flavor and sweetness in the cold temperatures! With advancing storage technology, crops such as squash, potatoes, onions, and apples can be harvested late in the season, stored, and sold throughout the winter. Many people forget about supporting local food in the colder months, the same months that farmers and food producers need it more than ever. If you want to continue supporting your local food system, consider signing up for our Fall Veggie Box program and shopping at a local farmers market!



What's in the Box?

Tomatoes, *Mac's Market, Laingsburg*
Poblano Peppers, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*
Organic Snack Peppers, *Lake Divide Farm, Stockbridge*
Organic Cucumber, *CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing*
Organic Summer Squash, *CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing*
Organic Watermelon, *CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing*

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. It's related to cantaloupe, zucchini, pumpkin, and cucumber. 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.

Recipes and Tips!

Watermelon Slushie

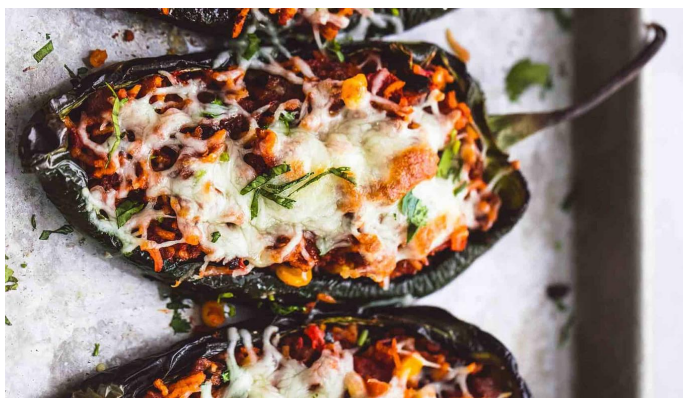
Veggie Box watermelon
Splash of lime juice
Dollop of honey (to taste)
splash of water

First, freeze seeded watermelon cubes for at least an hour. Then, add the Watermelon, honey, lime juice and water to a 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.

Stuffed Poblano Peppers

Veggie Box poblano peppers halved and seeds/membranes removed
1 teaspoon each ground cumin, chili powder, garlic powder
1/2 cup cooked long grain white rice
1 cup of cooked beans
1/4 cup corn
Veggie Box tomatoes, diced
Shredded Cheese (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and lightly grease a large baking sheet. Arrange halved poblano peppers in a single layer on the baking sheet so that they aren't overlapping. Bake for 10-15 minutes while you move on to the next step. Add rice and beans to a large skillet, and season with the cumin, chili powder, and garlic powder. Saute over medium heat for 5 minutes. Stir in the corn and diced tomatoes. Cook another 1-2 minutes. Spoon mixture into the peppers, sprinkle with cheese, and return to oven for another 10 minutes or so until peppers are tender and cheese is melted. Allow to cool slightly before serving.



Cucumber Tomato Salad

Veggie Box cucumber, sliced
Veggie Box tomatoes, diced
½ red onion sliced
1 tablespoon fresh herbs parsley, basil and/or dill, optional
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
salt & pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and toss well. Refrigerate at least 20 minutes before serving.



Roasted Mini Peppers

Veggie Box snack peppers
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1 clove of garlic, minced
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with foil. Cut the mini peppers in half lengthwise. I usually leave the stem, I think it's pretty - but you can cut it off if you wish. The larger mini peppers might have some seeds and membranes - remove those with your fingers or with a paring knife. Place the mini peppers in a large bowl. Toss them with the olive oil, salt, pepper, garlic powder, oregano and Parmesan. Arrange the seasoned mini peppers in a single layer on the prepared baking sheet. Bake them until tender, 20-30 minutes. Serve immediately.