

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 14, September 3

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!

Producer Spotlight

Stone Circle Bakehouse

Stone Circle Bakehouse, of Holt, Michigan, specializes in the European tradition of artisanal bread that is cut, scaled, and shaped by hand. Owner Kevin Cosgrove allows his dough to slowly ferment before baking it on the deck of his wood-fired oven. At Stone Circle Bakehouse, the innovative deliciousness stems from Cosgrove's desire to preserve traditional baking methods, rather than change them. Organic, local ingredients are prioritized when possible to bring customers fresh, environmentally and community friendly baked goods.

Crop Profile

Eggplant

Eggplant is grown for its edible spongy absorbent fruit widely used in cooking. It is part of the nightshade family, and most people consider it a vegetable despite its botanical definition as a berry fruit, a member of the genus *Solanum*, related to the tomato and the potato. Like the tomato its skin and seeds can be eaten, but like the potato it is not to be eaten raw. Raw eggplant can have a bitter taste, with an astringent quality, but it becomes tender when cooked and develops a rich, complex flavor. A staple in cuisines of the Mediterranean region, eggplant figures prominently in such classic dishes as the Greek moussaka, the Italian eggplant parmigiana, and the Middle Eastern relish baba ganoush. The fruit is capable of absorbing large amounts of cooking fats and sauces, which may enrich dishes.

ALLEN
FARMERS MARKET

Veggie Box

What's in the Box?

Salad Mix, *Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing*

Eggplant, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*

Poblano Peppers, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*

Organic Cherry Tomatoes, *Owosso Organics, Owosso*

Onions, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*

Garlic, *Side Hustle Farm, Potterville*

Organic Cucumber, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

Organic Mixed Cooking Greens, *Monroe Family Organics, Alma*

Add-Ons

Bread, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*

Sweet Treats, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*

Meat Variety, *Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston*

Recipes and Tips!

Aloo Baingan

1 tsp oil
1/2 tsp cumin seeds
1/2 tsp mustard seeds
4 cloves of Veggie Box garlic minced
1/2 inch ginger minced
1 hot green chile finely chopped (or a cayenne from last week!)
1 tsp coriander powder
1/2 tsp turmeric
1 1/2 cups of potatoes, cubed (from last week)
Veggie Box eggplant chopped small
1 cup of Veggie Box tomatoes, crushed
3/4 cup vegetable stock
3/4 tsp salt
garam masala to taste
cilantro for garnish

Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. When hot, add cumin and mustard seeds and cook them until cumin seeds change color and get fragrant. A few seconds or a minute depending on how hot the pan and oil are. Add garlic, ginger and chili and cook for a minute or until the garlic is golden. Add the coriander powder and turmeric and mix in. Add potatoes and eggplants and mix in. Add the tomatoes, salt and water and mix in. Cover and cook for 15 minutes. Stir, reduce heat to medium-low and continue to cook until the eggplants and potatoes are tender to preference. about 15 minutes. Taste and adjust salt and spice and mix in. Garnish with a good sprinkle of cayenne or garam masala or both, and cilantro and serve.



Spicy Veggie Box Stir Fry

2 inch nub of ginger, peeled and minced
Veggie Box eggplant, cubed
Veggie Box mixed cooking greens, chopped
1/2 cup Veggie Box onion, diced
2 tbs tamari
2 tbs sesame oil
2 tsp maple syrup (or honey)
3 cloves Veggie Box garlic
Veggie Box poblano peppers, sliced
1 tbs rice vinegar
4 tbs water
1 1/2 tsp Sriracha hot sauce
2 tbs sesame seeds, toasted

In a small bowl combine the sesame oil, rice wine vinegar, tamari, maple syrup, ginger, water and sriracha. Whisk everything together. Heat a large oiled skillet over medium heat. Add the onions and garlic. Cook for a few minutes. Add the eggplant and pepper and cook for about 5 minutes. (Until slightly soft.) Stir often. Add the Tokyo Bekana stems and continue to cook. After about 5 minutes of cooking add the Tokyo Bekana greens and tamari sauce. Stir the sauce in and continue to cook until the greens turn bright and wilted. Taste test to make sure everything is cooked to desired consistency. Serve over brown rice and top with toasted sesame seeds.

Stuffed Poblano Peppers

Veggie Box poblano peppers halved and seeds/membranes removed
1 teaspoon each ground cumin, chili powder
2 cloves of Veggie Box garlic
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. Bake for 10-15 minutes. Add rice and beans to a large skillet, and season with the cumin, chili powder, and garlic. 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.