

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 6, October 22

Welcome to week 6 of the Fall Veggie Box. Earlier this week we talked about ratios and how helpful they can be in allowing for modifications to fit the ingredients you have. Did you also know that using cooking ratios is a great way to avoid unnecessary food waste while cooking? Oftentimes recipes call for a different amount of ingredients than what we may have, or the final dish is far too small or large for how many we're cooking for. Sure, you could multiply or divide every measurement by the same number to scale up or down, and that's certainly not a bad way to adjust a recipe, but if you've ever tried that you've probably ended up with a weird measurement like $\frac{5}{8}$ cups or $\frac{2}{3}$ tablespoon (in case you're wondering, 3 tsp = 1 Tbsp, so $\frac{2}{3}$ Tbsp is just 2 tsp). One of the benefits of using ratios is that because you can use any type of measurement, you're less likely to end up needing to eyeball something because you don't have a $\frac{1}{8}$ th measuring cup. This becomes even easier if you're using a kitchen scale to measure ingredients, but ratios are a breeze regardless of unit. The next time you're stuck with more kale than is called for, or fewer apples than you need, try turning to a ratio to help scale the recipe and use what you have and avoid wasting any delicious VB (or other) produce. Thank you for supporting local food!

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

Celeriac

While you're probably familiar with it's close cousin celery, this week's featured item is actually the root; celeriac! While it's green top may look similar to celery, they are actually not the same plant. Celeriac is a bit more uncommon here in the US, but has been enjoyed for centuries throughout Europe. Initially, celeriac was used for religious and medicinal purposes throughout Italy, Greece, and Egypt. While the plant had been known of and used for so many years, it wasn't until 1623 that it was actually recorded as a food. That record brought a new popularity to celeriac, which was then widely cultivated throughout Europe by the end of the 1600s. Today, celeriac is great when paired with potatoes, used in stews, featured in a salad... actually there are a lot of great uses for celeriac! With many more weeks left of winter weather, it's the perfect time to try out a nice and warm celeriac recipe (hint: look for it on the back page!). We hope you enjoy this unsung hero.



What's in the Box?

- Organic Onions**, Cinzori Farms, Ceresco
- Potatoes**, Hunter Park Garden House, Lansing
- Golden Delicious Apples**, Hillcrest Farms, Eaton Rapids
- Organic Celeriac**, CBI Giving Tree Farm, Lansing
- Organic Kale**, Cinzori Farms, Ceresco
- Mint**, Hunter Park Garden House, Lansing
- Organic Turnips**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

Add-Ons

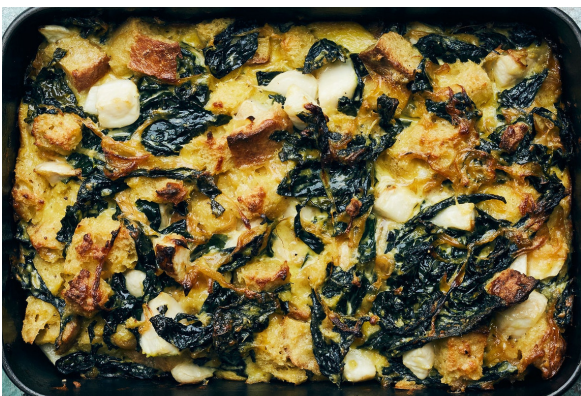
- Bread**, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt
- Meat**, Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston

Recipes and Tips!

Turnip and Kale Gratin

2-3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1 cups heavy cream
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
1 medium Veggie Box onion, thinly sliced
Kosher salt
1 bunch Veggie Box kale, ribs and stems removed, leaves torn
Veggie Box turnips, trimmed, peeled, cut into ½-inch pieces
1 large egg, beaten to blend
2 ounces Fontina, provolone, gouda, or other melty cheese, grated (about 1/2 cup)
1/2 ounce Parmesan, finely grated (about 1/2 cup)
4 ounces day-old bread, preferably a crusty kind, cut into ½-inch pieces

Bring garlic, cream, and thyme to a bare simmer over medium heat. Reduce heat to low and let cream simmer 30 minutes. Let cool. Meanwhile, heat 1 Tbsp. butter in a large skillet over medium-low. Add onions, season with salt, and cook, stirring occasionally and adding a splash or two of water if onions begin to stick to pan, until caramelized and amber colored, 45-60 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and let cool. Wipe out skillet. Heat remaining 1 Tbsp. butter in same skillet. Working in batches, add kale, tossing and letting it wilt slightly before adding more; season with salt. Cook until kale is wilted and tender, 5-8 minutes; transfer to bowl with onions. While kale is cooking, cook turnips in a large pot of boiling well-salted water until crisp-tender, about 2 minutes; drain. Transfer to a bowl of ice water and let cool. Drain; pat dry. Transfer to bowl with onions. Preheat oven to 375°. Whisk eggs, Fontina cheese, Parmesan, and cooled cream mixture in a large bowl to combine. Add onion mixture and bread; season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a 13x9" baking dish and press down on mixture with your hands to form a tight, even layer. Bake gratin, uncovered, until well browned, 40-50 minutes. Let rest 10 minutes before serving.



Celeriac and Lentils with Hazelnut and Mint

1/3 cup whole hazelnuts, toasted, peeled and coarsely chopped (or leave them whole which is what I preferred)
1 cup Puy lentils, rinsed
3 cups vegetable broth or water
2 bay leaves 4 sprigs fresh thyme
1 large celeriac (1.5 lbs), peeled and cut into 1-cm cubes
Salt and pepper, to taste
2 tsp hazelnut oil or your oil of choice
2 tbsp rice vinegar or your vinegar of choice
4 tbsp chopped fresh mint

1. Preheat the oven to 425F. Place the diced celeriac on a baking sheet, sprinkle with olive oil and a little salt and roast until tender, approximately 20 minutes. When done, set aside to cool. 2. Put the lentils, broth/water, bay leaves and thyme sprigs in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 15-20 minutes, or until the lentils are soft but not falling apart. Drain in a sieve. Remove and discard the bay leaves and the woody sprigs. 3. In a large bowl, mix the hot lentils (make sure they don't cool down - lentils soak up flavors much better when they're piping hot) with the remainder of the oil, vinegar, a few grinds of black pepper and plenty of salt (at least 1/2 tsp). Add the celeriac, stir, taste and adjust the seasoning as necessary. 4. If you're serving this straight away, stir in half the mint and the hazelnuts, then pile in a big heap on to a suitable serving dish. Drizzle the remaining hazelnut oil over the top, then garnish with the rest of the mint and nuts. If you're planning on serving it cold, wait for the lentil and celeriac mixture to cool down, taste again, then make a final adjustment to the seasoning. Add the rest of the hazelnut oil, the mint and the nuts just as you do when serving it hot.

