

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 11, November 25

ALLEN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Veggie Box

Thanksgiving is the easiest and best time of year to "eat local," for the simple reason that this holiday dates back to a time when "fresh and local" were not marketing terms, but just the way it was. This means that most of what you find on a traditional Thanksgiving menu has its roots in local, seasonal foods. Yet too often we feel obliged to follow more recent traditions. We fill a Thanksgiving menu with an industrially raised turkey that's been injected with saline to make it seem juicy, or Jell-O salad with canned fruit cocktail, or green bean casserole with canned mushroom soup, or sweet potatoes from a can, baked with butter and brown sugar with marshmallows on top. There's nothing wrong with family traditions, but it's easy and fun to give those old favorites new life with fresh, locally raised foods. Thanksgiving is the perfect time to choose from autumn's bountiful cornucopia of locally grown foods. There's even more to be thankful for because local foods, when grown without synthetic chemicals, enhance the health of farms, the community and ourselves. There is just no better way to express gratitude for good food, local farmers, and their active stewardship of the land than to buy one or more local items for the big meal on the day we join together (maybe not this year though) and give thanks. Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Trillium Wood Farm

Trillium Wood Farm was founded in 2013 by certified Nutritional Therapy Practitioners and sisters, Allie and Elise Thorp—as a solution to the shortcomings they see with our industrialized food system. Their vision of agri“culture” is to contribute to a local food system founded strongly on transparency and integrity, to remain engaged with our community, and to utilize ecologically sound practices. This means never growing beyond the point that they can maintain personal relationships with both collaborators and customers, incorporating heritage breeds, pasture rotations, 100% grass-fed ruminants, organic feed, focusing on preventative health strategies, and, most importantly, conditions that lead to happy animals, farmers, and consumers.

Crop Profile

Pie Pumpkin

First off, pie pumpkins are not to be confused with the ones used to carve jack-o'-lanterns. Also called sugar pumpkins or sweet pumpkins, pie pumpkins are smaller, sweeter, and less fibrous, which makes them a great choice for cooking. They belong to the winter squash family (as do butternut and acorn squash, and kabocha), and are delicious prepared in similar ways. Native to North America, pumpkins are one of the oldest domesticated plants. Their solid texture turns creamy with roasting, steaming, sautéing, or pureeing. And their sweet-savory flavor works as well with sweet ingredients as it does with savory ones.

What's in the Box?

Organic Pie Pumpkin, Cinzori Farms, Ceresco
Organic Garlic, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt
Fuji Apples, Hillcrest Farms, Eaton Rapids
Organic Spinach, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt
Cauliflower, Ten Hens Farm, Bath
Organic Red Onions, Cinzori Farms, Ceresco
Russet Potatoes, Hillcrest Farms, Eaton Rapids
Organic Bok Choi, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

Add-Ons

Eggs, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte
Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt
Coffee, Rust Belt Roastery, Lansing
Cold Brew, Rust Belt Roastery, Lansing
Kombucha, Apple Blossom Kombucha, Lansing
Cheese, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga
Chevre, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga
Meat, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte
Chicken, Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston
Beef, Heffron Farms Markets, Belding
Pork, Heffron Farms Markets, Belding

Recipes and Tips!

Veggie Box Stuffing

2 baguettes cut into cubes
1 Tablespoon olive oil
3 cloves of Veggie Box garlic, minced
1 cup of diced Veggie Box onion
4 stalks of celery diced
1 cup of mushrooms diced
2 Veggie Box apples cored and diced
2 1/2 cups of vegetable broth
1/2 cup white wine
2 tbsp of sage chopped
1/4 cup fresh parsley chopped
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
cracked pepper to taste
4 Tablespoons butter

If using fresh bread, preheat the oven to 250°F, and on a sheet pan, dry out the bread cubes in the oven for 1 hour. In a large skillet, saute the onions, celery, garlic and mushrooms in the olive oil over medium heat. 4-6 minutes or until the onions are soft. Add the apples and white wine. Cook for an additional minute. Add the vegetable broth and turn off the heat. When the bread is ready. Increase oven temperature to 350°F. In a large bowl combine all the ingredients except the butter. Mix well. Rub olive oil on the inside of a 9×16 baking pan. Pour the stuffing mixture into the baking pan and top with the butter. Bake stuffing uncovered for 45 mins to 1 hour.



Pumpkin Pie

2 cups of Veggie Box pie pumpkin puree (scoop out seeds, roast, and then puree or mash the inner pulp)
2 large eggs plus the yolk of a third egg
1/2 cup packed dark brown sugar
1/3 cup white sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves

1/8 teaspoon ground cardamom
1/2 teaspoon lemon zest
1 1/2 cup heavy cream or one 12 oz. can of evaporated milk
1 good pie crust, chilled or frozen

Preheat your oven to 425°F. 2 Make the filling: Beat the eggs in a large bowl. Mix in the brown sugar, white sugar, salt, spices—cinnamon, ground ginger, nutmeg, ground cloves, cardamom, and lemon zest. Mix in the pumpkin purée. Stir in the cream. Beat together until everything is well mixed. Pour into pie shell and bake: Pour the filling into an uncooked chilled or frozen pie shell. Bake at a high temperature of 425°F for 15 minutes. Then after 15 minutes, lower the temperature to 350°F. Bake for 45 to 55 minutes more. The pie is done when a knife tip inserted in the center comes out wet but relatively clean. The center should be just barely jiggly. (About half-way through the baking, you may want to put foil around the edges or use a pie protector to keep the crust from getting too browned.) Cool the pumpkin pie on a wire rack for 2 hours. Note that the pumpkin pie will come out of the oven all puffed up (from the leavening of the eggs), and will deflate as it cools. Serve with whipped cream.

Mashed Potatoes With Bok Choi and Crispy Onions

Veggie Box potatoes scrubbed well
Kosher salt
3/4 cup buttermilk, or more as needed (may substitute regular milk)
Freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon grapeseed or canola oil
Veggie Box bok choy cleaned well and then cut crosswise into 1-inch pieces
Crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
Toasted sesame oil, for serving
1 cup crispy/fried Veggie Box onions, for garnish

Boil peeled potatoes until fork tender. Drain, return to the pot; immediately pour in the buttermilk, then use a potato masher to mash to your desired consistency. Add more buttermilk, as needed. Season lightly with salt and pepper; cover to keep warm. Meanwhile, heat the grapeseed or canola oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Once the oil shimmers, toss in the chopped bok choy (to taste) and a pinch of crushed red pepper, flakes, if desired. Stir-fry for 1 to 2 minutes, until warmed through and slightly wilted. Transfer the warm mashed potatoes to a warmed serving bowl. Top with the bok choy, then drizzle a little toasted sesame oil over them. Scatter the crispy onions or shallots on top; serve right away.