

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 14, December 17

Welcome to the final week of the Fall Veggie Box! We are so glad that all of you decided to join this community of local food supporters. Over the past 14 weeks, the Veggie Box program has sourced over 28,000 pounds - 14 tons - of fresh, in-season produce from Mid-Michigan farmers. This has not only lead to improved health and culinary knowledge for you and your family, but has also resulted in impressive economic impacts. You have helped to make small-scale, family farming a more viable way of life, and have put thousands of dollars back into our local economy! We hope you've enjoyed trying an array of produce that you may not have tried before like black spanish radishes, kohlrabi, celeriac, rutabaga, and more. We've loved providing fresh, local produce for you and your families, and are always looking to improve our program. Be on the lookout (likely in January) for a follow-up survey about the Veggie Box program and your experience. As always, thank you for supporting local food, and happy holidays to you and your family!

## Producer Spotlight

### *Titus Farms*

Titus Farms was founded by Rose and Paul Titus in 1982. Growing up, both farmers worked at their respective family farms until they got married and purchased a small 20 acre land. Together, with their broad knowledge of farming, they ventured into farming using only organic methods. Paul and Rose both dedicated their lives into farming so that they can pass on ownership of the farm to their daughter Rebecca Titus. Titus Farms is dedicated to producing the highest quality vegetables using sustainable organic farming methods, as well as producing unique varieties of vegetables that capitalize on great taste.

## Crop Profile

### *Beets*

Beta vulgaris is the plant species to which all cultivated beets belong. Beets are a root vegetable that are known for their dark red color. The leaves of beets can also be eaten either raw or cooked. Beets are a source of folic acid, vitamin C and potassium, which is important for the health of your bones, kidneys and muscles. Beet greens can be used like any salad green, make sure to rinse well before eating. Use raw in salads, smoothies or as garnish. You can also cook beet greens in stir-fries or soups. Beets boast many health benefits including lowering blood pressure, improved stamina, and boosting brain health. Try some in one of the delicious recipes on the back!

ALLEN  
COMMUNITY CENTER

Veggie Box

## What's in the Box?

**Organic Lettuce**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

**Organic White/Yellow Acorn Squash**, Cinzori Farms, Ceresco

**Cabbages** Ten Hens Farm, Bath

**Beets**, Titus Farms, Leslie

**Organic Carrots**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

**Organic Tatsoi**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

**Spinach**, Ten Hens Farm, Bath

## Add-Ons

**Eggs**, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte

**Bread**, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt

# Recipes and Tips!

## Roasted Beet and Winter Squash Salad With Walnuts

Veggie Box acorn squash  
Veggie Box beets  
Veggie Box spinach  
1 tablespoons red wine or sherry vinegar  
1/2 teaspoon balsamic vinegar  
Salt and freshly ground pepper  
1 small garlic clove, minced or put through a press  
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
2 tablespoons chopped walnuts  
1 tablespoons mixed chopped fresh herbs, like parsley, mint, tarragon, chives

**Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Cut the greens off of the beets, leaving about 1/2 inch of the stems attached. Scrub the beets and place in a baking dish or ovenproof casserole. Add about 1/4 inch water to the dish. Cover tightly with a lid or foil, and bake 35 to 40 minutes, until the beets are tender. Remove from the heat and allow to cool. Line another roasting pan with foil or parchment and brush with olive oil. Peel the squash and cut in 1/2-inch thick slices. Toss with 2 teaspoons of the olive oil and salt to taste and place on the baking sheet. Roast for 20 to 30 minutes, turning halfway through, until lightly browned and tender. You can do this at the same time that you roast the beets, but watch carefully if you need to put the baking sheet on a lower shelf. Remove from the heat and allow to cool. Mix together the vinegars, garlic, salt, pepper, the remaining olive oil and the walnut oil. When the beets are cool enough to handle, trim the ends off, slip off their skins, cut in half, then slice into half-moon shapes. Toss with half the salad dressing. In a separate bowl, toss the roasted squash with the remaining dressing. Place the spinach on a platter, leaving a space in the middle. Arrange the beets and squash in alternating rows in the middle of the platter. Sprinkle on the fresh herbs and the walnuts. If desired, sprinkle on crumbled feta.**

## Beet Pesto Pizza with Spinach and Goat Cheese

1 large pizza dough (store bought or homemade)  
1 cup beet pesto  
Veggie Box spinach  
\*1.5 cups mozzarella cheese, grated  
2 ounces goat cheese

### Beet Pesto

1 cup Veggie Box beets, chopped and roasted  
3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped  
1/2 cup walnuts, roasted  
1/2 cup parmesan cheese, grated  
1/2 cup olive oil  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
Salt to taste

**Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Wash and scrub the beet and pat it dry. Chop it into 1/2" cubes and place it on a sheet of foil. Wrap the chopped beet in foil, making a foil packet. Place the packet on a baking sheet. Roast in the oven for 50 minutes, or until beets are soft and juices are seeping out. Allow beets to cool completely. Add all pesto ingredients except for the oil to a food processor or blender and pulse several times. Leaving the food processor (or blender) running, slowly add the olive oil until all ingredients are well combined. If the pesto is too thick for your blender to process, add a small amount of water until desired consistency is reached. Prepare the beet pesto and the pizza dough. Preheat the oven to 415 degrees F. Dust gluten-free flour (or cornmeal) on a baking sheet and press or roll the dough to desired thickness. Bake the dough for 5 to 7 minutes with no toppings. Remove the crust from the oven and spread the beet pesto over it. Add the spinach, followed by the goat cheese and mozzarella. Note: the kale will cook down in the oven. Bake pizza for 20 to 25 minutes or to desired crisp.**

