

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 2, March 11



The origins of the CSA, like so many agricultural practices in the United States, can be traced back to a black farmer. Dr. Booker T. Whatley was born in Alabama in 1915 and growing up saw how small farms, particularly those owned by black folks, were disappearing due to expansion of mass agriculture. He earned a PhD in Horticulture from Rutgers University and later a law degree from Alabama A&M. Dr. Whatley is best known for his work to help farmers grow smaller and smarter, and to focus on “internal resources” such as “the sun, air, rain, plants, animals, people, and all the other physical resources that are within the immediate environment of every farm” through a number of different methods. He first advocated for farmers to grow high-value crops like berries or heirloom strains instead of commodity crops that would compete with commercial agriculture. Whatley created regenerative farming systems, a holistic approach to farming in a way that doesn’t damage the land and incorporates practices such as crop rotation, topsoil regeneration, and groundwater conservation. In addition to regenerative farming he pioneered the practice of Pick-Your-Own (also called U-Pick). He also created “clientele membership clubs”, the original version of the CSA, in order to allow farmers to “plan production, anticipate demand & have a guaranteed market.” He recognized that a model like the CSA could benefit both the farmer and the consumer in incredible ways. Though often left out of history books, we have BIPOC farmers, horticulturalists, and scientists to thank for so many sustainable and community-based agriculture practices in use today. What others can you think of? Thank you for supporting local food!

## What's in the Box?

- Organic Spinach**, *Monroe Family Organics, Alma*
- Organic Onions**, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*
- Potatoes**, *Titus Farms, Leslie*
- French Breakfast Radishes**, *Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing*
- Organic Daikon Radishes**, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*
- King Trumpet Mushrooms**, *Agape Organic Farm, Dansville*
- Ginger**, *Peckham Farms, Lansing*

## Add-Ons

- Bread**, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*
- Meat Variety**, *Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte*

## Producer Spotlight

### *Agape Organic Farm*

Agape Organic Farm is a small, black-owned family farm out of Dansville, Michigan. Their mission is to grow quality food while being good stewards of the land and their animals. They raise purebred Berkshire pigs on pasture, 28 varieties of mushrooms in season, and also sell foraged mushrooms when available. Our farm also grows and sells live organic microgreens, garlic, shallots, and herbs grown on their own mushroom compost. The farm is run by Shara Trierweiler and her two children, Philomena and Dominic.

## Crop Profile

### *King Trumpet Mushrooms*

*Pleurotus eryngii*, also known as the king trumpet mushroom or king oyster is the largest species of the oyster mushroom. It’s found natively in the Mediterranean, Middle East, Northern Africa, and Asia, but is cultivated around the world. King trumpets are unique in their symbiotic preferences as they feed off of the roots of herbaceous plants, while the oyster mushrooms and golden oyster mushrooms you can find in the woods here in Michigan grow from wood!

# Recipes and Tips!

## Veggie Box Stir-Fry

1/2 a pound of Veggie Box daikon radish, sliced into matchsticks (1/2 of your share)  
1/2 cup of sliced Veggie Box onions  
2 tsp of Veggie Box ginger, minced  
4oz of Veggie Box king trumpet mushrooms, sliced thin (all of your share)  
2 cups of chopped greens to stir-fry (bok choy, cabbage, kale, etc.)  
3 cloves of Veggie Box garlic, minced  
1 teaspoon of red pepper flakes  
2 tablespoons of soy sauce  
1 1/2 teaspoon of lemon juice  
dash of sesame oil

**Slice the king trumpet mushrooms thin and let marinate in the soy sauce, lemon juice, sesame oil, red pepper flakes, and garlic mixture for at least half an hour. Heat vegetable oil in a wok and throw in the onions for a minute or two.**

**Then, add in the daikon radishes. Cook for a few minutes longer before add in the ginger, mushrooms, and greens. Cook on medium high heat and then dump the marinade over top.**

**Add more soy sauce or lemon juice to your liking. Finish with a dash of sesame oil.**

**Optional to serve over rice!**

## French Breakfast Radishes vs. Daikon Radishes

French breakfast radishes are oval in shape. They're that same lovely red with a white tip, and they're often—but not always—a bit more mild, and easier to eat raw. The French are known to eat them with sweet butter and sea salt, or on a baguette. While French Breakfast radishes are spring or summer plants, daikon radishes are winter ones. Daikon radishes are large—usually 6-15 inches in length. Instead of being red on the outside, they're white, green, or even purple. They're a bit sweet, and definitely have a peppery taste. You've likely had them pickled or braised on banh mi, with sushi, or in kimchi. However, you can also eat them raw!

## Fresh Ginger Tea

2 cups water  
½ lemon thinly sliced  
1 inch fresh Veggie Box ginger root  
1 tablespoon honey

**Peel one inch piece of fresh ginger root and grate into a teapot with a strainer or an infuser. Thinly slice half a lemon. No need to take out the seeds since the tea filter or infuser from the teapot will make sure the seeds don't get into your tea. Add the lemon slices into the teapot. Make sure to wash the lemon well since the rind will steep with the tea. Add honey. Let the tea steep for at least 5 minutes and then strain solids and pour hot tea into a teacup. If you don't have a teapot, feel free to use a French press! If you don't have a French press, feel free to simply simmer the ginger and lemon in a pot of water for five minutes before straining into a glass and adding honey.**



## Seared Mushrooms with Garlic & Thyme

3/4 tablespoons olive oil  
4oz of Veggie Box king trumpet mushrooms cut into rounds and scored (with caps just left whole or cut in half) (all of your share)  
Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper  
1 1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into pieces  
1 small sprig of thyme  
1 garlic clove, crushed

**Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Arrange mushrooms in skillet in a single layer and cook, undisturbed, until bottom side is golden brown, about 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, toss mushrooms, and continue to cook, tossing often and reducing heat as needed to avoid scorching, until golden brown all over, about 5 minutes more. Reduce heat to medium and add butter, thyme sprigs, and garlic to skillet. Tip skillet toward you so butter pools at bottom edge. Spoon foaming butter over mushrooms until butter smells nutty, about 4 minutes. Remove mushrooms from skillet with a slotted spoon.**