

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 5, April 1

Welcome to the fifth week of the Spring Veggie Box! The way we eat has a profound effect on how eco-friendly, ethical, and sustainable our lives can be. Choosing and using seasonal produce is key. But this isn't just about the perfect seasonal recipes – it's also about preserving the harvest to enjoy later in the year, and not letting food go to waste. Freezing, drying, pickling, and canning are effective ways to preserve the produce and herbs you get from Veggie Box. Freezing is an easy way to preserve a variety of vegetables and fruits. While it's a pretty simple method, it does involve more than just tossing vegetables into a zip-close bag and stashing them in the freezer. Before you freeze them, you should blanch (cook briefly in boiling water) many vegetables, such as kale, green beans, asparagus, rutabaga etc. Fruits like strawberries and blueberries can be frozen fresh. It's best to freeze things like strawberries and kale on a single layer on a sheet, and then put into a freezer bag so that it does not form one giant lump. Herbs and other types of produce can be dehydrated at a low temperature in the oven, or in a dehydrator. Feel free to pickle radishes, cucumbers, cabbage, beans, etc. You can do refrigerator pickles, which are soaked in a brine of water, vinegar, and salt, while fermented pickles are cured for longer. You can also *can*, which is a method of heat-treated produce in sealed glass jars, preventing microbacteria from spoiling the food. What methods have you tried? Thank you for supporting local food!

## Producer Spotlight

### *MSU Student Organic Farm*

The MSU Student Organic Farm is a 15 acre year-round educational, organic farm located in Holt, MI about 3 miles south of the Michigan State University campus. Started in 1999 by students who desired a more hands-on learning experience, the farm now offers a nearly year-long intensive program for those interested in learning everything they can about organic farming. Not only do the students tend to the fields, but the program also involves caring for the farm's livestock. MSU's multiple cafeterias source as much produce as they can from the MSUSOF and they also offer a weekly farm stand in the middle of campus for students and public alike.

## Crop Profile

### *Leeks*

As a cousin to the onion, leeks offer a similar but more subtle taste when used in your kitchen. Leeks have been cultivated since the time of Ancient Egyptians and have been regarded as a superior vegetable throughout history. Associated with anything from improving your singing voice and purging your blood, to curing nosebleeds, the leek is commonly viewed as a healthy and virtuous plant. You can use leeks in place of an onion in most roasts and stews to add a dose of vitamins A, B, and K, magnesium, and dietary fiber.



## What's in the Box?

**Organic Kale**, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing  
**Organic Leeks**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt  
**Salad Mix**, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing  
**Organic Garlic**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt  
**Organic Swiss Chard**, CBI's Giving Tree Farm, Lansing  
**Potatoes**, Titus Farms, Leslie

## Add-Ons

**Bread**, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt  
**Meat Variety**, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte  
**Cheese**, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga  
**Chevre**, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga  
**Eggs**, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte  
**Coffee**, Rust Belt Roastery, Lansing  
**Kombucha**, Apple Blossom Kombucha, Lansing  
**Organic Pinto Beans**, Ferris Organic Farm, Eaton Rapids  
**Pork**, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte  
**Chicken**, Heffron Farms, Belding  
**Beef**, Heffron Farms, Belding

# Recipes and Tips!

## Leek Frittata

1/4 cup milk  
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper  
8 large eggs, lightly beaten  
1 ounce Parmesan cheese, grated (about 1/4 cup)  
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
Veggie Box leeks, trimmed, and thinly sliced  
1/2 cup chopped Veggie Box kale  
1/2 cup chopped veggie box Swiss chard  
2 cloves of Veggie Box garlic, minced

**Preheat oven to 350. Combine milk, flour, salt, pepper, eggs, kale, Swiss chard, and cheese in a medium bowl, stirring with a whisk. Heat oil in a medium ovenproof skillet over medium. Add leek and garlic to pan; cook for about 4 minutes. Add egg mixture; stir gently. Cover skillet, and reduce heat to low. Cook until eggs are partially set, about 6 minutes. Uncover skillet, and bake at 350 until center is set, 10 to 12 minutes. Loosen frittata from skillet, and slide onto a cutting board. Cut into 8 wedges.**

## Turmeric Seasoned Potatoes and Greens

1 1/2 pounds of steamed (or boiled) potatoes, cubed  
1 bunch Veggie Box kale or Swiss chard  
4 tablespoons ghee (or butter)  
1/2 cup sliced Veggie Box leeks  
2 fresh tomatoes diced or 1 -15 ounce can of diced tomatoes  
1 teaspoon cumin seeds  
1 1/2 teaspoon turmeric  
1 teaspoon coriander powder  
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger root  
3 Veggie Box garlic cloves, minced  
salt to taste

**Cook potatoes. Mince the garlic and ginger, measure the spices out into a little bowl and slice leeks. Heat oil in sauce pan brown the cumin seeds until they turn fragrant add leeks sauté for 5 minutes add tomatoes until they "melt", then add garlic and ginger. Add the spices, and a little water if necessary. Cook for a few minutes, then add greens & 1/2 cup of water bring to boil, reduce heat, add the potatoes and mix well then cover and simmer gently until ready, stirring once or twice to prevent sticking about 10 minutes. It's done whenever the greens are cooked to your liking and soft. This is fantastic served with basmati rice and whole milk yogurt!**

## Potato Leek Soup

Veggie Box leeks (all of them from this week - about a pound)  
2 Tbs butter  
4 cups vegetable broth  
3 cloves of Veggie Box garlic  
Veggie Box potatoes, peeled and cubed (a pound and a half)  
1 teaspoon sea salt, less or more to taste  
1 sprig of fresh thyme  
1 bay leaf  
Sprinkle of Tabasco sauce or other red chili sauce  
White or black pepper to taste

**Cut off the roots of the leeks. Cut the leeks lengthwise, fan them open under running water to dislodge any dirt or mud hiding inside. Cut off the tough dark green tops and discard (either compost or freeze for making stock). Slice the white and light green parts of the leeks crosswise into 1/4-inch thick slices. Place the slices in a bowl of cold water and agitate them with your hands to dislodge any remaining dirt. Melt butter on medium heat in a 3 to 4 quart thick-bottomed pot. Add the the chopped leeks and minced garlic, stir to coat with the butter. Cover the pot and lower the heat to low, cook for 10 minutes until the leeks are softened. Check to make sure the leeks are not browning. Add the broth, diced potatoes, bay leaf, thyme, and a teaspoon of salt to the pot. Increase the heat to high to bring to a simmer, then lower the heat to maintain a low simmer, and cook for 20 minutes, until the potatoes are cooked through. Remove and discard the bay leaf, thyme sprig, and rosemary sprig. Use an immersion blender or standing blender to blend about half of the soup if you want a chunky soup, or all of it if you would like your soup to be more smooth. Add a few dashes of Tabasco to taste. Add freshly ground pepper and more salt to taste.**

