

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 7, July 15

We know you love to support local food since you're reading this, but what about when you go out to eat? Are you thinking about where that food is coming from, too? Sourcing local is not simply a trend, but rather has become a key component of many restaurants' endeavors to ensure fresh and tasty ingredients, promote environmental sustainability, and most importantly, support local businesses. Indeed, some of the greatest chefs around the world are now deeply involved in this locally-sourced philosophy, taking responsibility for their ecological footprint and making big strides in introducing more sustainable practices into their restaurants. The Farm to Table movement focuses on producing food locally and then transferring that food to local restaurants. On top of the food being fresher and healthier, benefits of a locally sourced restaurant include boosting the economy by keeping money local, contributes to a sustainable agricultural economy and workforce, and creates shorter transport distances which reduce green house gas emissions. Most restaurants that source locally are also locally owned. When you are supporting these restaurants, you are supporting the families of Lansing, too. Some of our favorite locally sourced restaurants in Lansing are Red Haven, Tannin, The Soup Spoon Cafe, and the People's Kitchen! What other locally sourced restaurants do you know of?

## Producer Spotlight

### *Clear Street Farms*

Clear Street Farms is a first year urban farm based in Reo Town, Lansing. In collaboration with Magnolia Avenue Farms, Clear Street Farms is dedicated to growing specialty vegetables, fruit, and herbs on reclaimed city lots; and to supporting and bolstering community resiliency efforts across the Greater Lansing Area.

## Crop Profile

### *Beets*

Beets are said to have grown in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. Humans originally ate beet greens but not the thin and fibrous roots, which were occasionally used in medicine. The large beet leaves and stalks were consumed like chard, a close relative. The Elizabethans enjoyed them in tarts and stews. Thomas Jefferson planted them at Monticello. Medieval cooks stuffed them into pies. The colorful, sweet root vegetable known as the beet tends to spark an impassioned response from folks who either love it or loathe it. Beets contain a substance called geosmin, which is responsible for that fresh soil scent in your garden following a spring rain. Humans are quite sensitive to geosmin, even in very low doses, which explains why our beet response ranges from one extreme to the other. Today, around 20 percent of the world's sugar comes from sugar beets. Furthermore, Beets are a source of folic acid, vitamin C and potassium, which is important for the health of your bones, kidneys and muscles



## What's in the Box?

**Organic Beets**, *Monroe Family Organics*, Alma  
**Jalapeños**, *Hillcrest Farms*, Eaton Rapids  
**Cucumber**, *Ten Hens Farm*, Bath  
**Carrots**, *Clear Street Farms*, Lansing  
**Onions**, *Peckham Farms*, Lansing  
**Swiss Chard**, *Magnolia Farms*, Lansing  
**Blueberries**, *Felzke Farms*, Dewitt

## Add-Ons

**Bread**, *Stone Circle Bakehouse*, Holt  
**Meat**, *Grazing Feilds Cooperative*, Charlotte  
**Eggs**, *Heffron Farms Market*, Belding  
**Coffee**, *The 517 Coffee Company*, Lansing  
**Cheese**, *Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery*, Onondaga  
**Chevre**, *Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery*, Onondaga  
**Meat Variety**, *Heffron Farms Market*, Belding  
**Chicken**, *Heffron Farms Market*, Williamston  
**Beef**, *Heffron Farms Market*, Belding  
**Pork**, *Grazing Feilds Cooperative*, Charlotte

# Recipes and Tips!

## Tangy Swiss Chard with Slivered Carrots

1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil  
5 Veggie Box carrots, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced on the diagonal  
3 cups Veggie Box Swiss chard, stems chopped, leaves cut into 1-inch strips  
2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar  
Salt and ground pepper  
2 Cloves of garlic

**Heat the olive oil in a skillet. Add the carrots and cook until crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Add the garlic and chard stems and cook for 1 minute, then stir in the chard leaves and toss until wilted, about 3 minutes. Stir in the rice vinegar, season with salt and pepper and serve.**



## Blueberry Compote

Veggie Box blueberries  
3 tablespoons water  
1/4 cup sugar  
2 teaspoons lemon juice

**Combine 1 cup of the blueberries, water, sugar, and lemon juice in a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat for about 10 minutes. Add the rest of the blueberries and cook for 8 minutes more, stirring frequently. Serve warm on pancakes, or over ice cream!**



## Black Bean Soup with Cumin & Jalapeno

2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 Veggie Box onion, chopped  
3 Veggie Box carrots, chopped  
4 garlic cloves, chopped  
2 teaspoons ground cumin  
2 teaspoons chilli powder  
2 teaspoons paprika  
1 1/2 teaspoons of lime juice  
1 Veggie Box jalapeño, minced  
2 15- to 16-ounce cans black beans, undrained  
2 slicer tomatoes, diced.  
1 1/2 cups vegetable broth  
Chopped fresh cilantro  
Chopped green onions  
Crumbled feta cheese

**Heat oil in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Add onion, carrot, and garlic; sauté until vegetables begin to soften, about 6 minutes. Mix in cumin, paprika, chili powder, lime juice, and the jalapeño. Add beans, tomatoes with juice, and broth; bring soup to boil. Reduce heat to medium, cover, and cook until carrots are tender, about 15 minutes. Transfer 3 cups of soup to blender and puree until smooth. Return puree to pot. Simmer soup until slightly thickened, about 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Ladle soup into bowls. Pass cilantro, green onions, and feta cheese separately.**

## Caramelized Beet-Lentil Pilaf

3/4 cup brown lentils, rinsed  
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil, plus more for serving  
1 onion, thinly sliced  
Veggie Box beets, greens and stems chopped, root peeled and coarsely grated  
Kosher salt  
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin  
1 cup long-grain white rice  
Yogurt, for serving  
Paprika or cayenne for serving

**Add lentils to a small saucepan and cover with 3 inches of water. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer and partially cover. Cook until lentils are almost tender, 10 to 12 minutes; drain. In a large straight-sided skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onion, grated beets, and a generous pinch of salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden and caramelized, 10 to 12 minutes. Add 1 teaspoon salt, cumin, and rice and cook until rice looks opaque, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in 1 1/2 cups water and lentils and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer until rice is crisp-tender, 15 minutes. Uncover and top with beet greens. Cover and cook until greens are bright green and tender, 5 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, for 10 minutes. Fluff with a fork. Serve with yogurt, paprika/cayenne, and a drizzle of oil.**