

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 13 August 24

Are you looking for things you can do to improve your garden this season or ways to live a more sustainable lifestyle? Composting can meet both of those goals. Homemade compost builds the health and disease resistance of the plants in your garden while diverting organics from the landfill which reduces green house gas emissions. Composting requires 3 basic ingredients: browns, greens and water. Your compost pile should have an equal amount of browns and greens. Browns consist of dead leaves, branches, and twigs. Greens consist of grass clippings, vegetable waste, fruit scraps, and coffee grounds. Water provides moisture to help break down the organic matter. Adding compost to your garden soil will improve its fertility, consistency, drainage and health. It builds up the beneficial microorganisms in the soil leading to healthier garden overall. Composting also helps stop soil loss and helps save water. Organic material retains at least 18 times its weight in water. There are multiple ways that you can compost outside and indoors. Visit

<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home> to get more information on the various methods of composting. You can find a method that works best with the space you have at home. Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Hillcrest Farms

Hillcrest Farms is a four season farm in Eaton Rapids that offers an extensive selection of fresh produce. Owner, Mark Kastner, started farming in 2008 gaining inspiration from his grandmother, a fantastic chef and farmer with whom he spent summers with as a child. Now he is known around town for his deliciously unique spinach and salad mix, as well as for the impeccable quality of the rest of his produce. His sustainable farming practices assure customers that products are safely produced with regards to environment and human health.

Crop Profile

Tomatillos

Tomatillos, also known as the Mexican husk tomato, is a plant of the nightshade family bearing small, spherical and green or green-purple fruit. Tomatillos have a slightly more acidic, slightly less sweet flavor than ripe and unripe tomatoes. Overall, the flavor is more vegetal and bright, and the interior texture is denser and less watery. Prepping a tomatillo is pretty straight forward. The husks can be easily removed with your hands and discarded. From here, you decide what you want to do with them. If you want to keep the flavor bright and play up their bracing acidity, use them raw. If you want to mellow out that acidity a bit and access the fruit's deeper, more savory qualities, then try cooking them!



What's in the Box?

Organic Cubanelle Peppers, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

Organic Eggplant, Cinzori Farms, Ceresco

Summer Squash, Ten Hens Farm, Bath

Organic Parsley, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

Apples, Hillcrest Farms, Eaton Rapids

Tomatoes, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing

Lettuce, Ten Hens Farm, Bath

Organic Sweet Onions, Cinzori Farms, Ceresco

Tomatillos, Clear Street Farm, Lansing

Add-Ons

Eggs, Grazing Fields Coopertive, Charlotte

Bread, Stone Circle BakeHouse, Holt

Chevre, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga

Cheese, Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga

Coffee, The 517 Coffee Company, Lansing

Organic Navy Beans, Ferris Organic Farm, Eaton Rapids

Kombucha, Apple Blossom Kombucha, Lansing

Meat, Heffron Farms Market, Belding

Pork, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte

Beef, Heffron Farms Market, Belding

Chicken, Heffron Farms Market, Belding

Recipes and Tips!

Aloo Baingan

1 tsp oil
1/2 tsp cumin seeds
1/2 tsp mustard seeds
4 cloves of garlic, from last week's Veggie Box
1/2 inch ginger minced
1 hot green chile finely chopped (or any kind of hot pepper!)
1 tsp coriander powder
1/2 tsp turmeric
1 1/2 cups Veggie Box potatoes, diced
Veggie Box eggplant, chopped small
1 cup of Veggie Box tomatoes, crushed
3/4 cup vegetable stock
3/4 tsp salt
garam masala to taste
cilantro for garnish

Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. When hot, add cumin and mustard seeds and cook them until cumin seeds change color and get fragrant. A few seconds or a minute depending on how hot the pan and oil are. Add garlic, ginger and chili and cook for a minute or until the garlic is golden. Add the coriander powder and turmeric and mix in. Add potatoes and eggplants and mix in. Add the tomatoes, salt and water and mix in. Cover and cook for 15 minutes. Stir, reduce heat to medium-low and continue to cook until the eggplants and potatoes are tender to preference. about 15 minutes. Taste and adjust salt and spice and mix in. Garnish with a good sprinkle of cayenne or garam masala or both, and cilantro and serve.



Apple Brown Betty

1 lemon
3/4 cup all purpose flour
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
1/2 cup cold butter, cubed

Preheat oven to 350 degrees, add apple slices to a 9x9 baking dish. Cut lemon in half and squeeze juice over apples. Toss apples to evenly coat. In medium sized bowl, combine flour, sugars, and spices. Add cold butter and use a pastry blender to work the butter into the dry ingredients, cutting it into small pieces. You want the mixture to be crumbly with little to no dry ingredients left that haven't touched the butter. Sprinkle all of the topping over the apples evenly. Cover with aluminum foil and cook in preheated oven for 40 minutes. Remove foil and allow to continue cooking until the topping is crisp, about 10-20 additional minutes. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream.



Roasted Tomatillo Salsa

Veggie Box tomatoes
Veggie box tomatillos
1 Veggie box sweet onion
1 garlic clove from last weeks box
1-2 jalapeño (or serranos)
5 sprigs cilantro
1 ear of Veggie Box Corn from last weeks box
pinch of salt
squeeze of lime

The tomatillos and then rinse both the tomatoes and tomatillos. Roast the tomatoes and tomatillos in a 400F oven for 20-25 minutes. Add the roasted tomatoes and tomatillos to a blender along with leeks, 1 peeled garlic clove, 1 rinsed and de-stemmed jalapeno (or less for a milder version), 10-12 sprigs rinsed cilantro. Combine well (I usually leave it a bit chunky.) Add the corn. Take a taste for seasoning. I added another 1/2 jalapeno, a pinch of salt, and a generous squeeze of lime. Serve immediately or chill in the fridge for a bit before serving. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the fridge where they will keep for a few days.