

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 12, August 19

Welcome to week 12 of Fall Veggie box. The Veggie Box fresh, nutritious and safe food from local providers every week for you to enjoy. It is easy to get caught up in the craziness of life and take for granted the wonderful things that are before us. Showing gratitude is an important aspect of maintaining mental health, maintaining social relationships, and fostering a vibrant community. Allen Neighborhood Center values community and aims to cultivate strong and intentional connections among our community members. One way ANC can do this is by encouraging our members and staff to practice gratitude. University California Berkeley has conducted many studies on gratitude practices that correlate practices of gratitude with improvements of physical and psychological health and will help shift your mind away from toxic emotions and towards more positive emotions. Gratitude practices have also been shown to improve sleep and to improve self esteem. It can be difficult to know how to begin integrating gratitude practices into your daily life, however a great place to start your gratitude practices is with the food you eat! Try taking 3-5 minutes before you begin eating to reflect on all the factors that brought the food to your table: the farmers, the delivery drivers, the water and sunlight that nourished your food, the soil that gave your food a place to grow, and the thousands of years of knowledge that has been cultivated about agricultural practices. Showing appreciation will help spread the love and positivity in the hectic world we all live in and will foster a stronger relationship that contributes to a connected and vibrant community. Here at ANC we are grateful for all of our amazing staff and members like you! We are excited to hear about your gratitude journeys, happy gratitude practices!

Producer Spotlight

Owosso Organics

Owosso Organics is a family owned, certified organic vegetable and cut flower farm located four miles west of Owosso. Starting from a small postage stamp garden in 1978, Richard Bowie, Pooh Stevenson and their daughters Cody and Taylor now farm over seven acres of their eighty acre farm, along with eight greenhouses of over 15,000 square feet. They have been certified organic since 1994, and are currently certified with Global Organic Alliance. Their mission is to provide specialty artisan produce and flowers grown with great care and impeccable service available locally to enrich the lives and palates of all people who seek their business assisting in bridging urban and rural communities together.

Crop Profile

Leek

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 and is commonly viewed as a healthy and virtuous plant. According to an old Welsh legend, St. David advised the Britons to wear leeks in their helmets as a clever way to distinguish themselves from an enemy army on the battlefield. They emerged victorious and to this day Welsh Guardsmen wear a special green and white plume in their helmets as a tribute. If you don't want to wear them on your head, 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 Spring Mix, *Monroe Family Organic Farm, Alma*

Organic Potatoes, *Cinzori Farms, Ceresco*

Organic Garlic, *Owosso Organics, Owosso*

Tomatoes, *Hunter Park Green House, Lansing and Ten Hens, Bath*

Organic Leek, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

Organic Celery, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

Organic Cilantro, *Monroe Family Organics, Alma*

Corn, *Felzke Farms, Dewitt*

Cucumber, *Ten Hens, Bath*

Organic Bell Pepper, *Owosso Organics, Owosso*

Add-Ons

Bread, *Stone Circle BakeHouse, Holt*

Meat, *Heffron Farms Market, Belding*

Honey, *Behavior Ranch, Ovid*

Recipes and Tips!

Tzatziki

- 1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons Veggie Box Cilantro, chopped
- 1 clove Veggie Box garlic, minced
- 1/2 Veggie Box cucumber, diced

Prepare the tzatziki sauce by combining all ingredients in a small bowl. Stir until well combined. Store in fridge to chill till serving. This versatile sauce is taste best with warm pita bread, vegetables, or savory meat or fish.



Mexican Veggie Soup

- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 1/2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 stalk of celery, chopped
- 2 cloves Veggie Box garlic, minced
- 1/2 heaped tbsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried coriander
- 1 heaped tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp freshly squeezed lime juice
- Veggie Box tomatoes, diced
- Veggie Box bell pepper, chopped
- Veggie Box corn, chopped from cob
- 1 small handful of Veggie Box cilantro, chopped
- 1 can black beans, drained and rinsed

Heat the oil in a large saucepan. Add the onion and cook over medium heat until the onion is translucent. Then add celery and cook for another 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Now add garlic, spices, dried herbs, and tomatoes. Stir and add 2 1/2 cups of water. Add vegetables, beans and corn. Finally, add salt and pepper and lime juice. Bring to the boil and simmer for 20 minutes. Stir in chopped cilantro and serve immediately. Serve with bread.

Potato Leek Soup

- 1/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 sprig of rosemary
- 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, rosemary, 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.

