

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 2, September 23

Welcome to week 2 of the Fall Veggie Box! Who likes bland, tasteless, sad food? Nothing against any of the bland food lovers but let us introduce you to the importance of herbs, spices, and aromatics. Take a second to remember some of the smells of your childhood kitchen – maybe it’s the smell of sautéed garlic, onions, tomatoes, and basil? Or another combination of simmering cumin, cilantro, chilis, and garlic? Maybe it’s something sweet, spicy, zesty, or tangy, and you remember not being able to wait to taste what’s cooking. That’s the aromatics talking to you. Herbs that carry a strong smell of the plant they were harvested from, as well as spices, enhance the flavors of our meals. In other terms, herbs that smell good are good for you! Repeat that with me, herbs that smell good are good for you! Week after week we’ve noticed a mountain of herbs left on the swap table and we honestly want to convince you to not do that. We hope you like veggies - actually we really bank on your love for veggies and the new meals they can bring you with your devotion to Veggie Box. Herbs and spices can be a great way to explore your love of not only vegetables, but food and the multitude of tastes they bring. We all like to experience good food, so this week when you see the winter savory, pick it up with confidence. Thank you for supporting local food!



What's in the Box?

Leeks, *Magnolia Avenue Farms*, Lansing
Tomatoes, *Hunter Park GardenHouse*, Lansing
Komatsuna, *Hunter Park GardenHouse*, Lansing
Fuji Apples, *Hillcrest Farms*, Eaton Rapids
Organic Sweet Peppers, *Owosso Organics*, Owosso
Spaghetti Squash, *Tomac Pumpkin Patch*, Chesaning
Organic Red Norland Potatoes, *Monroe Family Organics*, Alma
Winter Savory, *Hunter Park GardenHouse*, Lansing

Add-Ons

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

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

Winter Savory

It is a mystery why Winter Savory is relatively unknown compared to its sister plant, Summer Savory. In flavor it is quite peppery, the winter version more so than the summer. Savory is also savory by nature, and so it seasons a dish without the need for salt and pepper. Reducing salt intake is something many of us are advised to do, and herbs generally are helpful in this regard, but Savory particularly so. It blends well with different oreganos, thymes and basil, and it also cooks well with beans, meat, poultry or fish. Its small leaves are the perfect compliment to herb cheeses or as last-minute additions to sautés.

Recipes and Tips!

Baked Spaghetti Squash with Garlic and Butter

1 Veggie Box spaghetti squash
2 tablespoons butter
2 cloves garlic finely minced
Veggie Box winter savory to taste
1/2 teaspoon salt or to taste
1/2 of Veggie Box tomatoes, diced
1/4 cup shredded parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 375F. Cut squash in half, lengthwise and remove the seeds and membranes. Add a little water to a baking dish, and bake the squash cut-side down for about 45 minutes, or when it can be pierced easily with a knife. Use a fork to scrape the squash to get long, lovely strands. If the squash seem difficult to scrape, place squash halves cut side down, and bake for an additional 10 minutes. Heat a large saute pan with the butter and the garlic over medium-low heat. When garlic becomes fragrant, add winter savory, salt, and tomatoes. Cook for a few minutes and then add spaghetti squash strands. Toss well, sprinkle in the parmesan cheese and taste to see if you need additional salt. The spaghetti squash should have a slight crunch - but if you like it softer, cover the pan and cook 2 more minutes



Preserving Winter Savory

Dehydrator drying is a fast and easy way to dry high quality herbs because temperature and air circulation can be controlled. However, you can also tie it into small bundles and hang them to air dry in a dry, well-circulated area.

Komatsuna Nibitashi

One of our volunteers, Hiro, was stoked to have komatsuna in the Veggie Box this week! A note from Hiro: "My mom would make this dish all the time when I was growing up in Japan. It is one of those dishes that touches your soul for me!"

Veggie Box Komatsuna
1 package of Aburaage
1/2 cup Dashi (or Vegetable stock)
1 tsp sugar
1 1/2 Tbsp Soy Sauce
2 Tbsp Sake
2 Tbsp Mirin

Wash Komatsuna well and cut into 1 1/2" long pieces. Cut Aburaage into 1/2" width strips. In a pot, heat Dashi, sugar, Soy Sauce, Mirin, and Sake. Add komatsuna and Aburaage and cook for a couple of minutes, until softened. Cover and let it cool completely. Serve at room temperature or heat up. If you cannot find aburaage, it is made by cutting tofu into thin slices and deep fried two times, once at lower temperature first and then at high temperature last.



Garlicky Red Potatoes

Veggie Box Potatoes
3 tablespoons olive oil
3 cloves of garlic (from last week's box)
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
Veggie Box winter savory (to taste)

Arrange a rack in the middle of the oven and heat to 425. Place a rimmed baking sheet in the oven while it heats. Place the potatoes, olive oil, garlic powder, salt, winter savory, and pepper in a large bowl and toss to combine. Remove the hot baking sheet from the oven. Transfer the potatoes to the baking sheet and arrange them cut-side down. Roast for 15 minutes. Flip the potatoes over with a flat metal spatula and roast until browned and tender, about 10 minutes more.