

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 6, October 21

Buy local - you hear this phrase all the time, but why is it so important? Local produce is often much fresher and tastier since it is picked when in-season, compared to produce grown miles away that had been picked before it was ripe. Produce that is in season can be picked at peak ripeness and transported to local grocery stores or farmers markets usually within 24 hours. Produce grown locally also has greater nutrient value, since less time passes between harvest to your table. Food imported from far away can lose its nutrient value as it ages during transport. Similarly, food that requires fewer steps from farm to table has a smaller risk of becoming contaminated, which leads to a safer food supply. Another major benefit of buying locally is the environmental impact. Local foods require less travel, thus cutting down on fuel consumption and air pollution that long truck drives cause. Shopping at a farmers market also eliminates the need for packaging facilities and refrigeration. Supporting our local farmers helps keep their operations running, which prevents their farmland from being sold by developers who could destroy the land and its wildlife. Your support will also help prevent big businesses from buying out the farm and using non-eco-friendly farming practices. Thank you for shopping local and helping save our planet!

## Producer Spotlight

### *Lake Divide Farm*

Helen and Jim, the owners of Lake Divide Farm, farmed in New Jersey for four years on leased land before deciding to buy a farm in Michigan. In 2016, they found a farm in Jackson County and began the arduous process of moving everything and making the house livable while maintaining the farm in New Jersey. They are also a first generation family farm. They fell in love with growing food because of the satisfaction of an honest days work and the joy of doing something constructive and tangible for our community and the environment. They believe in food equality, that farming is an essential profession, and that producing food doesn't have to abuse the natural world. They plan on forging a business that affords the farmers, and those who work with them, a living wage, while making nutrient dense, fresh food available to all members of our community.

## Crop Profile

### *Celeriac*

While you're probably familiar with it's close cousin celery, this week's featured item is actually the root; celeriac! While it's green top may look similar to celery, they are actually not the same plant. Celeriac is a bit more uncommon here in the US, but has been enjoyed for centuries throughout Europe. Initially, celeriac was used for religious and medicinal purposes throughout Italy, Greece, and Egypt. While the plant had been known of and used for so many years, it wasn't until 1623 that it was actually recorded as a food. That record brought a new popularity to celeriac, which was then widely cultivated throughout Europe by the end of the 1600s. Today, celeriac is great when paired with potatoes, used in stews, featured in a salad... actually there are a lot of great uses for celeriac! We hope you enjoy this unsung hero.



## What's in the Box?

**Organic Celeriac**, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt  
**Microgreens**, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing  
**Shizuka Apples**, Hillcrest Farms, Eaton Rapids  
**Organic Ginger**, Lake Divide Farm, Stockbridge  
**Potatoes**, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing  
**Pie Pumpkins**, Tomac Pumpkin Patch, Chesaning  
**Organic Collard Greens**, Cinzori Farms, Ceresco

## Add-Ons

**Eggs**, Grazing Fields Coopeartive, Charlotte  
**Meat**, Trillium Wood Farm, Williamston

# Recipes and Tips!

## Chocolate Gingersnaps

1/2 cup butter, softened  
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar  
1/4 cup molasses  
1 tablespoon water  
2 teaspoons minced fresh Veggie Box ginger  
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 tablespoon baking cocoa  
1-1/4 teaspoons ground ginger  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves  
7 ounces semisweet chocolate, finely chopped  
1/4 cup coarse sugar

**In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy, 5-7 minutes. Beat in the molasses, water and gingerroot. Combine the flour, cocoa, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in chocolate. Cover and refrigerate until easy to handle, about 2 hours. Shape dough into 1-in. balls; roll in sugar. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° until tops begin to crack, 10-12 minutes. Cool for 2 minutes before removing to wire racks.**

## Fresh Ginger Tea

2 cups water  
½ lemon thinly sliced  
1 inch fresh Veggie Box ginger root  
1 tablespoon honey

**Peel one inch piece of fresh ginger root and grate into a teapot with a strainer or an infuser. Thinly slice half a lemon. No need to take out the seeds since the tea filter or infuser from the teapot will make sure the seeds don't get into your tea. Add the lemon slices into the teapot. Make sure to wash the lemon well since the rind will steep with the tea. Add honey. Let the tea steep for at least 5 minutes and then strain solids and pour hot tea into a teacup. If you don't have a teapot, feel free to use a French press! If you don't have a French press, feel free to simply simmer the ginger and lemon in a pot of water for five minutes before straining into a glass and adding honey.**

## Stuffed Pumpkin

1 Veggie Box Pumpkin  
Salt & freshly ground pepper  
1 cup of cubed, stale bread  
3/4 cup of grated cheese (of your choice)  
2 Veggie Box garlic cloves, coarsely chopped (from last week)  
1/3 cup heavy cream  
1/2 cup of diced onions.  
1/2 of Veggie Box collard greens  
1 Veggie Box celeriac peeled and diced.  
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg  
1 teaspoon of fresh thyme

**Center a rack in the oven and preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with a silicone baking mat or parchment, or find a Dutch oven with a diameter that's just a tiny bit larger than your pumpkin. Using a very sturdy knife cut a cap out of the top of the pumpkin. Clear away the seeds and strings from the cap and from inside the pumpkin. Season the inside of the pumpkin generously with salt and pepper, and put it on the baking sheet or in the pot. Roast the celeriac and onions for 20 or so minutes until tender. Toss the bread, cheese, garlic, onions, collards, celeriac and herbs together in a bowl. Season with pepper- and pack the mix into the pumpkin. Stir the cream with the nutmeg and some salt and pepper and pour it into the pumpkin. Put the cap in place and bake the pumpkin for about 2 hours. Check after 90 minutes, or until everything inside the pumpkin is bubbling and the flesh of the pumpkin is tender enough to be pierced easily with the tip of a knife. Because the pumpkin will have exuded liquid, remove the cap during the last 20 minutes or so, so that the liquid can bake away and the top of the stuffing can brown a little.**

## Celeriac & Garlic Mashed Potatoes

Veggie Box potatoes, cubed (1 1/2 pounds)  
Veggie Box celeriac, peeled and chopped  
3 Veggie Box garlic cloves, peeled (from last week)  
3 tablespoons butter  
1 1/2 tablespoons milk (or more if needed)  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon pepper

**Place the potatoes, celeriac and garlic in a pot; cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and cook just until tender, 15 minutes. Drain; cool slightly. Mash vegetables with butter, milk, salt and pepper.**