

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 11, November 24

Thanksgiving is the easiest and best time of year to "eat local," for the simple reason that this holiday dates back to a time when "fresh and local" were not marketing terms, but just the way it was. This means that most of what you find on a traditional Thanksgiving menu has its roots in local, seasonal foods. Yet too often we feel obliged to follow more recent traditions. We fill a Thanksgiving menu with an industrially raised turkey that's been injected with saline to make it seem juicy, or Jell-O salad with canned fruit cocktail, or green bean casserole with canned mushroom soup, or sweet potatoes from a can, baked with butter and brown sugar with marshmallows on top. There's nothing wrong with family traditions, but it's easy and fun to give those old favorites new life with fresh, locally raised foods. Thanksgiving is the perfect time to choose from autumn's bountiful cornucopia of locally grown foods. There's even more to be thankful for because local foods, when grown without synthetic chemicals, enhance the health of farms, the community and ourselves. There is just no better way to express gratitude for good food, local farmers, and their active stewardship of the land than to buy one or more local items for the big meal on the day we join together and give thanks. Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Titus Farms

Titus Farms was founded by Rose and Paul Titus in 1982. Growing up, both farmers worked at their respective family farms until they got married and purchased a small 20 acre land. Paul and Rose both dedicated their lives into farming so that they can pass on ownership of the farm to their daughter Rebecca Titus. Titus farms is dedicated to producing the highest quality vegetables using sustainable organic farming methods, as well as producing unique varieties of vegetables that capitalize on great taste.

Crop Profile

Brussels Sprouts

Brussels sprouts first appeared in northern Europe during the fifth century, later being cultivated in the 13th century near Brussels, which is where they got their name. Brussels sprouts grow on tall stalks, and the tasty buds are cut off before they are eaten. They boast various health benefits, such as helping to maintain healthy blood sugar levels, reducing inflammation, and are high in nutrients and antioxidants. So why do Brussels sprouts get a bad rep? Some people have a gene, known as TAS2R38, that make Brussels sprouts and other cabbages taste bitter to them. Furthermore, overcooking Brussels sprouts produces a sulfur-like smell, which is usually what turns people off from the produce. Don't be afraid - give some of our recipes a shot, and we're sure you'll love them!



What's in the Box?

Brussels Sprouts, Ten Hens Farm, Bath
Sweet Potatoes, Titus Farms, Leslie
Organic Onions, Cinzori Farms, Ceresco
Russet Potatoes, Hillcrest Farms, Eaton Rapids
Organic Garlic, Cinzori Farms, Ceresco
Gold Rush Apples, Hillcrest Farms, Eaton Rapids
Butternut Squash, Tomac Pumpkin Patch, Chesaning
Sage, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing

Add-Ons

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

Recipes and Tips!

Veggie Box Stuffing

16 cups day-old, cubed French or Italian bread
3 cloves of Veggie Box garlic, minced
1 cup of diced Veggie Box onion
3 stalks of celery diced
1 cup of shredded Veggie Box Brussels sprouts.
2 Veggie Box apples cored and diced
2 1/2 cups of vegetable broth
1 1/2 tbsp of Veggie Box sage, chopped
1 tsp of thyme
1 tbsp parsley
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt cracked pepper to taste
4 Tablespoons butter

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Melt the butter in a pot over medium heat. Add the onions, garlic, celery, sprouts, sage, parsley, and thyme and cook for 5-7 minutes or until softened. Add the broth, bring to a simmer, then remove from the heat. Stir in the cubed bread and diced apples. Transfer the mixture to a buttered baking dish. Cover and bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake for 15-20 minutes or until the top is golden brown

Most people hear the story of Thanksgiving from a young age - it's pretty simple and peaceful.

Reality isn't that simple. People had been in the Americas for at least 12,000 years and according to some Indigenous traditions, since the beginning of time. And having history start with the English is a way of dismissing all that. The arrival of the Mayflower was not some kind of first-contact episode. Wampanoags had a century of contact with Europeans—it was bloody and it involved slave raiding by Europeans. At least two and maybe more Wampanoags, when the Pilgrims arrived, spoke English, had already been to Europe and back and knew the very organizers of the Pilgrims' venture.

Most poignantly, using a shared dinner as a symbol for colonialism really has it backward. No question about it, Wampanoag leader Ousamequin reached out to the English at Plymouth and wanted an alliance with them. But it's not because he was innately friendly. It's because his people have been decimated by an epidemic disease caused by colonizers, and Ousamequin sees the English as an opportunity to fend off his tribal rebels and keep his people safe. It did not last, and was not honored.

Although many Indigenous folks across the United States celebrate Thanksgiving, the factual history behind the holiday is something to be less than thankful for. While communing with loved ones and showing appreciation for the bounties and gifts provided is one positive aspect of the national holiday, teaching a false narrative of its beginnings perpetuates colonialism and ignores more than 400 years of atrocities committed

against Native Americans and First Nations' people. Thanksgiving facts and Thanksgiving myths have blended together for years like so much gravy and mashed potatoes, and separating them is just as complicated.

Whiskey-Glazed Sweet Potatoes

Veggie Box sweet potatoes
1/2 cup pecans
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, plus more for the dish
1/4 cup maple syrup
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 tbs whiskey
Kosher salt
1 Veggie Box apple, peeled, halved, cored and cut into 1/2-inch-thick slices

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Place the sweet potatoes on a baking sheet (do not pierce) and bake 25-30 minutes. Lightly squeeze the potatoes: If they're slightly soft, they're done. Let cool. Lightly toast the pecans in a medium saute pan over high heat, shaking the pan occasionally, about 3 minutes. Add the butter, then reduce the heat to medium and stir in the maple syrup, cinnamon, nutmeg and cayenne; let simmer 4 to 5 minutes. Add the whiskey and a dash of salt; simmer 5 more minutes. Butter the bottom and sides of an 8- inch-square baking dish. Cut the sweet potatoes into 1/2- inch-thick slices or cubes. Arrange the sweet potato and apple slices in the prepared pan, alternating. Pour the whiskey-pecan mixture over the top. Cover with aluminum foil and bake 15 minutes. Remove the foil and baste the top with the whiskey sauce that's collected in the bottom of the pan; continue baking until the apples are soft and glazed, about 18 more minutes

Brussels Sprouts with Lemon Garlic Butter

Veggie Box Brussels sprouts cut in quarters
1-2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
3 cloves Veggie Box garlic roughly chopped
1/2 lemon zested and juiced

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium high heat. Add the trimmed Brussels sprouts and sauté for about 10 minutes until golden brown and fork tender, giving them a stir halfway through to ensure they cook evenly. Once golden brown on some sides, add the butter, red pepper flakes and garlic and sauté for 1 minute more until fragrant. Remove from heat and stir in the lemon zest and lemon juice and season with salt and pepper. Serve as needed.