

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 2, March 8

Welcome to the second week of the Spring Veggie Box! The idea that food is power may seem obvious when thinking about how food literally powers our bodies and minds. But power within food systems is far more complicated. For example, larger farms have, in large part, lost the power to choose what they grow due to the US government heavily subsidizing certain crops (namely corn, soy, and wheat). Now that farmers are forced to grow only one crop, which is oftentimes not a variety that is edible without heavy processing, they have lost both the power of choice and the power to feed their families. Another example is the treatment of Indigenous peoples and the impact it has had on their relationships with food. Many Indigenous peoples have been forced off of their land and onto reservations where their traditional foodways are no longer accessible to them. Not only that, but they are given low-quality, highly processed foods and face the harsh consequences of food apartheid; without access to fresh produce, nutritionally-dense foods, or culturally appropriate foods, they are stripped of their power over themselves, their bodies, and their health. This has led to the creation of a generalized "Native American" cuisine, including foods like fry bread, that is rooted in scarcity and a lack of food sovereignty. Health disparities from the impact of systemic racism on access to healthy foods has hugely impacted so many minority communities and has led to generations of increased rates of type II diabetes, hypertension, malnourishment and obesity, which can negatively impact cognitive development, academic performance, and mental health. By buying and consuming local produce you can help give the power back to farmers and food producers, and empower yourself to eat foods that are nourishing for your body, your food system, and your community.

Producer Spotlight

Green Wagon Farm

Green Wagon Farm is a small-scale vegetable venture in Ada, Michigan, growing 18 acres of diverse vegetables and herbs. The farm sells its goods at local farmers markets, delivers to area restaurants and grocers, operates a year-round CSA, and has newly started selling to Veggie Box!

Crop Profile

Beets

Beets are said to have grown in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. Humans originally ate beet greens but not the thin and fibrous roots, which were occasionally used in medicine. The large beet leaves and stalks were consumed like chard, a close relative. The Elizabethans enjoyed them in tarts and stews. Thomas Jefferson planted them at Monticello. Medieval cooks stuffed them into pies. The colorful, sweet root vegetable known as the beet tends to spark an impassioned response from folks who either love it or loathe it. Beets contain a substance called geosmin, which is responsible for that fresh soil scent in your garden following a spring rain. Humans are quite sensitive to geosmin, even in very low doses, which explains why our beet response ranges from one extreme to the other. Today, around 20 percent of the world's sugar comes from sugar beets. Furthermore, Beets are a source of folic acid, vitamin C and potassium, which is important for the health of your bones, kidneys and muscles



What's in the Box?

- Organic Kale**, *Green Wagon Farm*, Ada
- Microgreens**, *Hunter Park GardenHouse*, Lansing
- Organic Popcorn**, *Ferris Organic Farm*, Eaton Rapids
- Organic Daikon Radishes**, *Lake Divide Farm*, Stockbridge
- Organic Beets**, *Green Wagon Farm*, Ada
- Organic Garlic**, *Cinzori Farms*, Ceresco
- Organic Red Onions**, *Green Wagon Farm*, Ada

Add-Ons

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

Recipes and Tips!

Beet Pesto Pizza with Kale and Goat Cheese

1 large pizza dough (store bought or homemade)
1 cup beet pesto
2 cups Veggie Box kale, thinly sliced
1 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded
2 ounces goat cheese

Beet Pesto

1 cup Veggie Box beets, chopped and roasted
3 cloves Veggie Box garlic, roughly chopped
½ cup walnuts, roasted
½ cup parmesan cheese, grated
½ cup olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
Salt to taste

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Wash and scrub the beets and pat it dry. Chop it into ½” cubes and place it on a sheet of foil. Wrap the chopped beet in foil, making a foil packet. Place the packet on a baking sheet. Roast in the oven for 50 minutes, or until beets are soft and juices are seeping out. Allow beets to cool completely. Add all ingredients except for the oil to a food processor or blender and pulse several times. Leaving the food processor (or blender) running, slowly add the olive oil until all ingredients are well combined. If the pesto is too thick for your blender to process, add a small amount of water until desired consistency is reached. Prepare the beet pesto and the pizza dough. Preheat the oven to 415 degrees F. Dust gluten-free flour (or cornmeal) on a baking sheet and press or roll the dough to desired thickness. Bake the dough for 5 to 7 minutes with no toppings. Remove the crust from the oven and spread the beet pesto over it. Add the kale leaves, followed by the goat cheese and mozzarella. Note: the kale will cook down in the oven. Bake pizza for 20 to 25 minutes or to desired crisp.

Roasted Curry Daikon Radish

1 lb (all of this week's) Veggie Box daikon radish, cut into 1/2' pieces
2 thai chili peppers, chopped
2 tbsp olive oil,
3/4 Tbsp curry powder
2 tsp kosher salt
2 cloves of Veggie Box garlic, minced.
1/4 cup of Veggie Box onion, diced.
1/8 tsp
splash of lemon juice
Veggie Box microgreens for garnish

Preheat oven to 400°. Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl; toss to coat. Let stand for at least 15 minutes. Arrange radish pieces in a single layer on a cookie on a sheet; bake for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Flip once during baking time. Garnish with microgreens!



Beet and Chickpea Burger

1 can of chickpeas
Veggie Box beets, pre-cooked
1 smaller Veggie Box onion (or about 1/2 cup diced)
1 cup oats
2 cloves garlic
1 tsp paprika powder
salt and pepper to taste

Cut the beets in cubes, slice the onions, then add all the ingredients to a food processor. You can also add salt and pepper at this point. Process all of the ingredients in a food processor until well blended. Do not overprocess. Form the mixture into 4 big patties or 8 small ones, depending how you want to serve these. Should the dough stick to your hand, wet them a little bit before handling each patty. Fry them in a little bit of oil for 3-4 minutes on each side. Enjoy!