

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 1, June 2

We're on native land. Specifically, Allen Neighborhood Center is on land belonging to the Anishinaabe (Odawa, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi people) & Haudenosaunee Confederacy, which today is called Lansing, Michigan. Lansing was originally called "Nkwejong," meaning "where the rivers meet," and Michigan comes from the Ojibwe word "mishigamaa," meaning "large lake." The purpose of this statement is to show respect for Indigenous peoples, and recognize their enduring relationship to the land. Practicing acknowledgment can also raise awareness about histories that are often suppressed or forgotten. Given how closely Veggie Box is tied to the land and the environment, we think it's important to acknowledge the history of the relationships that Indigenous folks had (and continue to have) with the land, plants, and animals, and how these relationships sustained communities for generations. Over the next fourteen weeks, we ask that you continue to remind yourself of Indigenous presence and land rights in our community. What might our local food system look like if it were to have a deeper respect and understanding of Indigenous cultures? In what ways has colonialism disrupted Indigenous foodways? How can this be combated? Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Pear Tree Farm

Pear Tree Farm is a project of Dr. John Biernbaum, a professor of Horticulture at MSU and one of the founders of the MSU Student Organic Farm, Dr. Biernbaum's most recent focus was on providing educational programs and technical assistance for small-scale organic farmers through the MSU Student Organic Farm and MSU Extension. Key topic areas included season extension/hoophouses, compost production, organic transplants, intensive vegetable production including urban agriculture, and organic soil management.

Crop Profile

Rhubarb

Rhubarb is a spring vegetable, one of the few that is still truly seasonal. The edible part of this perennial plant is the vibrant pink stalk, which is almost always cooked with lots of sugar because it is very sour.

Rhubarb is a vegetable often thought to be a fruit. There's actually a good reason for this confusion: in 1947 the USDA classified it as a fruit because the tariffs on bringing fruits into the country were lower on fruits than vegetables. In actuality though, rhubarb is a vegetable - a member of the buckwheat family.

Rhubarb is often seen as jam or compote with or without strawberries. In addition, it's used in many different types of sweet desserts, from pies and tarts to cakes and cookies. If you can't use it all, freeze the rhubarb and eat it all year long.

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Veggie Box

What's in the Box?

Organic Green Garlic, *Cinzori Farms, Ceresco*

Salad Mix, *Hunter Park GardenHouse, Bath*

Rhubarb, *Green Eagle Farm, Onondaga* - **and** - *Pear Tree Farm, Haslett*

Organic Bok Choi, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

Asparagus, *Felzke Farms, Dewitt*

Microgreens, *Highwater Farms, Lansing*

Spinach, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*

Organic Radishes, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

Add-Ons

Bread, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*

Meat Variety, *Heffron Farms Market, Belding*

Kombucha, *Apple Blossom Kombucha, Lansing*

Cheese, *Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga*

Chevre, *Hickory Knoll Farms Creamery, Onondaga*

Chicken, *Heffron Farms Market, Belding*

Beef, *Heffron Farms Market, Belding*

Pork, *Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte*

Organic Pinto Beans, *Ferris Organic Farms, Eaton Rapids*

Coffee, *517 Coffee Company, Lansing*

Eggs, *Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte*

Recipes and Tips!

Rhubarb Crisp

2 ½ cups chopped Veggie Box rhubarb
½ cup sugar
1 tablespoon cornstarch

For the Crisp Topping:

¼ cup brown sugar
¼ cup granulated sugar
⅓ cup flour
1 cup old fashioned oats
½ cup pecans, chopped
1 teaspoon vanilla
½ cup salted butter, melted

Preheat your oven to 375 degrees. Spray/oil an 8x8-inch square baking dish and set aside. In a medium bowl, combine the chopped rhubarb, sugar, and cornstarch, and stir to combine. In a second medium bowl, combine the sugars, flour, oats, and pecans and stir with a fork to combine. Then, add the vanilla and melted butter to the second bowl and stir until it's all incorporated. Place the rhubarb mix in your baking dish, and top with the crisp mixture. Cook for 18 to 24 minutes, until the crisp is lightly browned and the rhubarb is bubbling around the edges. Let the crisp cool for 5 minutes before serving hot with ice cream!

Rhubarb Compote

1 pound of Veggie box rhubarb (all from this week) cut into 1/2 inch pieces
1/2 cup granulated sugar (a little less if you want it more tart!)
small pinch of salt

In a saucepan, combine rhubarb with sugar and salt over low heat. When the rhubarb starts to soften and releases liquid, cook for five minutes. Just before the rhubarb falls apart, use a slotted spoon to scoop out the very soft rhubarb and put it in a bowl, leaving the liquid in the saucepan. Cook down the remaining liquid in the pan until it thickens and turns syrupy, about 5 minutes longer. (This condenses and intensifies the rhubarb flavor.) Add the syrup to the bowl with the rhubarb and let cool. Compote will keep for at least a week in the fridge. Great on toast, yogurt, oatmeal, ice cream, pancakes, etc!

Garlicky Asparagus and Bok Choi with Noodles Recipe

6 ounces Thin Rice Noodles or rice vermicelli
2 tablespoons sesame oil divided
2 eggs + 1 Tbs of water whisked
8 ounces shiitake or crimini mushrooms destemmed, sliced thin and cut into bite size pieces
1 pound of Veggie Box asparagus (all from this week) trimmed, cut into bite size pieces with tips preserved.
2 Scallions sliced thin, green and white parts separated
Veggie Box bok choy sliced thin, into bite size pieces, leaves and stems separated
Veggie Box green garlic (white and light green parts) sliced.

For the Sauce:

1 1/4 cups vegetable broth
4 tablespoons Tamari or soy sauce
1 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon Sriracha or to taste

For Garnish:

Sesame Seeds
Tops of Scallions
Veggie Box microgreens

In a large bowl, add the rice noodles and cover with cool tap water. Meanwhile in a large nonstick saute pan, add 1 tsp of oil and bring to a shimmer. Pour in the whisked eggs, a pinch of sea salt and a few grinds of pepper. Cook on low without stirring, flipping the 'egg pancake' in half to finish cooking. Remove from pan and slice into thin bite size pieces. Set aside. To the same pan, heat 3 tsp of oil and add the sliced mushrooms. Cook in an even layer on medium-low to sear, tossing and flipping the mushrooms a few times for 6-7 minutes. To the pan with the mushrooms add one more tsp of oil and add the asparagus, white parts of the scallions and white stems of the bok choy. Cook on medium low for about 6 minutes. The vegetables should be tender-crisp at the end of this stage of cooking. Add the garlic and stir, cooking for about 1 minute. Whisk the vegetable broth, tamari and sriracha together and add it to the vegetable mixture. Bring up to temperature and stir in the green leafy parts of the bok choy. Drain the noodles and place in the saute pan with all the veggies. Carefully toss and turn the noodles with the veggies until everything is mixed well making sure the noodles have plenty of contact with the sauce. Cook for about 1-2 minutes on medium low. Toss in the egg slices and give the mixture another toss before serving. Top with sesame seeds, scallions, microgreens, and more tamari or sriracha if you wish!