

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 2, June 7

Welcome to the second week of the Summer Veggie Box, and happy Pride Month! Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBT+) Pride Month is currently celebrated each year in the month of June to honor the 1969 Stonewall Uprising in Manhattan – often referred to as the tipping point of the LGBT+ Rights Movement. So why do we care about LGBT+ pride when we're talking about food systems and Veggie Box? The same reason we care about racial equity, Indigenous food sovereignty, poverty, and food insecurity. As a nonprofit neighborhood center with a focus on food, we understand that the sharing of food has brought people together since the beginning of time. It's how we make friends, nurture relationships, celebrate milestones, mend conflicts and feel gratitude for life. In most societies, families celebrate important events by sharing food, and mealtimes have traditionally been those times when whole communities or villages come together. Eating and sharing food together is a symbol of shared life. But what happens when oppressed, vulnerable populations aren't invited to the table? Where we sit at the intersections of race, gender, class and sexuality makes us highly vulnerable and subject to the policing of our food and economic system. Discrimination and oppression can lead lack of resources, and lack of resources often coincides with less autonomy and less opportunities. LGBT+ folks are disproportionately food insecure – these rates amongst LGBT+ adults are more than double the national food insecurity rate. So what happens when our LGBT+ neighbors are not allowed to express themselves, and as a result, have less input and influence into the development of our local food system? What happens when our local food system only adapts and changes based on the experiences of a few? What happens when foodways are stifled? Can recognition, affirmation, and pride make a difference? Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Green Wagon Farm

Owner of Green Wagon Farm, Chad Anderson began their journey with farming through their time in the peace corps and working in Uganda with dairy farmers. Chad opened, ran the farm while working a factory job and sold produce at their veggie stand in 2010. Co-Owner, Heather volunteered at the farm in 2012 when they discovered their shared passion for and career in farming. Green Wagon Farm has a year-round crew of 13 and up to 18 at the season's height. The Anderson family has grown the farm from a small roadside stand on borrowed land to the certified organic, family-owned, year-round operation it is today. "We relish our time working and celebrating together as we study and experiment with ways to better serve the land and our community."

Crop Profile

Thyme

Originally from the Mediterranean, thyme was used in ancient Egypt as part of the mummification process. In ancient Rome, it was widely believed that thyme could cure poison, making the herb especially popular among Roman emperors. In the European Middle Ages, thyme's association with courage, strength, and farewells continued. Thyme was a traditional gift given to soldiers leaving for battle, and when the Black Death arrived, many people turned to thyme to create remedies. Today we know that thymol, a chemical compound found in thyme, is a powerful antiseptic, and it is still used in mouthwash and hand sanitizers. Thyme's pungent flavor pairs well with other herbs such as rosemary and sage in marinades for grilled or roasted meats. Its hardy nature means it can withstand long cooking times in slow-cooked stocks and stews.



What's in the Box?

Asparagus, Felzke Farms, DeWitt

Organic Collards, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt

Organic Beets, Green Wagon Farm, Ada

Salad Mix, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing

Organic Sweet Onions, Green Wagon Farm, Ada

Thyme, Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing

Organic Spinach, Monroe Family Organics, Alma

Add-Ons

Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt

Meat Variety, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte

Maple Syrup, Tomac Pumpkin Patch, Chesaning

Recipes and Tips!

Lemon Thyme Bars

Crust:

1/2 lb. unsalted butter at room temperature
1/2 cup sugar
2 cups flour
2 tablespoons fresh Veggie Box thyme, finely chopped
1/4 teaspoon salt

Lemon Layer:

7 large eggs
2 1/2 cups sugar
3 tablespoons grated lemon zest
1 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 cup flour
Fresh thyme sprigs, for garnish

Lemon Glaze:

2 cups confectioner's sugar
1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (around the juice of 2 lemons)

Preheat the oven to 350°F and grease a 9 by 13 by 2-inch baking pan. For the crust, cream the butter and sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer until light. Combine the flour, thyme and salt and, with the mixer on low, add to the butter until just mixed. Dump the dough onto a well-floured board and gather into a ball. Flatten the dough with floured hands and press it into the greased baking pan, building up a 1/2-inch edge on all sides. Chill. Bake the crust for 15 to 20 minutes, until very lightly browned. Cool on a wire rack. Leave the oven on. For the lemon layer, whisk together the eggs, sugar, lemon zest, lemon juice, and flour. Pour over the crust and bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or about five minutes beyond the point where the filling is set. Cool to room temperature. For the lemon glaze, whisk together the confectioner's sugar and lemon juice. Add more or less sugar and/or juice for desired consistency. Pour glaze over lemon bars and spread with a spatula to cover evenly. Allow the glaze to set for at least 20-30 minutes. Cut into squares and garnish with fresh thyme, if desired. Serve and enjoy!

Veggie Box Tacos with Beets & Greens

Veggie Box beets (1#)
1 bunch of Veggie Box collards
1 cup of cooked Veggie Box pinto beans (from the bean add-on from last week!)
1 bunch of Veggie Box green garlic (from last week)
oil
cilantro
1 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
2 teaspoon paprika
splash of lime juice
salt to taste
Queso Fresco
hot sauce

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Trim, peel, and chop the beets into fourths. Put in bowl and toss with 1/2 tbs oil, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Toss to coat, then bake for 30 minutes, or until tender when pricked with a fork, stirring occasionally. Heat a tablespoon of oil in a pan, add chopped collards and green garlic (white and light green parts), as well as a small splash of water to steam the collards. Saute for a few minutes, and then add the beets, cooked pinto beans, chili powder, paprika, lime juice, and salt. Season to taste, and serve on a tortilla with queso fresco, cilantro, and hot sauce

Easy Oven Roasted Beets

Veggie Box beets (1 pound)
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon Veggie Box thyme leaves, minced
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon orange zest

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Peel each beet. Cut the beets into 1 1/2-inch chunks. (Small beets can be halved, medium ones cut in quarters and large beets cut into eighths.) Place the cut beets on foil-lined baking sheet and toss with olive oil, thyme, salt and pepper. Roast for 35 to 40 minutes, turning once or twice with a spatula, until the beets are tender. Remove from the oven and immediately toss with orange zest. Season with salt and pepper as needed. Serve warm.