

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 10, August 4

Welcome to week 10 of the Summer Veggie Box! This week was election day, so we hope you went out and voted! If you missed voting in the primary, there will be the statewide general election on November 8th. Please remember that with the recent redistricting, your polling location might have changed from what it has been in years past! Polls will be open from 7 a.m to 8 p.m. and the primary's were to help decide the Michigan GOP nomination for governor, several Congressional seats statewide, and primary races for Michigan Senate and House seats, as well as important local millages and bond proposals. How does voting and politics relate to food or food access? State officials administer many nutrition programs like WIC, SNAP, school lunch and breakfast, and afterschool and summer food programs. They can also provide discretionary funds for food banks and pantries and shape policies that directly effect our food systems in Michigan. Voting is a way to express your opinions and elect leaders who support your interests and values. Get out and vote in November, and thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Stone Circle Bakehouse

Stone Circle Bakehouse, of Holt, Michigan, specializes in the European tradition of artisanal bread that is cut, scaled, and shaped by hand. Owner Kevin Cosgrove allows his dough to slowly ferment before baking it on the deck of his wood-fired oven. At Stone Circle Bakehouse, the innovative deliciousness stems from Cosgrove's desire to preserve traditional baking methods, rather than change them. Organic, local ingredients are prioritized when possible to bring customers fresh, environmentally and community friendly baked goods.

Crop Profile

Eggplant

The eggplants we grow in our vegetable gardens took hundreds of years to reach us. Food historians have traced eggplants to their origins in either India or China. Some records show that eggplants were cultivated as early as 50 BCE. Travelers carried the fruit west to Europe, then eventually it arrived in America, thanks to Thomas Jefferson bringing seeds back from France. While we enjoy eggplants of different shapes, colors and sizes, the early plants bore fruit that was considered ornamental instead of edible. Those plants flowered and grew small white and oval fruits that looked just like chicken eggs. Eggplant is grown for its edible spongy absorbent fruit widely used in cooking. Most people consider it a vegetable despite its botanical definition as a berry fruit, a member of the genus *Solanum* related to the tomato and the potato. Like the tomato its skin and seeds can be eaten, but like the potato it is not to be eaten raw. Raw eggplant can have a bitter taste, with an astringent quality, but it becomes tender when cooked and develops a rich, complex flavor.

ALLEN

Veggie Box

What's in the Box?

Organic Poblano, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

Organic Eggplant, *Cinzori Farms, Ceresco*

Corn, *Felzke Farms, Dewitt*

Organic Onions, *Cinzori Farms, Ceresco*

Organic Parsley, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

Organic Beans, *Cinzori Farms, Ceresco*

Organic Spring Mix, *Monroe Family Organics, Alma*

Add-Ons

Bread, *Stone Circle BakeHouse, Holt*

Meat, *Heffron Farms Market, Belding*

Honey, *Beebehavior Ranch, Ovid*

Recipes and Tips!

Lemony Garlic Green Beans

1 1/2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
dash of red pepper flake, or to taste
Veggie Box green beans, trimmed (all from this week - 1 #)
2 cloves garlic, minced (from last week's box)
1/2 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
splash of lemon juice

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add red pepper flake and stir to coat the pepper in the oil. Add green beans and cook, stirring often until the beans are blistering and browning in areas, 5 to 7 minutes. Add garlic and salt and cook, stirring constantly until the garlic is fragrant and browning, about 30 seconds. Add lemon juice and immediately cover. Cook covered until the beans are bright green and crisp tender, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve immediately.

Eggplant Curry Stew

Veggie Box eggplant
1 cup of Veggie Box green beans
1 Small sweet potato
2 cloves of garlic (from last week!)
1 tbsp fresh ginger
1/2 cup of red lentils
2 tsp curry powder
1 tsp mustard
salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup canned coconut milk

Chop the eggplant and sweet potato in even pieces, around 1.5 inches each. Heat a large pot on the stove with 1 cup vegetable broth and add the sweet potato and eggplant and cover. Turn the heat up to medium high. The goal is to get the potato and eggplant chunks to cook quickly and at the same rate. Add in the garlic and fresh ginger. After 10 minutes, add the red lentils and water, using twice as much water as red lentils. Add the curry powder and mustard, stir, and cover. After 5 minutes, add the green beans. Stir and cover again. Stir often to prevent the stew from sticking to the bottom of the pan. Finding that it's really thick and needs more water? Stir in 1/2 cup water, and then add 1/4 at a time after that if it still needs more. You may want to increase the spices if adding more water. Always adjust water and seasoning to your specific tastes! When everything is soft, turn the heat off and stir in the canned coconut milk. Add salt and pepper and a dash of cayenne if you'd like!

Buttermilk Cornbread with Poblanos

1 1/2 cups yellow cornmeal
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
3 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 scant teaspoon salt
3 to 4 tablespoons sugar (or to taste)
1 or 2 Veggie Box jalapeno peppers (to taste)
2 Veggie Box ears of corn, kernels cut off the cob
1 cup Mexican blend cheeses (finely shredded)
1 2/3 cups buttermilk
2 large eggs
6 tablespoons butter (melted)

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Grease and flour a 9-inch square baking pan. In a mixing bowl, combine the cornmeal, flour, baking powder, soda, salt, and sugar. Add the chopped poblano pepper, corn kernels, and shredded cheese. Stir the mixture to combine thoroughly. Set aside. In another bowl, whisk together the buttermilk, eggs, and melted butter. Add the wet mixture to the dry ingredients; stir until well moistened. Spread the batter in the prepared baking pan. Bake the cornbread for about 20 to 25 minutes, or until it is firm and browned around the edges.

Elote (Mexican Street Corn)

Veggie Box Sweet Corn
Mexican Crema
Cotija cheese
Chili powder or smoked paprika
Limes
Cilantro

To prepare the corn, just strip the husks back, remove the silk and then fold the husks back up. The real secret to grilling corn on the cob starts before it ever hits the grill. You need to fill your sink with cold water and 1-2 tablespoons of kosher salt. Drop the corn in the water and let it soak for a good 10-15 minutes. You'll grill the corn first in the husks, then strip them back and turn the grill up, rotating the corn as soon as grill marks appear. As soon as you pull the corn off the grill, spread the Mexican crema all over each corn on the cob. If you can't find Mexican crema, you can use mayonnaise as a substitute. Sprinkle the cotija all over the corn that has been lathered in crema (can use feta in place of the cotija). The classic seasoning for elote is chili powder, but can also use smoked paprika. You can sprinkle them on the corn with the cotija cheese and then squeeze fresh lime juice all over each corn on the cob. Top off each cob with some chopped fresh cilantro.