

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 11, August 11

Welcome to week 11 of the Summer Veggie Box! Plants provide food, medicine, shelter, dyes, fibers, oils, resins, gums, soaps, waxes, latex, tannins, and even contribute to the air we breathe. Ethnobotany is the study of how people make use of native plants; the study of a region's plants and their practical uses through the traditional knowledge of a local culture and people. Current use of the term implies the study of Indigenous or traditional knowledge of plants. It involves the Indigenous knowledge of plant classification, cultivation, and use as food, medicine and shelter. However, many Indigenous peoples believe that this study can be exploitative in numerous ways. Perhaps it is worth mentioning that Richard Evans Schultes, 'the father of ethnobotany' was a white American. Though he was a conservationist and worked closely with Indigenous peoples, the person who tells a story or disseminates information, matters. The voices of Indigenous people and the interests and perspectives of Indigenous communities should lead discussions. The economic focus of biological prospecting "discoveries," has highlighted important issues concerning Indigenous rights, cultural knowledge, and traditional resources. A more "precautionary" approach to ethnobotanical inquiry would assist Indigenous communities in protecting cultural heritage. The issues raised by publishing Indigenous plant knowledge are intensified by the significant uncertainties surrounding subsequent impacts on Indigenous communities whose value systems, priorities, expectations, and time frames may differ from those of the academic community. How do we ensure Indigenous voices are prioritized? What does this have to do with our food system and Veggie Box? Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight

Wildflower Eco Farm

Drawn to farming due to the combination of physical and mental work, Phil Throop achieved his MS in Horticulture from Michigan State University and has continued farming ever since. He established his own 3.5 acre farm in Bath Township, MI, and named it for the wonderful array of wildflowers throughout the property. Wildflower Eco Farm specializes in using sustainable growing practices with over sixty types of fruits and vegetables. They offer their own CSA and are familiar faces at many of the area's Farmer's Markets.

Crop Profile

Tomatillos

Tomatillos, also known as the Mexican husk tomato, is a plant of the nightshade family bearing small, spherical and green or green-purple fruit. Tomatillos have a slightly more acidic, slightly less sweet flavor than ripe and unripe tomatoes. Overall, the flavor is more vegetal and bright, and the interior texture is denser and less watery. Prepping a tomatillo is pretty straight forward. The husks can be easily removed with your hands and discarded. From here, you decide what you want to do with them. If you want to keep the flavor bright and play up their bracing acidity, use them raw. If you want to mellow out that acidity a bit and access the fruit's deeper, more savory qualities, then try cooking them!

ALLEN

Veggie Box

What's in the Box?

Organic Zucchini, *MSU Student Organic Farm*, Holt
Cucumber, *Ten Hens Farm*, Bath
Organic Yukon Potatoes, *Cinzori Farms*, Ceresco
Garlic, *Wildflower Eco Farm*, Bath
Organic Carrots, *Monroe Family Organics*, Alma
Cherry Tomatoes, *Clear Street Farms*, Lansing, and *Ten Hens Farm*, Bath
Organic Cabbage, *MSU Student Organic Farm*, Holt
Tomatillos, *Ten Hens*, Bath

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, *Grazing Fields Cooperative*, Charlotte
Pork, *Grazing Fields Cooperative*, Charlotte
Beef, *Heffron Farms Market*, Belding
Chicken, *Heffron Farms Market*, Belding

Recipes and Tips!

Fresh Summer Rolls with Cucumber, Organic Cabbage, Carrots, and Organic Cabbage with Garlic Peanut Sauce

6 Rice paper wrappers (round or square)
2 Veggie Box carrots, thinly sliced or shredded
2 Veggie Box cucumbers, thinly sliced
2 cups cabbage, thinly sliced
8 oz. firm tofu, pressed and cut into slices (tofu can be replaced with vermicelli noodles)
2 handfuls herbs: Thai basil, mint, and/or cilantro

Garlic Peanut Sauce

3 tbsp peanut butter
1/3 hot water
1 tbsp soy sauce
1 tsp sugar
1-2 Veggie Box garlic cloves, minced
Optional: 2 tsp chili oil

Begin by making the peanut sauce, stirring the peanut butter and hot water until smooth. Stir in the rest of the sauce ingredients and set to the side. Prepare the ingredients by slicing the vegetables and pressing the water from the firm tofu. After preparing your ingredients, fill a large bowl with warm water. Dip one rice paper wrapper in the water for 2-3 seconds and lay on a non-porous surface (it will still be a little stiff but will soften as you work). Layer the herbs, carrots, cabbage, cucumber, and tofu about 1/3 of the way up the rice paper, filling in the middle third of the roll. Tuck the edge closest to you by bringing it up over the ingredients then fold the ends on top and roll away from you. The rice paper is very sticky so be sure you are wrapping the ingredients tightly as you will not be able to unstick the edges once they touch! Repeat the process with each roll. Serve immediately with the garlic peanut sauce.



Chilaquiles with Roasted Tomatillo Salsa

Veggie Box tomatillos and Veggie Box cherry tomatoes (pint of each - all from this week)
2 fresh serrano chiles
3 Veggie Box garlic cloves, unpeeled
1 large onion, coarsely chopped
Olive oil, as needed
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/2 cup fresh cilantro leaves
1/4 cup vegetable broth or more as needed

Chilaquiles:

1/3 cup vegetable oil
10 corn tortillas, cut into eighths, preferably stale
3 cups roasted Tomatillo and cherry tomato Salsa
Kosher salt and fresh ground black pepper
1/2 cup crumbled queso fresco or a mild feta
2 thin slices onion, separated into rings
1/2 cup Mexican crema, creme fraiche or sour cream
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves, for garnish

Preheat the broiler or oven to 550 degrees F. Remove husks from the tomatillos and rinse under warm water to remove the stickiness. Put the chiles, garlic, onion, cherry tomatoes and tomatillos on a baking sheet. Season with a little olive oil, and salt and pepper, to taste. Put on a rack about 1 or 2 inches from the heat, and cook, turning the vegetables once, until softened and slightly charred, about 5 to 7 minutes. When cool enough to handle, peel the garlic and pull off the tops of the chiles. Add all the broiled ingredients to a blender along with the fresh cilantro and puree. Pour in 1/4 cup of broth and blend to combine. Add more broth, if needed, for desired consistency. To make the chilaquiles: Pour about 1/3 cup vegetable oil into a large saute pan over medium heat. When the oil is hot, add the tortillas, working in 2 or 3 batches, and cook until lightly browned and nearly crisp. Drain the tortillas on paper towels and discard the remaining oil. Wipe the pan with a paper towel. In the same pan, add the tomatillo and cherry tomato salsa and bring to simmer over low heat. Add the tortillas and cook until soft but not mushy, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Divide the mixture onto four plates. Top with the cheese crumbles, a fried egg, and onion rings. Drizzle with Mexican crema, sprinkle with some chopped fresh cilantro and serve immediately.