

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 14, August 30

Can you believe this is the last week of the Summer Veggie Box? We are so glad that you and your families have been a part of the Veggie Box program this year, and have enjoyed the bountiful harvest that our local farmers have provided. Children should be encouraged to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables – there is a rainbow of colors to choose from – which provides a rich source of antioxidants, instead of sugary snacks and fast food, which are high in fat and sugar. The vitamins, minerals, fiber and antioxidants found in fruits and vegetables provide the following benefits: 1) Promote good health and protect against disease, both now and in the future; 2) To ensure the child's healthy growth and development; 3) Strengthen a child's immune system and help fight illnesses. There is strong evidence to show that the nutrients found in fruits and vegetables can prevent chronic diseases such as cardiovascular diseases. 4) The high-fiber content can aid in the proper function of the digestive system and prevent constipation. Eating only fruits may mean that your child is missing out on nutrients found in vegetables. Thus, it is important to receive the benefits from a wide range of these essential nutrients by eating a variety of both fruits and vegetables.

## Producer Spotlight

### *Magnolia Avenue Farms*

Magnolia Avenue Farms is a small family-owned operation located in Lansing Eastside's Urdandale neighborhood. This urban farm also serves as an incubator farm that provides up-and-coming farmers an experience to serve as the farm manager and coordinate its operation without having to start from scratch! Magnolia Farms grows a diverse range of fruits, vegetables, herbs and more, using regenerative farming practices that focus on building and sustaining soil health. Their focus is on creating a farm that is human-powered instead of reliant on fossil fuels, and is resilient in the face of climate change.

## Crop Profile

### *Corn*

Corn was domesticated from a grass called teocintle by the peoples of Meso-America approximately 10,000 years ago. The yellow corn commonly found in the United States pales in comparison to the shapes, sizes, and colors of the traditional maize varieties cultivated by the indigenous peoples of Mexico. The ears of corn may range from a couple of inches to a foot long, in colors that include white, red, yellow, blue, and black. Some varieties even have an assortment of colors on one ear. Sweet corn is a variety of maize with a high sugar content, and was grown by a number of indigenous tribes. Corn is also one of the three sisters in Iroquois agriculture and tradition, along with beans and winter squash. In a technique known as companion planting the three crops are planted close together. The maize provides a structure for the beans to climb, eliminating the need for poles. The beans provide the nitrogen to the soil that the other plants use, and the squash spreads along the ground, blocking the sunlight, helping prevent the establishment of weeds.



## What's in the Box?

**Organic Spaghetti Squash**, *Cinzori Farms, Ceresco*  
**Organic Carrots**, *Monroe Family Organics, Alma*  
**Corn**, *Felzke Farms, Dewitt*  
**Organic Heirloom Tomatoes**, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*  
**Green Beans**, *Felzke Farms, Dewitt*  
**Organic Leeks**, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*  
**Parsley**, *Magnolia Avenue Farms, Lansing*

## Add-Ons

**Bread**, *Stone Circle BakeHouse, Holt*  
**Meat**, *Heffron Farms Market, Belding*

# Recipes and Tips!



## Corn Ribs

Veggie Box Corn  
4 tbsp butter, melted  
1 tbsp chili powder  
1 tsp smoked paprika  
1 tsp garlic powder  
1/2 tsp salt  
Dash of cayenne pepper  
Sliced jalapenos, cilantro, cotija cheese, or scallions (or whatever you like!) for garnish  
Sweet and spicy chili mayo  
1/2 cup mayonnaise, sour cream, or greek yogurt  
2 tbsp garlic chili sauce (or 2 tbsp sriracha with 1 clove of minced garlic)  
1 tbsp honey or agave  
1/2 tsp hot sauce of choice  
Juice of half a lime

**Shuck the corn and remove any silk strands. Use a large sharp knife to cut the bottom of the stalk (the thicker side) about 1/3 inch off at most. Stand the cob up on the flat end so it is vertical and carefully cut down through the core, rocking the knife back and forth (this might take a minute!) Lay the two halves flat and cut them in half again. Repeat with other cobs. Melt butter in a small bowl for 15-20 seconds in the microwave and add salt and spices. Brush onto the kernel sides of the corn. For the next step you can use a grill or oven. Grill: heat to 400°F on medium flame. Add seasoned corn ribs with one of the cut sides down and cook for 8 minutes. Turn the corn to the other cut side and remove from direct heat or reduce heat to low then cook for 6-8 minutes. Oven: Preheat to 425°F. Cover the bottom of a baking sheet with parchment paper/foil and place corn ribs cut side down in a single layer. Bake for 12 minutes then flip to the other cut side, bake an additional 6 -8 minutes. After grilling/roasting the outside should be lightly charred, and the ends curled in slightly. Sauce: In a small bowl, whisk together all the dipping sauce ingredients. Season to taste with additional honey or hot sauce. Pile the corn ribs on a platter with garnishes of choice and serve with the dipping sauce!**

## Spaghetti Squash with Goat Cheese, Tomatoes, and Arugula

1 Veggie box Spaghetti Squash, halved with seeds removed  
3 Oz Goat Cheese  
1 Cup Arugula (or other greens)  
1/2 cup chopped Veggie Box Heirloom tomatoes  
2 tbsp. Olive Oil  
1 clove of minced garlic  
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper  
1/2 teaspoon salt

**Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a baking sheet and place spaghetti squash with cut sides down. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove squash from oven and set aside to cool enough to be easily handled. Use a large spoon to scoop the stringy pulp from the squash and place in a medium bowl. Mix with goat cheese, arugula, tomatoes, olive oil, garlic, and add salt and pepper.**

## Leek and Potato Au Gratin

4 tbsp butter  
1 1/2 cups whole milk  
1 cup heavy cream  
3 large garlic cloves finely chopped  
1 tbsp stone ground mustard  
1/4 tsp freshly grated nutmeg  
3/4 tbsp kosher salt  
1 tsp freshly ground pepper  
Cheese: 2 oz blue cheese, 6 oz grated Gruyere cheese, 2 oz freshly grated parmesan cheese  
3 lb leek, white and light green portions, washed and sliced into 1/4 inch rings  
3-4 medium potatoes, sliced about 1/4" thick  
3 tbsp Veggie Box Parsley, minced

**Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease a 9x13 baking dish or large cast iron skillet with butter. In a nonstick skillet over medium heat melt the butter. Add leeks and stir until they are completely coated. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the leeks are tender, about 20 minutes. Add the milk, cream, blue cheese, garlic, mustard, nutmeg, salt and pepper and simmer uncover until slightly thickened, about 15 minutes. Be careful not to let it boil! Remove from heat and cool. Meanwhile, mix gruyere and parmesan cheese in a bowl. Layer one third of the sliced potatoes in the baking dish/skillet, pour 1/3 of the leek mixture on top, then sprinkle one third of grated cheese and 1 tbsp of minced parsley. Repeat to make two more layers reserving the last layer of parsley for garnish. Cover au gratin with foil and bake for 45 minutes. Remove foil and bake until potatoes are tender and crust is golden brown, about 30 more minutes. Allow to sit for 15 minutes after removing from oven. Garnish with reserved chives and serve!**