

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 4, March 21

This week, we are looking at how private property has affected our access to food. Did you know that 60% of land in the United States is privately owned? Indigenous peoples were the first inhabitants of this land, which must be remembered first and foremost when discussing the implications of private property. Their displacement began as soon as European settlers first arrived to the Americas and began commodifying the land and the plants and animals living on it. As colonists settled land in the United States they brought the concept of private property with them, the history of which can be traced back to Medieval Western Europe. In the 16th to 18th century, the British parliament was rapidly handing over land to the wealthy that peasants had been cultivating, stewarding and living on for hundreds of years. The General Enclosure Act of 1801 sanctioned the transfer of what used to be common, public lands, to private owners greatly reducing the ability to forage, hunt, or get firewood and other natural materials. Related to private property, in the United

States the history of "No Trespassing" laws began in 1865, the same year the government put a legal end to slavery. Even though slavery was abolished by law, strict rules called the Black Codes were put into place to keep Black individuals tied to agricultural labor. One law required formerly enslaved peoples to be employed or they would be sent to jail, forcing many to continue to work on the same plantations that they had been freed from. Black Americans had been supplementing their diets with food from hunting and foraging for centuries, but as part of the Black Codes they were purposefully denied hunting licenses, ultimately working to further entrench a reliance on farm labor for their livelihood. "No Trespassing" signs were even prevalent in Northern states where factory owners wanted their workers to be reliant on company wages and disconnected from other forms of sustenance such as through foraging or hunting. This intentional denial of access to nature, foraging, and hunting has had lasting impacts on communities of color for centuries.

## Farmer Profile

### *Titus Farms*

Titus Farms was founded by Rose and Paul Titus in 1982. Growing up, both farmers worked at their respective family farms until they got married and purchased a small 20 acre land. Paul and Rose both dedicated their lives into farming so that they can pass on ownership of the farm to their daughter Rebecca Titus. Titus Farms is dedicated to producing the highest quality vegetables using sustainable organic farming methods, as well as producing unique varieties of vegetables that capitalize on great taste.

## Crop Profile

### *Rutabaga*

Rutabaga is a root vegetable in the Brassica family and originated as a hybrid between cabbage and turnips. This root is great for growing in colder climates like the ones we have here in Michigan because they are hardy and can be stored for a long time. The name Rutabaga comes from the Swedish rotabagge meaning bunch of roots. Around the world it is also sometimes called swede, Swedish turnip, or just turnip. It can be eaten in a variety of ways and the leaves are also edible. The flavor of raw rutabaga tastes milder than turnips, almost like a carrot without sweetness. It's crisp, juicy, and just a tiny bit piquant. Rutabagas truly shine in baked dishes and are also delicious in stews, soups, or mashed. It was introduced to North America in the early 19th century with reports of rutabaga crops in Illinois as early as 1817. Various European countries have a tradition of carving them into lanterns on Halloween.

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Veggie Box

## What's in the Box?

**Rutabaga**, *Titus Farms, Leslie*

**Sun Shoots**, *Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing*

**Carrots**, *Yoder Family Cooperative, Mason*

**Organic Turnips**, *Cinzori Farms, Ceresco*

**Organic Garlic**, *MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt*

**Yellow Onions**, *Titus Farms, Leslie*

**Mini Bok Choy**, *Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing*

## Add-Ons

**Bread**, *Stone Circle BakeHouse, Holt*

**Meat**, *Heffron Farms, Belding*

# Recipes and Tips!

## Turnip and Rutabaga Gratin

- 1 Veggie Box rutabaga, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 tsp thyme leaves
- salt and pepper to taste
- 3 Tbsp unsalted butter
- Veggie Box turnips, peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 1/4 cups bread crumbs
- 1 1/2 cup vegetable stock
- 1 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup of parmesan

**Preheat the oven to 450F. Lightly butter a 9x11 baking dish. Arrange a thin, even layer of the rutabaga slices across the bottom of the dish. Sprinkle with a pinch of thyme, salt and pepper, then dot with tiny pats of the butter. Arrange a thin, even layer of turnip slices over the rutabaga. Sprinkle with thyme, salt and pepper and dot with more butter. Continue the layering process, alternating between the rutabaga and turnip, until the dish is approximately two-thirds full and all the vegetables have been included. Season the bread crumbs with salt and black pepper and spread over the vegetables. Pour the stock and cream over the bread crumbs; press down on the bread crumbs gently to absorb the liquids. Drizzle with the olive oil. Bake until the gratin is golden brown and the vegetables in the center of the dish are tender when poked with a paring knife, about 30 minutes. Add parmesan, and then add back to the oven for another 5-8 minutes. Remove the gratin from the oven and let rest for 20 minutes, then serve.**

## Lentil Soup

- 1 cup green lentils
- 28 oz can diced tomatoes
- 3 cups water
- 1 Veggie Box yellow onion
- 1 Veggie Box sweet potato (from last week!), peeled and roughly chopped
- 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes
- 1-2 Veggie Box carrots (about 2 cups), sliced
- Veggie Box turnips
- 3 cloves Veggie box garlic, minced
- 3-5 Veggie Box kale leaves (from last week!)
- Optional: 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, Veggie Box sun shoots

**Heat oil in a medium/large saucepan and sauté onion until translucent or slightly browned. Add garlic, stir for another minute, then add tomatoes, red pepper flakes, sweet potato, carrots, and turnips. When slightly bubbling add lentils. Bring to a boil then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 45 minutes or until vegetables and lentils are soft. Stir occasionally, breaking up the tomatoes. Turn off heat and stir in kale (if you prefer softer kale you can simmer until wilted). Serve topped with Veggie Box sun shoots and finely grated cheese if desired. Salt and pepper to taste.**

## Bok Choy and Carrot Stirfry

- 1-2 Tbsp sugar (to taste)
  - 1/2 tsp Veggie Box ginger (from last week!), finely grated
  - 2 cloves Veggie Box garlic, minced
  - 1 Tbsp shaoxing wine
  - 2 Tbsp light soy sauce
  - 1 tsp sesame oil
  - Veggie Box bok choy, washed
  - 1-2 Veggie Box carrots peeled into strips or 1/2 cup matchstick carrots
  - 2 Scallions, thinly sliced
  - 1 Tbsp sesame seeds
  - Optional: 1/4 cup chopped cilantro
- Stir sugar, ginger, garlic, shaoxing wine, and soy sauce in a bowl and set aside. Heat a wok on medium high heat then add oil. Add bok choy and carrots stirring continuously, about 2 minutes. Add sauce and cook until sauce has coated vegetables and heated through. Turn off heat, add scallions and sesame seeds. Top with cilantro if desired and serve with rice.**

## Salad Time!

This week's veggies are great for salads. Bok choy can be chopped to add a crunch either by itself or combined with other leaves like spring mix. Carrots can be peeled and grated to add as a salad topping--you can even grate them in advance and store in the fridge to use as needed. Sunflower shoots are type of microgreen that comes from sunflower seeds. They tend to be thicker than other microgreen varieties and have a very nice nutty flavor that make a great addition to salads. Lastly, garlic is a great addition to homemade salad dressings or fry them up to make a crispy topping. Get creative with your salads this week and let us know what delicious combinations you come up with!