

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 8, April 18

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Everyone in Michigan is part of a watershed. Our water winter wonderland is home to 26,266 inland lakes, 120 major rivers, and 86 major watersheds. The Great Lakes hold 1/3 of the world's surface freshwater and provide drinking water to 42 million people. They have a massive impact on our climate, regulating the temperature of the region and increasing cloud cover and precipitation in the winter. Unfortunately, rising temperatures of the Great Lakes will have extensive impacts, including algal blooms that stifle oxygen available to aquatic plants and animals, shore erosion, and decreased ice cover. Wetlands are vital to the health of ecosystems by being home to many species, mitigating floods, and filtering water—one acre of wetland can store up to a million gallons of water. Michigan has seen a decrease of over 4 million acres of wetlands since colonization. Pesticides and chemicals in agriculture also contribute to the pollution and loss of wetlands. In the face of climate change and disruptions in rainfall causing floods or droughts, our waterways ensure that water slows down so we can use it in the long term. The actions of you and your neighborhood greatly impact the health of local and regional streams, lakes, rivers, and wetlands. Michiganders can contribute to watershed restoration in many ways, including planting natives, eating a diverse, local diet, participating in waterway clean-ups, and advocating against industrial pollution at the local government level. Engaging in our local environment brings us in deeper connection with the cycles of the seasons and helps us understand how our ecosystems function. This knowledge allows us to make more informed decisions about how we choose to interact with the land. In honor of watersheds on Earth Day, we invite you to join us and the East Lansing Environmental Stewardship Program this Saturday, April 22nd from 9AM-11AM in White Park to remove some invasive species, including phragmites, buckthorn, and garlic mustard. A registration link is in this week's email- hope to see you there!

Farmer Profile

Magnolia Farms

Magnolia Avenue Farms is a small family-owned operation located in Lansing Eastside's Urbandale 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

Arugula

Arugula is a cruciferous vegetable with a distinct spicy, pepper flavor, that gets more bitter with age. Originally grown in the Mediterranean, it has many names including rocket, Italian cress, and rucola. It is a member of the Brassica family and is related to mustard greens, kale, and cabbage. Arugula is popular not only for its taste but for being nutrient dense and high in fiber. While it is mostly used in salads, either on its own or mixed with other greens, it can be used in so many ways—on top of pizza, in sandwiches, blended into pesto, or even sauteed as a side dish. When cooked, it becomes milder in flavor and has a texture similar to cooked spinach. To store, wrap leaves in a paper towel and store in a plastic bag in the crisper. Don't wash until right before using.

ALLEN
MICHIGAN CENTER

Veggie Box

What's in the Box?

Microgreens, *Highwater Farms*, Lansing
Sweet Winter Spinach, *Magnolia Farms*, Lansing
Evercrisp Apples, *Hillcrest Farms*, Eaton Rapids
Lettuce, *Blue Mitten Hydroponic Farms*, Okemos
Pea Shoots, *Blue Mitten Hydroponic Farms*, Okemos
Organic Spring Mix, *Monroe Family Organics*, Alma
Arugula, *Swallowtail Farms*, Mason

Add-Ons

Bread, *Stone Circle BakeHouse*, Holt
Meat, *Grazing Fields Cooperative*, Lansing

Recipes and Tips!



Evercrisp and Arugula Caprese Sandwich

4 slices your choice of bread, e.g. ciabatta
Butter or olive oil
1 garlic clove, halved
1 Veggie Box Evercrisp apple, sliced thin about 4-5 slices per sandwich
2 tomatoes, sliced about 3-4 slices per sandwich
4-6 slices mozzarella cheese, about 2-3 slices per sandwich

Balsamic glaze to drizzle

2 handfuls Veggie Box arugula (feel free to combine with the spring mix and microgreens too!)

Drizzle olive oil or spread butter on each bread slice. On a frying pan on medium heat or in a toaster oven, toast 4 slices of bread until golden. Remove and rub each slice with a garlic clove half. To make each sandwich, layer 4-5 apple slices, 3-4 tomato slices with a sprinkle of salt and pepper, 2-3 mozzarella slices, then drizzle balsamic glaze over the cheese. Finish by adding a handful of arugula and top with the second slice of bread. Repeat with the second sandwich

Arugula Pesto

2 garlic cloves, cut in half
2 heaped Tbsp shelled walnuts (can also use sunflower seeds or pine nuts)
2 cups tightly packed Veggie Box arugula, washed and dried
1/3 to 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil, as needed
1/3 to 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan, to taste
Salt to taste

In a food processor, chop garlic cloves. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and add walnuts. Process until they are finely ground. Scrape down sides of the bowl again and add arugula and salt. Pulse until arugula is finely chopped. Continue pulsing and slowly add in olive oil. When mixture is smooth, stop food processor, scrape down the sides and process for another 30 seconds. Work in the parmesan cheese and serve!

Sauteed Pea Tendrils

Veggie Box Pea Shoots

Veggie Box green garlic from last week (optional), trimmed and minced

1 Tbsp cooking oil

Extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice to taste

Trim and discard any tough ends of the pea shoots and cut vines into smaller pieces if they are very long. Heat a large wok over high heat. Once pan is hot add cooking oil and green garlic, stirring until fragrant about 30 seconds. Add washed pea greens (they don't need to be completely dry) and cook, stirring frequently until wilted, about 2-3 minutes. Season with salt and drizzle with some lemon juice and olive oil if desired. You can also drizzle with sesame oil and a dash of soy sauce instead.

Sweet Winter Spinach and Evercrisp Apple Salad

Veggie Box sweet winter spinach

1-2 Veggie Box Evercrisp apples, cored and thinly sliced

1/2 a red onion, thinly sliced

1/2 cup chopped nuts such as walnuts, toasted

1/3 cup dried cranberries or other dried fruit

3 oz. crumbled goat cheese or feta

Vinaigrette

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar

2 tsp honey

1 tsp Dijon mustard

1 small garlic clove, minced

Salt and pepper to taste

Combine vinaigrette ingredients in a bowl and whisk, or shake them together in a mason jar. Toss the spinach, apples, red onion, nuts, dried fruit, and half of the goat cheese in a large bowl. Drizzle with the vinaigrette and toss to combine. Serve immediately with the remaining goat cheese.

