

Veggie Box Newsletter

Week 6, April 3

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SNAP/Food Stamp benefits have recently received massive cuts as they return to pre-pandemic levels. The elderly will be the most impacted with some benefits going from \$281 to just \$23 a month while the average SNAP user will see an \$83 reduction in benefits. Recipients must now face rising food and housing costs as a result of inflation and greedy corporations, while receiving reduced or removed government assistance. When the state fails to provide adequate benefits, emergency food programs like food banks, food pantries like ANC's own Breadbasket, soup kitchens, or subsidized options work to fill the gap. Emergency food programs first emerged during the Great Depression where massive agricultural surplus sharply contrasted widespread hunger and starvation in what sociologist Janet Poppendieck called "a paradox of want amidst plenty". Programs were thus created to not only solve problems of hunger, but of agricultural surplus which remains prominent today--food banks and food pantries often rely on excess food donated by large grocer retailers. While some programs are supplied by The Emergency Food Assistance Program funded by the

Farm Bill, or other state programs, not all programs are eligible and programs that do receive them often have limitations on who can benefit and how often. Emergency food programs are often criticized for not providing nutritious and sustainably produced options. This contrasts criticisms of the local food movement, which include the prioritization of white, middle-class consumers, and upholding locality and sustainability over food access. A plethora of programs have emerged as a result of these criticisms which combine the two approaches seen in either the adoption of healthy, sustainable, and local options by emergency food programs, or the inclusion of subsidized options in local food initiatives. ANC's programs provide great examples of this—Veggie Box provides a subsidized option for those experiencing economic hardship, our Breadbasket pantry is supplied by both donated Veggie Boxes and food grown by Hunter Park GardenHouse, and the Allen Farmers Market offers Double Up Food Bucks where food stamp users can receive double up to \$10. Can you think of other examples in the Lansing area that combine approaches? What new ways could we address food access, sustainability, and locality simultaneously?

Farmer Profile

ANC's Youth Service Corps

The ANC Youth Service Corps was first assembled over 23 years ago in 1999, and is a community service based agriculture, culinary arts, and business management program for youth aged 11-17 that also earns members gift cards for participation. Members learn about sustainable agriculture and local business practices while growing and creating their own products and services to market to the Lansing Eastside community.

Crop Profile

Pea Tendrils

All parts of the pea plant can be eaten and enjoyed which includes pea tendrils! Pea Tendrils are delicate, curling vines that form at the beginning of the life cycle of the pea plant. They are harvested before any pea pods grow in order to maintain the tendril's tender texture. They can be served raw, flash steamed, or thrown into a stirfry, and are a popular dish in many types of Chinese cuisine. They are becoming more popular as gardeners are utilizing more parts of the plants they cultivate. They contain a fresh pea-like flavor that is crisp and tender! Store bagged in the refrigerator and consume within 1-2 days for best flavor and texture.

ALLEN
HYDROPONIC CENTER

Veggie Box

What's in the Box?

Red Cabbage, Titus Farms, Leslie
Yellow Onion, MSU Student Organic Farm, Holt
Daikon, Tantré Farms, Chelsea
Spicy Salad Mix, Magnolia Farms, Lansing
Blue Potatoes, Tantré Farms, Chelsea
Pea Tendrils, Blue Mitten Hydroponic Farms, Okemos

Add-Ons

Bread, Stone Circle BakeHouse, Holt
Meat, Heffron Farms Market, Belding
Eggs, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte
Tea, ANC's Youth Service Corps, Lansing
Beans, Ferris Organic Farms, Eaton Rapids
Kombucha, Apple Blossom Kombucha, Lansing

Recipes and Tips!

Pea Tendril and Lemon Risotto

6 cups canned vegetable broth
3 1/2 Tbsp butter
1 Tbsp olive oil
2 large shallots, chopped (use the ones from last week!)
2 cups arborio or medium-grain white rice
1/4 cup dry white wine
1 cup freshly grated Parmesan
Veggie Box pea tendrils, roughly chopped if desired
2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
4 tsp grated lemon peel

Bring broth to simmer in large saucepan over medium heat. Reduce heat to low and cover. Melt 1 1/2 Tbsp butter with oil in heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add shallots and sauté until tender, 6 minutes. Add rice and stir, 1 minute. Add wine and stir until evaporated, 30 seconds. Add 1 1/2 cups hot broth; simmer until absorbed, stirring frequently. Add remaining broth 1/2 cup at a time, allowing broth to be absorbed before adding more and stirring frequently until rice is creamy and tender, about 35 minutes. Stir in cheese and remaining 2 tablespoons butter. Stir in pea tendrils, lemon juice, and lemon peel. Season risotto with salt and pepper. Transfer to bowl and serve.

Braised Daikon Rice Bowls

3 Tbsp vegetable oil
3 star anise
3 tsp Sichuan peppercorns
1 tbsp ginger, minced
3 cloves garlic, smashed and finely chopped
4 scallions, chopped with white separated from green
8oz extra firm tofu, pressed, drained, and crumbled
1 Tbsp Shaoxing wine
1 tsp dark soy sauce
1 Tbsp light soy sauce
1 Tbsp oyster sauce
1/2 tsp sugar
2 cups water
1 1/2 Tbsp cornstarch mixed with 3 Tbsp water
Steamed jasmine rice

Heat oil in a wok over low heat. Add star anise and Sichuan peppercorns. Let them infuse the oil for 10 minutes, take care to not let burn. Scoop out and discard aromatics leaving the oil in the wok.

Add ginger, garlic, and white parts of scallion and turn heat to medium-high, 1 minute. Add crumbled tofu, and stir fry until browned. Next add daikon and shiitake mushrooms, mixing everything well. Add Shaoxing wine, dark soy sauce, light soy sauce, oyster sauce, sugar and 2 cups of water. Mix well and cover, simmer for about 15 minutes until daikon is cut through and translucent. Once cooked, turn heat to high and add the cornstarch slurry to thicken the sauce for 1 minute. Stir in green parts of scallions and serve over rice.



Braised Red Cabbage

2 Tbsp butter
1 Veggie Box onion
1 Veggie Box red cabbage
1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
1/4 cup water (or more as needed)
Salt and pepper to taste

Add onion to a large pot with the butter and sauté over medium heat until soft and translucent. While onion is sautéing, finely shred the cabbage. Add the cabbage, vinegar, water, and salt to the pot. Turn the heat to medium, place a lid on the pot, and let the cabbage cook, stirring occasionally, until very tender (20-30 minutes, depending on your desired texture). If the bottom of the pot begins to dry up, add another 1/4 cup water. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Cabbage, Daikon, and Ginger Salad

2 cups shredded Veggie Box red cabbage
1 1/2 cups shredded or julienned carrots
1 1/2 cups shredded or julienned Veggie Box daikon
2 Tbsp freshly grated ginger (about a 1-inch piece)
1/4 cup rice vinegar
1 Tbsp soy sauce
1 Tbsp sesame oil
1 tsp honey or maple syrup
Sesame seeds (black or white)
Optional: sliced green onion for topping
Optional: mix with cold soba noodles

Shred or julienne the cabbage, carrots, and daikon radish. Mix the cabbage, carrots, and radish together in a large bowl. Place the rice vinegar, ginger, soy sauce, sesame oil, and honey in a jar and shake vigorously until combined. Toss dressing with shredded vegetables then top with sesame seeds and green onion if using.