

Veggie Box Newsletter

Fall Week 5, Thursday, October 12th



Following Indigenous Peoples' Day, let's reflect on the influence food has on culture and social power. We often think about how food is power for our bodies and minds—but power within food systems is more complicated. For example, larger farms have predominately lost the power to choose what they grow due to the US government heavily subsidizing certain crops (namely corn, soy, and wheat). Now that farmers are forced to grow monocultures - often not a crop that is edible without heavy processing - they have lost both the power of choice and the power to feed their families.

Another example is the treatment of Indigenous peoples and the impact it has had on their relationships with food. Many Indigenous peoples have been forced off their land and onto reservations where their traditional foodways are no longer accessible. Not only that, but they are given low-quality, highly processed foods and face the harsh consequences of food apartheid; without access to fresh produce, nutritionally-dense foods, or culturally appropriate foods, they are stripped of their power over themselves, their bodies, and their health. Health disparities from the impact of systemic racism on access to healthy foods has hugely impacted so many minority communities and has led to generations of increased rates of type II diabetes, hypertension, and malnourishment, which can negatively impact cognitive development, academic performance, and mental health. By buying and consuming local produce you can help give the power back to farmers and food producers, and empower yourself to eat foods that are nourishing for your body, your food system, and your community.

Producer Spotlight *Magnolia Avenue 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 *Shishito Peppers*

Shishito peppers are a variety of the species *Capsicum annuum*, which also includes bell peppers and cayenne peppers. Most shishito peppers are mild, but about one out of every ten will display a bit of heat due to exposure to sunlight or other environmental factors—an exciting game of pepper roulette! Originally from Japan, the shishito pepper is named after the appearance of its tip, which resembles the head of a lion (shishi in Japanese). They're often eaten as an appetizer where they are roasted, grilled, or fried until charred and blistered, then sprinkled with coarse salt. Charring helps to bring out the rich flavors of these mild peppers, and because of their thin walls, shishitos will char faster than many other varieties of pepper. Whenever they're cooked, a small hole should also be poked in them beforehand to prevent the peppers from bursting. They can also be used raw and added to salads, salsas, gazpachos, stews, and seafood dishes. Shishito peppers are rich in vitamins and minerals and are considered an excellent source of vitamin C.

What's in the Box?

Tomatoes, *Ten Hens Farm, Bath*

Roma Tomatoes, *Peckham Farms, Lansing*

Hot Pepper Mix, *Magnolia Avenue Farms, Lansing*

Salad Mix, *Hunter Park GardenHouse, Lansing*

Organic Celery, *Lake Divide Farms, Stockbridge*

Shishito Peppers, *Blue Mitten Hydroponic Farms, Okemos*

Garlic, *Wildflower Eco Farm, Bath*

Crimson Crisp Apples, *Hillcrest Farms, Eaton Rapids*

Add-ons

Bread, *Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt*

Eggs, *Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte*

Honey, *Beebehavior Ranch, Ovid*

Meat, *Heffron Farms Market, Belding*

Chicken, *Heffron Farms Market, Belding*

Beef, *Heffron Farms Market, Belding*

Pork, *Heffron Farms Market, Belding*

Recipes and Tips!

Fresh Salsa

- Veggie Box tomatoes, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1/4 cup onions, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp. Veggie Box parsley (from last week), chopped
- 1 tbsp. fresh basil, chopped
- 2 Veggie Box hot peppers, seeded and minced
- 1 teaspoon minced Veggie Box garlic
- 2 teaspoons lime juice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar

Chop* and combine all ingredients into a bowl. Mix them together and let sit for about ten minutes, allowing flavors to meld together.

*Make sure the onion, garlic and hot peppers are truly chopped fine enough. There are some powerful flavors in those vegetables and the smaller you can make each piece, the better.

(Still have last week's plums? Considering throwing them in for a spicy-sweet combo!)



Chunky Veggie Tomato Sauce

- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 rib of Veggie Box celery, chopped
- 1 Veggie Box hot pepper, chopped
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- Crushed Veggie Box roma tomatoes (all)
- 1 teaspoon tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 Veggie Box garlic clove, smashed.
- salt to taste

Dice first four veggies listed into large cubes and put in a large pot with oil. Add crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, garlic and salt. Let simmer until vegetables are soft. Serve over your favorite pasta.



Small Batch of Applesauce

- Veggie Box Apples, peeled, cored, and quartered
- 1 cup apple cider
- 1/4-1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1 pinch salt
- pinch of cinnamon

Place the apples and apple cider in a pan over medium heat. Allow to cook for 25-30 minutes, until soft, stirring occasionally. Add the cinnamon, sugar, and salt, and mash with a potato masher. Remove from heat, add the lemon juice.