

Veggie Box Newsletter

Fall Week 8, Thursday, November 2nd

Welcome to week eight of Fall Veggie Box, and we hope you had a happy Halloween! Halloween, like many other holiday traditions, is rooted in our agricultural past and was connected to the end of the harvest season. Many traditions around this time of year revolve around food-like bobbing for apples and carving pumpkins. Apple bobbing comes from the Roman festival celebrating Pomona, the goddess of fruit and orchards, which was celebrated around November 1. The Romans believed that the first person to catch an apple with their teeth would be the first to get married in the new year. It was also believed that if you peeled an apple in one long unbroken piece and threw it over your shoulder while being spun around, the shape of the peel on the ground would represent the first initial of your true love! The tradition of carving pumpkins actually began with carving turnips or rutabagas (or potatoes or beets in some cases) in the shape of a demon's face and placing a candle inside. The carved root vegetables were placed in windows and doorways to frighten evil spirits and welcome the deceased spirits of loved ones inside. The name jack-o-lantern on the other hand comes from the Irish legend of Stingy Jack, who after stealing money from the devil, was doomed to roam the earth forever with only a carved turnip to light his way. So hollow out your turnips (or eat them), and enjoy the changing seasons! Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight *Green Wagon Farm*

Owner of Green Wagon Farm, Chad Anderson began their journey with farming through their time in the peace corps and working in Uganda with dairy farmers. Chad opened and ran the farm while working a factory job, selling produce at their veggie stand in 2010. Co-Owner Heather volunteered at the farm in 2012 when they discovered their shared passion for and career in farming. Green Wagon Farm has a year-round crew of 13 and up to 18 at the season's height. The Anderson family has grown the farm from a small roadside stand on borrowed land to the certified organic, family-owned, year-round operation it is today. "We relish our time working and celebrating together as we study and experiment with ways to better serve the land and our community."

Crop Profile *Fennel*

Fennel is a flowering plant in the carrot family that is native to the Mediterranean region. There are two main types of fennel: herb fennel and Florence fennel, or the Italian finocchio. This herb's stems, seeds, and feathery leaves that look like its cousin dill are all edible. Florence fennel, however, is grown primarily for its large, bulb-like bottom. Typically, the trimmed off green tops are used to garnish dishes. Regardless of type, fennel has a strong anise or licorice flavor. The crisp bulbs can be eaten raw by cutting into thin slices for salads and slaws. If it's cooked, the bulb's flavor becomes softer and more mellow. Fennel has been used as an herb, food source, and object in important rituals for various cultures. A carminative, it was used to reduce gas, bloating, and nausea, and was baked or boiled along with other foods to make them easier to digest.

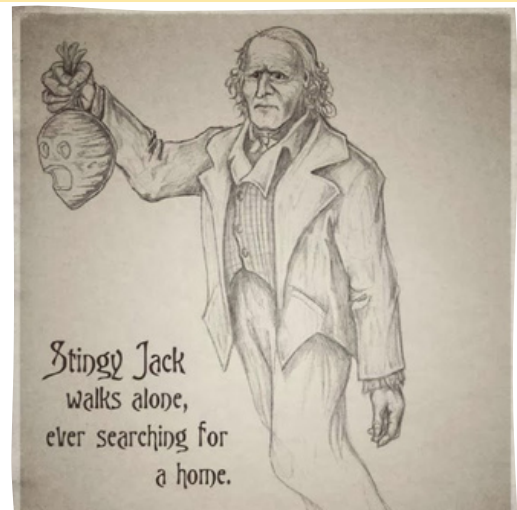


What's in the Box?

Fennel, Ten Hens Farm, *Bath*
Organic Hakurei Turnips, Ten Hens Farm, *Bath*
Organic Romaine Lettuce, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*
Red Choi, Hunter Park GardenHouse, *Lansing Eastside*
Spaghetti Squash, Tomac Pumpkin Patch, *Chesaning*
Organic Sweet Potatoes, Monroe Family Organics, *Alma*
Pea Shoots, Blue Mitten Hydroponic Farms, *Okemos*

Add-ons

Coffee, 517 Coffee Company, *Lansing*
Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, *Holt*
Meat, Heffron Farms Market, *Belding*



Recipes and Tips!

Spaghetti Squash Boat

- 1 Veggie Box spaghetti squash
- ⅓ cup onions diced
- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon fresh basil
- 2 tomatoes, crushed or 1 can crushed tomatoes
- 2 cups tomato sauce
- 2 cloves last week's Veggie Box garlic
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup cheddar cheese
- ½ cup mozzarella cheese
- 2 tablespoon olive oil

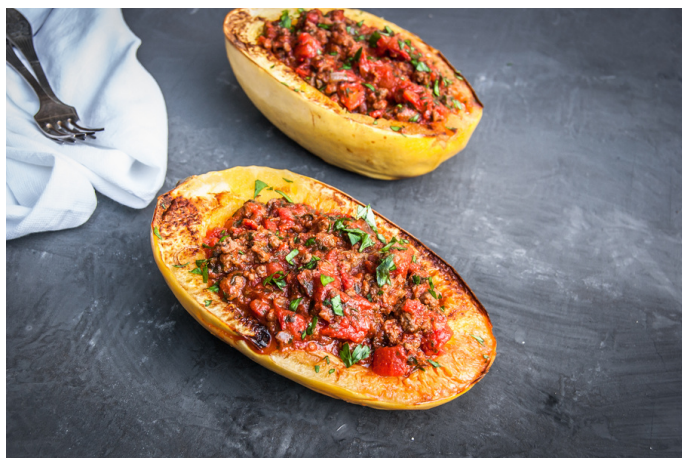
Heat the oven to 425 F.

Poke some holes in your spaghetti squash with the tip of a sharp knife. Heat the squash in the microwave for 5 minutes to soften it up.

Let cool, then cut the squash in half lengthwise. Remove the seeds and brush the olive oil in the cavity and the edge of the squash. Bake for 30 minutes.

While the squash cooks, in a hot skillet, brown the beef for about 5 minutes. Once browned, add salt and pepper. Add crushed tomatoes, onions, herbs and garlic. Cook for about 2 minutes. Add the tomato sauce. Stir. Let simmer on low for 7 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.

Use a fork to lightly scrape the inside of the squash, then fill in the cavity with the meat sauce. Topped with cheese and bake for 10 minutes or until golden brown on top. Let cool and serve warm.



Cinnamon Roasted Sweet Potatoes, Squash, and Apples

- Veggie Box sweet potatoes cut into 1" cubes
- Veggie Box apples cut into 1" cubes
- Acorn squash (or similar), sliced into 1" slices
- 3 Tbsp coconut oil melted & divided
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 2 Tbsp pure maple syrup
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

Preheat oven to 415 F. Grease a large baking pan and set aside. In a large bowl, toss cubed sweet potatoes and sliced squash with melted coconut oil and stir until coated. Add sea salt and stir until evenly distributed. Bake in the preheated oven for 20 min, stirring halfway through, until sweet potatoes and squash just barely start to brown.

While the sweet potatoes and squash are baking, stir the remaining 1 Tbsp of coconut oil into the apples. Add maple syrup and cinnamon and stir to combined. After 20 minutes, or when the sweet potatoes and squash have begun to brown, remove them from oven and add the apple mixture and stir to combine. Return to the oven and bake for 20 more minutes, stirring halfway through. Once the sweet potatoes and apples are browned and the maple syrup has caramelized on them remove them from the oven and serve immediately.

Sweet Fennel Butter

- 1/2 pound (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh fennel fronds
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed orange juice
- 2 teaspoons freshly grated orange zest
- 1 teaspoon honey
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Mix together butter, fennel or dill, orange juice, zest and honey until smooth, either in a food processor, in an electric mixer, or by hand. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Scrape butter into a decorative small bowl and serve.