

Veggie Box Newsletter

Fall Week 7, Tuesday, October 24th

Did you know that October is Michigan's Apple Month? Apples are synonymous with Fall here in the Midwest, particularly in Michigan where over 14.9 million apple trees in commercial production cover 34,500 acres on 775 family-run farms! Apples are the largest and most valuable fruit crop in Michigan, which is also known as the variety state due to apple farmers growing more than 16 varieties of apples in a diverse array of flavors. It is estimated that Michigan apple growers will harvested approximately 1.344 billion pounds of apples in 2023, making Michigan the third-largest apple producing state in the nation. Apples were brought to North America by colonists in the 17th century and the first apple orchard on the continent was planted by Reverend William Blaxton in 1625. Apple varieties were brought as seeds from Europe and spread along Native American trade routes in addition to being cultivated on colonists' farms. You can celebrate Apple month in a number of ways (if you haven't already) such as by going to a U-pick farm (Michigan has over 200!), visiting one of Michigan's many cider mills, or enjoying apple treats like apple butter, apple pie, and more. This week you can celebrate Apple Month with Jonagold apples grown by Phillips Orchards and Cider Mill. This variety is great for eating as is or making baking into your favorite recipes.

Producer Spotlight *Swallowtail Farms*

Anne, also known as 'Farmer Anne' is a plant geek who has the pleasure of managing Swallowtail Farm along with help from her family and an awesome employee or two. It brings her joy to know that she's growing veggies, fruit and flowers in a sustainable way for folks in her community to enjoy. She wasn't always a plant geek. When she was in college she took a practical botany class because it sounded like a great way to 'blow off' her science requirements. Little did she know, she was beginning a lifelong journey of learning and awe with all things green.

Crop Profile *Beets*

Beets refer to the taproot of a beet plant, although both the root and its leaves are edible. Did you know chard is the same species as beet, but it doesn't produce an edible root? Originally domesticated in the Middle East, they were also cultivated in Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Beets contain a substance called geosmin, which is responsible for the fresh soil scent in your garden following rain. Because humans are quite sensitive to geosmin, people tend to either love or hate beets. Use these delicious, nutrition packed veggies in the Eastern European beet soup, borscht, served either hot or cold. You can also enjoy them pickled, roasted, sauteed, or raw! You can store these sturdy root vegetables in the fridge for up to three weeks in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer -- make sure to cut off the greens and leave two inches of stem.



What's in the Box?

Microgreens, Highwater Farms, *Lansing*
Organic Beets, MSU Student Organic Farm, *Holt*
Organic Spinach, MSU Student Organic Farm, *Holt*
Organic Daikon Radish, Lake Divide Farm, *Stockbridge*
Organic Turnips, Lake Divide Farm, *Stockbridge*
Ginger, Hunter Park Garden House, *Lansing's Eastside*
Carrots, Swallowtail Farm, *Mason*
Garlic, Swallowtail Farm, *Mason*
Jonagold Apples, Phillips Orchards and Cider Mill, *St. Johns*

Add-ons

Eggs, Grazing Fields Cooperative, *Charlotte*
Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, *Holt*
Meat, Heffron Farms Market, *Belding*
Chicken, Heffron Farms Market, *Belding*
Beef, Heffron Farms Market, *Belding*
Pork, Grazing Fields Cooperative, *Charlotte*

Recipes and Tips!

Chinese Braised Daikon Radishes

- 1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 green onion, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon Veggie Box ginger, minced
- 1/2 pound ground tofu or meat (beef, pork, chicken, or turkey)
- 1 teaspoon Doubanjiang (spicy bean paste made from fermented soybeans)
- 2 Veggie Box Daikon radish (about 1 pound)
- 1 cup vegetable stock (or chicken/beef stock)
- 1/2 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1/2 tablespoon Shaoxing wine (or dry sherry)
- 1/2 tablespoon sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon five-spice powder
- 1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt or to taste

Heat a medium-size heavy duty pot over medium heat until hot. Add a tablespoon of oil. Add green onion and ginger. Cook for a minute to release the flavor. Add ground tofu or meat. Cook and stir until surface turns brown. Add the doubanjiang. Cook and stir until the meat is evenly coated. Add the radish. Cook and stir to mix well. Add Shaoxing wine, chicken stock, soy sauce, sugar, and five spice powder. Cook over medium high heat until brought to a boil. Turn to medium low heat. Simmer for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the radish turns tender. Add salt to taste. Serve with steamed rice or by itself.

Ginger Hot Chocolate

- 3 cups milk
- Sweetener to taste
- 1/4-1/2 teaspoon of fresh Veggie Box grated ginger
- 1/4 cup cocoa or cocoa powder
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Heat milk in medium saucepan. Once it comes to a simmer, reduce heat slightly and whisk in cocoa powder, sea salt, and ginger. Once cocoa is warmed to your liking, approx. 2-5 minutes, remove from heat and add vanilla extract. Stir once more before serving.

Honey Ginger Roasted Carrots

- Approx. 1 lb Veggie Box carrots (all from this week), peeled whole or cut into pieces
- 1/4 cup Veggie Box honey
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1-2 teaspoons fresh grated Veggie Box ginger
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 clove Veggie Box garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- Salt & pepper, to taste
- Sesame seeds, for garnish (optional)

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a small bowl, whisk together honey, olive oil, ginger, soy sauce, garlic, brown sugar and salt and pepper. Toss carrots with glaze (in a large bowl, or right on the pan). Bake for 15-25 minutes (depending on the size of your carrots), turning and stirring once during cooking, until carrots are tender. If desired, sprinkle with sesame seeds before serving.



Tip: Young Ginger

Wondering about the pink hue of your ginger? This young ginger has a more delicate skin than mature ginger. In fact, you don't even have to peel it if grating or chopping finely.

If you want to increase its shelf life, try making a ginger garlic paste. Mix equal parts ginger and garlic in the food processor (we recommend chopping into smaller pieces for easier blending) with a splash of vinegar and water. Leave slightly coarse, it doesn't need to be a fine paste. Store in an airtight container in the fridge for 3 to 5 weeks.