

Veggie Box Newsletter

Summer Week 14, Tuesday August 29

Welcome to the final week of the Summer Veggie Box!

Shopping local is fairly easy during the warmest months when fresh produce is abundant and farmers markets pop up all over Michigan. However, buying local foods may not seem as easy as we move into the colder months. However, many farmers markets are open year-round for a wide selection of winter produce, including our own Allen Farmers Market. Michigan farmers can use hoop houses to plant cold-hardy crops in the late summer and keep them growing into winter. Some Michigan crops that often grow in hoop houses include salad greens, spinach, kale, swiss chard, carrots, parsnips, beets, and other root crops. Some of these crops actually gain flavor and sweetness in the cold temperatures! With advancing storage technology, crops such as squash, potatoes, onions, and apples can be harvested late in the season, stored, and sold throughout the winter. Many people forget about supporting local food in the colder months, the same months that farmers and food producers need it more than ever.



What's in the Box?

Peaches, *Phillips Orchard & Cider Mill*, St. Johns
Cherry Tomatoes, *Peckham Farms*, Lansing
Red Peppers, *Ten Hens Farm*, Bath
Beets, *Ten Hens Farm*, Bath
Kale, *Titus Farms*, Leslie

Add-Ons

Bread, *Stone Circle Bakehouse*, Holt
Meat Variety, *Heffron Farms*, Belding
Chicken, *Ham Sweet Farm*, Williamston
Cheese, *Hickory Knoll Creamery*, Onondaga
Chevre, *Hickory Knoll Creamery*, Onondaga

Last Week of Veggie Box! Please Return The Empty Boxes

Producer Spotlight *Ham Sweet Farm*

Ham Sweet Farm is a small family pasture-based pork and poultry farm in Williamston, Michigan. The 30-acre backyard farm is run by Kate and her husband Christian, with the help of their young son. They operate with the core values of ensuring the best quality products, supporting their community, and maintaining ethical raising practices. All of the animals are fed only locally-grown and milled grain that is organic and GMO-free. Ham Sweet Farm is a model for economic, social, and environmental sustainability for a farming operation. Through their local market involvement, social consideration in pricing, and environmentally sustainable practices, they effectively and thoughtfully uphold the three pillars of sustainability.

Crop Profile *Kale*

Though you may have only become familiar with Kale in the recent years with its popularity rise, Kale is actually a very old leafy green. It actually was one of the most popular greens throughout Europe until the end of the middle ages when other crops began to rival it. In addition to being a leafy green staple, Kale was also used medicinally to help alleviate intestinal ailments. Kale was given a new role due to World War II. Because so many countries were forced to ration, causing people to lack key nutrients, Kale production increased to help fill in some of the nutritional gaps. Kale is a great source of iron, Vitamins C and K, calcium, and many antioxidants. These days, Kale has many uses, such as in salads, soups, smoothies, and casseroles. To keep kale for up to a week, wrap the bunch in paper towels in a plastic bag and store them in the fridge crisper drawer.

Recipes and Tips!

Veggie Box Tacos

- 2 Poblano Pepper
- Veggie Box beets
- Medium Onion or 2 Shallots, sliced
- 2 cloves of Veggie Box garlic, smashed
- 2 carrots, diced
- 1/2 of Veggie Box kale, chopped
- Veggie Box tomatoes, diced
- 1 teaspoon chile powder
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- salt to taste
- Queso Fresco

Preheat oven to 365 degrees F. Trim, peel, and dice beets into cubes. Put in bowl and toss with 1 Tbsp oil, and sprinkle with 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper. Toss to coat, then bake for 45 minutes, or until tender when pricked with a fork, stirring occasionally. Roast the poblanos directly over a gas flame or charcoal fire, or close under a preheated broiler, turning regularly until blistered and blackened all over, about 5 minutes over an open flame, 10 minutes under a broiler. Collect the peppers in a bowl, cover with a kitchen towel and cool until handleable. Rub off the charred skin, pull out the stems and seed pods, and dice. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a pan, add diced carrots, and cook, covered, for a few minutes. Then, add the shallots and garlic, and cook for another 2 minutes. Season with salt, chile powder, and paprika. Add a splash of water to the pan, add in the chopped kale, and cook for another few minutes. When the kale seems tender, uncover, and add in the peppers and beets. Season to taste, and serve on a tortilla with diced tomatoes and queso fresco.



Beet Pesto Pizza with Kale and Goat Cheese

- 1 large pizza dough (store bought or homemade)
- 1 cup beet pesto (see below)
- 2 cups Veggie Box kale leaves, thinly sliced
- *1.5 cups mozzarella cheese, grated
- 2 ounces goat cheese

Beet Pesto

- 1 cup Veggie Box beets, chopped and roasted
- 3 cloves Veggie Box garlic, roughly chopped
- ½ cup walnuts, roasted
- ½ cup parmesan cheese, grated
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- Salt to taste

Pesto: Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Chop beets into ½” cubes and place on a sheet of foil. Wrap the chopped beet in foil, making a foil packet. Place the packet on a baking sheet. Roast in the oven for 50 minutes, or until beets are soft and juices are seeping out. Allow beets to cool completely. Add all ingredients except for the oil to a food processor or blender and pulse several times. Leaving the food processor (or blender) running, slowly add the olive oil until all ingredients are well combined. If the pesto is too thick for your blender to process, add a small amount of water until desired consistency is reached.

Pizza: Preheat the oven to 415 degrees F. Dust cornmeal or flour on a baking sheet and press or roll the dough to desired thickness. Bake the dough for 5 to 7 minutes with no toppings. Remove the crust from the oven and spread the beet pesto over it. Add the kale leaves, followed by the goat cheese and mozzarella. Note: the kale will cook down in the oven. Bake pizza for 20 to 25 minutes or to desired crisp.

