

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Spring 2024 · Week 3 · Thursday, March 14th

ALLEN

Veggie Box

Plants provide food, medicine, shelter, dyes, fibers, oils, resins, gums, soaps, waxes, latex, tannins, and even contribute to the air we breathe. **Ethnobotany** is the study of how people make use of native plants; the study of a region's plants and their practical uses through the traditional knowledge of a local culture and people.

Current use of the term implies the study of Indigenous or traditional knowledge of plants. It involves the Indigenous knowledge of plant classification, cultivation, and use as food, medicine and shelter. However, many Indigenous peoples believe that this study can be exploitative in numerous ways. It is worth mentioning that Richard Evans Schultes, 'the father of ethnobotany' was a white American. Though he was a conservationist and worked closely with Indigenous peoples, the person who tells a story or disseminates information, matters.

The voices of Indigenous people and the interests and perspectives of Indigenous communities should lead discussions. The economic focus of biological

prospecting "discoveries," has highlighted important issues concerning Indigenous rights, cultural knowledge, and traditional resources. A more "precautionary" approach to ethnobotanical inquiry would assist Indigenous communities in protecting cultural heritage. The issues raised by publishing Indigenous plant knowledge are intensified by the significant uncertainties surrounding subsequent impacts on Indigenous communities whose value systems, priorities, expectations, and time frames may differ from those of the academic community. How do we ensure Indigenous voices are prioritized? What does this have to do with our food system and Veggie Box?

## Producer Spotlight *Green Wagon Farm*

Owner of Green Wagon Farm, Chad Anderson began his journey with farming through their time in the peace corps and working in Uganda with dairy farmers. Chad opened, ran the farm while working a factory job and sold produce at their veggie stand in 2010. Co-Owner, Heather volunteered at the farm in 2012 when she discovered her shared passion for and career in farming. Green Wagon Farm has a year-round crew of 7 and about doubles 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 *Rutabaga*

The rutabaga is a root vegetable that originated as a cross between the cabbage and the turnip. The root can be prepared in a variety of ways, and the leaves can be eaten as a leaf vegetable. Various European countries have a tradition of carving them into lanterns at halloween, similar to the way we carve pumpkins! The first known printed reference to the rutabaga comes from the Swiss botanist Gaspard Bauhin in 1620. Introduction to North America came in the early 19th century with reports of rutabaga crops in Illinois as early as 1817. Finns cook rutabaga in a variety of ways: roasted, baked, boiled, as a flavor enhancer in soups, uncooked and thinly julienned as a side dish or in a salad, and as the major ingredient in the popular Christmas dish lanttulaatikko (swede casserole). Rutabaga is nice baked into a casserole with potatoes and cheese- gruyere is a family favorite for us! The flavor of raw rutabaga tastes milder than turnips almost like a carrot without sweetness. It's crisp, juicy, and just a tiny bit piquant. Rutabagas truly shine in baked dishes.

## What's in the Box?

**Organic Parsley**, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*  
**Organic Beets**, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*  
**Organic Rutabaga**, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*  
**Organic Kohlrabi**, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*  
**Carrots**, Hunter Park GardenHouse, *Lansing*  
**Organic Spinach**, Monroe Family Organics, *Alma*

## Add-ons

**Eggs**, Grazing Fields Cooperative, *Charlotte*  
**Bread**, Stone Circle Bakehouse, *Holt*  
**Meat Variety: Ground Beef**, Heffron Farms, *Belding*  
**Chicken: Chicken Breast**, Heffron Farms, *Belding*  
**Beef: Beef Strips**, Heffron Farms, *Belding*  
**Pork: Bacon**, Heffron Farms, *Belding*  
**Coffee (Bi-Weekly): Peru Quellouno**, 517 Coffee Company, *Lansing*

# Recipes and Tips!

## Rutabaga Spice Cake

Cake:

- 1 cup packed raw peeled and grated rutabaga)
- 3 eggs
- ¾ cup sugar
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour plain flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 350F. Grease and line a 9" square cake pan with parchment paper. Beat the eggs, sugar, yogurt, oil and vanilla together well. Stir in the grated rutabaga. Sift in the flour, baking powder, baking soda, nutmeg and salt and gently stir to combine. Pour into the prepared pan and bake for 25-30 minutes or until an inserted skewer comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes in the tin and then turn onto a wire rack, removing the parchment paper, to cool completely.

Frosting:

- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3-4 tablespoons milk
- ½ cup butter, at room temperature

Put the powdered sugar, vanilla and 1 tablespoon of the milk into a large bowl. Set aside. In a saucepan over a low heat, melt the butter and continue to heat until it turns brown and smells nutty. Pour into the bowl of powdered sugar and beat until thick and smooth, adding more milk if necessary. Top the cooled cake with the frosting. Enjoy! (Optional: top with toasted nuts)



## Beet, Kohlrabi, and Apple Slaw

- 1 Veggie Box kohlrabi, peeled and shredded
- 1 share Veggie Box beets, peeled and shredded
- 1-2 Veggie Box apples from previous weeks, cored and cut into matchsticks
- 2 Tbsp Veggie Box parsley, minced
- 2 green onions
- 1 orange, juiced
- 1 orange, zested
- 1 lime juiced
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- salt + pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup roasted sunflower seeds
- feta cheese (optional)

Salad: Place shredded kohlrabi, shredded beets, chopped apple, parsley, and green onion in a large bowl.

Dressing: In a separate bowl, whisk together orange zest, orange juice, lime juice, olive oil, and salt + pepper.

Drizzle dressing over salad and toss to mix.

Sprinkle roasted sunflower seeds and feta cheese (optional) on top, then serve.

*Recipe adapted from theforkedspoon.com*

## Tips: Kohlrabi Storage

**Kohlrabi bulbs will typically stay fresh in the refrigerator for several weeks.**

Simply scrub and store in a paper or plastic bag in the refrigerator until ready to use.

**Kohlrabi can also be blanched and flash frozen!**

