

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Spring 2024 · Week 7 · Tuesday, April 9th

Veggie Box just went global (specifically, the intern) and I can't wait to tell you about it! Hello! My name is Truman and for my Spring break I conducted a two-week research trip in West Bengal, India. I'm an undergraduate student at Michigan State University studying Environmental Studies & Sustainability and Comparative Cultures & Politics, where I'll be graduating at the end of this month. My research focused on how climate change, increased floods, cyclones, and erratic rainfall are impacting rural agricultural livelihoods in West Bengal. I was on this trip with a Bengali researcher. We visited three villages where it didn't rain once (it's currently the dry season). In those villages rice, fish, and prawns were the main agricultural products being cultivated—I was lucky enough to get my fill during my two-week stay. If you've ever had the big tiger prawns, they may have come from this region of India! There was an impressive variety of crops being grown including bananas, pumpkins, tomatoes, bitter melon, jute, amaranth, and a whole laundry list that would take up this whole page. We spoke with various farmers, maintaining small and large tracts of land, to understand how their livelihoods were being impacted. One thing was clear, climate change was impacting these villages significantly. First, flooding of saltwater from the ocean damaged the soil, putting farmers in a precarious position and forcing many of them to migrate out of the area. Second, women worked in the fields in only the poorest of areas because of lack of alternative opportunities. Third, political tensions in the area caused the slow-walking of aid after major cyclones and disasters. My internship with Veggie Box showed me how to act locally and gave me the perfect skill set for my time in India. If there's one thing I realized, farmers from all over the world are more similar than you think.

– Truman Forbes, Veggie Box Intern and MSU Undergraduate Student



## What's in the Box?

**Rosemary**, Hunter Park GardenHouse, *Lansing*  
**Salad Mix**, Hunter Park GardenHouse, *Lansing*  
**Beets**, Titus Farms, *Leslie*  
**Rutabaga**, Titus Farms, *Leslie*  
**Organic Spinach**, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*  
**Organic Carrots**, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*  
**Organic Green Garlic**, Monroe Family Organics, *Alma*

## Add-ons

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

## Producer Spotlight *Titus Farms*

Titus Farms was founded by Rose and Paul Titus in 1982. Growing up, both farmers worked at their respective family farms until they got married and purchased a small 20-acre land. Paul and Rose both dedicated their lives to farming so that they could pass on ownership of the farm to their daughter, Rebecca Titus. Titus Farms is dedicated to producing the highest quality vegetables using sustainable organic farming methods, as well as producing unique varieties of vegetables that capitalize on great taste.

## 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 many 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 how 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 (or, swede casserole, with swede meaning rutabaga). 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 less sweet carrot. It's crisp, juicy, and just a tiny bit piquant. Rutabagas truly shine in baked dishes.

# Recipes and Tips!

## Rutabaga Curry

Last fall, ANC's Chef Matt offered a special cooking class for Veggie Box members. There, we tackled our rutabaga fears and made this delicious rutabaga curry together. Now you can try Chef Matt's recipe in your own home!

- 1 tsp coriander seed
- 1 Tbsp garam masala
- 1 Tbsp turmeric
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 6 cloves garlic
- 2 Tbsp fresh ginger, diced
- 2 cups Veggie Box onion, diced
- 1 Veggie Box rutabaga, peeled and chopped
- 2 Tbsp tomato paste
- 1 cup water, or vegetable stock for a richer flavor
- 3/4 cup plain coconut yogurt
- Cilantro for garnish
- 1 Serrano or fresh chili (REQUIRED, otherwise it's overly sweet)
- Green Onion

Heat coriander seeds in hot pan and then add oil. Once oil is hot, sauté garlic, ginger, and onions. about 5 mins until translucent and aromatic.

Add peeled and chopped rutabaga to the pot, along with all the seasonings and tomato paste to deglaze the pan.

Stir in water (or vegetable stock) and let simmer until rutabaga is fork tender.

Finish with coconut yoghurt and a sprinkle of cilantro.

Serve with seasoned rice or naan bread.

Optional: Add stewed beef.



## Crustless Veggie Quiche

- 5 Veggie Box eggs
- 1 cup whole milk
- 4 ounces of your preferred cheese (fontina, mozzarella, feta, etc)
- 1 tablespoon oil, plus more for the pan
- 8 ounces sliced mushrooms
- 2 yellow onions or shallots, diced
- Full share Veggie Box green garlic, sliced in thin rounds
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 ½ tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- full share of Veggie Box spinach

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Brush a 9-inch pie plate with olive oil and set it on a baking sheet.

In a large bowl, aggressively whisk together the eggs and milk. Cube the Fontina cheese and set aside.

Set a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the olive oil to the skillet. Once the oil begins to shimmer, add the mushrooms, onion, and green garlic. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook until the mushrooms shrink and the onions are translucent, about 10 to 15 minutes depending upon the size of your mushrooms. Drizzle the balsamic vinegar over the vegetables and stir, cooking for another minute or two. Add the spinach and thyme, stir until spinach is wilted, about 3 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasoning to your liking.

Add the cooked vegetables to the pie plate, sprinkle with cubed cheese, and pour the egg mixture over the top. It should be full up to the rim. Carefully transfer the baking sheet to the oven.

Set the timer for 35 minutes and bake until the center is set. Let cool at room temperature for about 10 minutes before serving.

Recipe adapted from  
[www.themediterraneanandish.com](http://www.themediterraneanandish.com)