

Veggie Box Newsletter

Summer 2024 · Week 6 · Tuesday, July 9th

When my daughter was one year old, we were fortunate to move down the street from Allen Neighborhood Center. I was a young, low income single mom. Each Monday, we'd come to the Breadbasket Food Pantry. We were so grateful for this resource, but some weeks it went further than others—sometimes, the inventory was low by the time we could get there, or the produce quickly expired. An ANC staff member let me know about the new Subsidized Veggie Box Program, which made Veggie Boxes available to Eastside neighbors with children for only \$5 a week. Signing up changed our lives! We knew for sure we'd have access to high quality, affordable produce for an entire season, and we were treated the same as every other member.

When I joined ANC as the food hub assistant manager last September, I was honored to take on coordinating Subsidized Veggie Box. The program has steadily grown, and is now open to anyone who self-identifies as experiencing a hardship which makes accessing fresh produce difficult. Subsidized members are responsible for a small weekly payment, and the remaining cost is contributed by fellow Veggie Box members who love the program so much, they want to donate to make sure any neighbor who wants to participate is able.

This summer, ANC began participating in the Michigan Farm to Family: CSA program (through Michigan Fitness Foundation), which allows us to offer additional reduced cost memberships to members who pay with an EBT card. We were able to provide a reduced cost membership to nearly 11% of our total membership thanks to donors, corporate sponsors and grant funding! - *Iris Paul, Food Hub Assistant Manager*

Questions about Reduced Cost Veggie Box?

Contact me: IrisP@AllenNeighborhoodCenter.org

Producer Spotlight *Monroe Family Organics*

Monroe Family Organics is the fruition of a dream set in motion almost 20 years ago, and finally realized in 2011. After having a stall at the local Alma farmers market the summer he was 16, Fred Monroe was hooked on organic vegetable production. While at MSU studying horticulture and agribusiness, he worked at the MSU Student Organic Farm and interned at a large CSA south of Chicago. In 2010, Fred and his wife Michele set to work acquiring land buying a house, and rounding up equipment for the first farm season. Over the next few years, they continued to add more crops, more animals, more CSA drop-offs, more delivery options, and more local mid-Michigan store and restaurant partners. 2024 marks their 14th growing season!

Crop Profile *Green Onion*

Green onions are actually baby, immature onions that are picked before they fully grow. The bulb is younger and is cut while the tops are still green. They have tiny white bulbs at the end of long green tops. There are slight age differences and bulb types between scallions and green onions (green onions have a larger bulb), but they are often considered the same. Since green onions really consist of two parts, the white bottoms and the green shoots on top, green onions are a uniquely versatile vegetable with two distinct flavors. The flavor of the bottom white section most resembles the flavor of an onion, though it is less pungent and more sweet. Although it's the most potent part of the green onion, even served raw, as a garnish or ingredient in a salad, it is generally mild enough for most palates. The green part is distinctively oniony but with an additional fresh, grassy flavor. Store your green onions in a slightly damp paper towel in an airtight container for up to two weeks.



What's in the Box?

Organic Cucumber, Owosso Organics, *Owosso*

Organic Basil, Owosso Organics, *Owosso*

Organic Tomatoes, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*

Organic New Red Potatoes, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*

Green Onions, Swallowtail Farm, *Mason*

Organic Cabbage, Monroe Family Organics, *Alma*

Add-ons

Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, *Holt*

Meat Variety: Beef Strips, Heffron Farms, *Belding*

Coffee, 517 Coffee Company, *Lansing*

Tea, ANC's Youth Service Corps, *Lansing*

Kombucha, Apple Blossom Kombucha, *Lansing*

Maple Syrup, Tomac Pumpkin Patch, *Chesaning*

Honey, Beebehavior Ranch, *Ovid*

Want to support Subsidized Veggie Box?

Visit: bit.ly/vbdonate

Recipes and Tips!

Ethiopian Aicha

Inspired by Teff-Riffic, beloved Allen Farmers Market vendor

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 head Veggie Box cabbage, shredded
- 6 stalks of last week's Veggie Box garlic scapes sliced 1", or 5 cloves of garlic finely minced
- 4-5 Veggie Box potatoes, cubed
- 3 large carrots, chopped into 1" slices
- 1 to 4 tablespoons butter, or vegetable oil
- 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger, or grated fresh
- 2 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- 1/4 cup oil (canola recommended)

In a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Once shimmering, add onions and cook for 5 minutes, until translucent. Stir in garlic, ginger, cumin powder, and 1 tsp of the turmeric (reserve the rest of the turmeric for next step). Cook for 1 minute.

Add carrots, cabbage, broth, salt, pepper, and the rest of the turmeric. Mix well to infuse with spices. Cover and cook 20 min on medium heat.

Add potatoes. Cook for 20-30 minutes. Check for doneness-- the carrots, cabbage and potatoes should be cooked through but not mushy. If needed, cook a few more minutes until soft. Serve hot with rice or flatbread!



Cucumber Basil Tomato Salad

- 1 Veggie Box cucumber
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar (or balsamic)
- 1 clove garlic, crushed (optional)
- 1 Veggie Box tomato, cut into large pieces
- Several Veggie Box green onion stalks, white section thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup Veggie Box basil leaves, torn or chopped
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Smash the Cucumber: Cut the cucumber in half lengthwise and rest the flat side on a cutting board. Use a heavy rolling pin or the flat side of a knife to crush the cucumbers, then cut into 1/2" pieces or chunks. Transfer the cucumber to a fine mesh sieve and mix with a generous pinch of salt; let sit for 15 to 20 minutes, or while you prepare the remaining ingredients.

Make the Dressing: Add the oil, vinegar, garlic clove (if using), and 1/2 teaspoon of salt to a small jar; seal and shake until emulsified, then set aside. Combine: add the chopped tomatoes to a large bowl, then add in the cucumbers, shallot, and basil. Top with the dressing and black pepper, to taste. Mix well, then place in the fridge for 15 minutes to chill.

Serve: Season with additional salt and pepper to taste, if necessary. Serve cold; store leftovers in the fridge in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Recipe adapted from Frommybowl.com