

Veggie Box Newsletter

Summer 2024 · Week 4 · Tuesday, June 18th



Happy Juneteenth! What does this holiday have to do with food and foodways? As a day that celebrates the emancipation of enslaved peoples in the United States, Juneteenth offers a way for us to recognize how much our food system has been influenced by centuries of slavery and colonization, from the high levels of food insecurity experienced by minority communities, to the still dire labor conditions experienced by farmworkers.

Like many holidays we know and love, Juneteenth also has its own food traditions that center Black history and culture; a community's roots and location can result in very different menus! For some this means celebrating with Southern soul food, including classic dishes like fried fish, cornbread, and stew. Related to soul food, eating prosperity foods that are normally eaten in the new year like collard greens, black eyed peas, pork, and corn, are also commonly eaten on Juneteenth. Others might gather around the grill to celebrate with barbecue and sides like potato salad and more. Eating red foods like watermelon, strawberries, Juneteenth punch, red velvet cake, red beans or hot sauce, however is perhaps the most significant tradition to Juneteenth. Because many foods eaten back in the day were brown or green, red foods were seen as a treat associated with celebration.

This tradition is also related to diaspora—many of the enslaved Africans in Texas at the time of Juneteenth were either part of or familiar with the Yoruba and the Kongo, for whom the color red was highly significant. Whether you celebrate with food or not, take the time this week to look into the history of Juneteenth and reflect on the way that people before us have molded our food system into what it is today. Thanks for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight *Felzke Farms*

Felzke Farms is a family farm located in Dewitt, Michigan that was founded in 1960. They are the largest producer of strawberries in mid-Michigan, offering both U-Pick opportunities as well as pre-picked options at their indoor farm market that has been in operation since 1978. Felzke Farms also grows a variety of vegetables such as asparagus, summer squash, cucumbers, peppers, and more!

Crop Profile *Fennel*

Fennel is a flowering plant in the carrot family that is native to the Mediterranean region. There are two main types of fennel: herb fennel and Florence fennel, or the Italian finocchio. This herb's stems, seeds, and feathery leaves that look just like its cousin dill are all harvested and used. Florence fennel, however, is grown primarily for its large, bulb-like bottom that is eaten as a vegetable. Typically, the trimmed off green tops only garnish dishes. Regardless of type, fennel has a strong anise or licorice flavor. The crisp bulbs can be eaten raw by cutting into thin slices for salads and slaws. If it's cooked, the bulb's flavor becomes softer and more mellow. In various cultures, fennel has a long history for its uses as an herb, food source, and object in important rituals. It has also been considered one of the best carminatives, which are used to reduce gas, bloating, and nausea, and was baked or boiled along with other foods to make them easier to digest. Today, fennel is still used in many of the same ways and may make a helpful digestive aid in addition to being a delicious vegetable or spice.

What's in the Box?

Strawberries, Felzke Farm, *Dewitt*
Salad Mix, Hunter Park GardenHouse, *Lansing*
Scallions, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*
Carrots, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*
Fennel, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*
Tatsoi, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*
Herb: Cilantro, Green Wagon Farm, *Ada*

Add-ons

Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, *Holt*
Coffee, Strange Matter Coffee, *Lansing*
Meat Variety: Smoked Chicken Sausage, Heffron Farms, *Belding*

Recipes and Tips!

Roasted Carrot & Fennel Galette

- 1 share Veggie Box carrots
- 1 share Veggie Box fennel
- ½-1 share Veggie Box scallions (to taste)
- 1 pie crust (the kind you can roll out - storebought or homemade is fine!)
- 1½ tbsp olive oil
- 4 ounces soft goat cheese (or sub feta)
- Salt and pepper
- (optional) 1 egg white

Preheat oven to 400F. Roll out the crust into a rough circle, about 13in wide. Place on a baking sheet, and let rest in fridge.

Clean and peel carrots. Cut into discs, roughly ⅓ inch thick. Cut fennel in half and trim out the triangular core. Cut into ⅓ inch thick slices. Remove outermost layer of scallions and cut off roots, as well as the very tip of the greens. Place vegetables onto large baking sheet, drizzle with oil, and salt and pepper to taste. Mix vegetables until coated with oil, and roast until tender. Cut roasted scallions into 1-2 inch bite-sized pieces.

Remove crust from fridge and set on work surface. Arrange vegetables on crust with a spoon in the center, leaving about 2 inches of crust around. Crumble goat cheese over the top, and use fingers to nestle it in slightly. Fold dough over vegetables, crimping and pleating to make it stay. Optionally, use a pastry brush to brush the galette's top with egg white.

Bake in oven for 40-45 minutes, until crisp and golden. Serve warm or at room temp, cut into wedges.

Recipe adapted from SimplyRecipes.com



Strawberry Tatsoi Salad

For the salad:

- 1 share Veggie Box tatsoi
- 1 share Veggie Box strawberries
- ½ share Veggie Box salad mix
- ¾ cup raw pecans
- ¾ cup crumbled feta (or sub goat cheese)
- ½ small red onion

For the dressing:

- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 3 tbsps extra virgin olive oil
- 1½ tbsps poppy seeds
- 1½ tbsps honey
- ½ tsp Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Roast pecans on a baking sheet in a 350F oven, 8-10 mins, or until fragrant and tan in the middle when broken (keep an eye on them so they don't burn!) When cool, roughly chop. Thinly slice the red onion, place in a bowl and cover with cold water to remove the sharpness. Hull and quarter strawberries.

In a bowl or measuring cup, mix dressing ingredients - vinegar, oil, poppy seeds, honey, mustard, salt, and pepper - until well combined.

Combine tatsoi and salad mix and place into serving bowl. Add strawberries, and drained onions. Drizzle half of dressing and toss to combine. Salad should be lightly moistened, but not coated in dressing. Add more dressing as necessary. Add feta and pecans, then toss lightly. Serve immediately.

Recipe adapted from WellPlated.com