

Veggie Box Newsletter

Fall 2024 · Week 10 · Thursday, November 21

Welcome to Week 10 of Fall Veggie Box! When talking about our food system, it is imperative that we understand how racial injustice has pervaded the industry for hundreds of years. The food system we know today was built on the mistreatment and exploitation of people of color including the taking of land from Indigenous peoples, the enslavement of Black individuals to work in the fields, discriminatory immigration laws against Asian farm laborers, and the ongoing mistreatment of Latinx farmworkers. These are all examples indicative of a system built on control and corruption. For centuries, the capitalist food system has concentrated its power in the hands of the privileged few and pushed social and environmental injustices primarily onto racially stigmatized groups. Farms are predominantly run by white farmers whereas farm workers are disproportionately people of color. These workers are often paid poverty level wages and experience high levels of food insecurity, wage theft, harassment, in addition to a lack of benefits. Race, poverty, and food insecurity are all interconnected. Recognizing racism in our food system is an important step in creating a system that is rooted in equity. What could a system that is rooted in equity look like? What are other instances of racism in our food system, how did they originate, and what are their impacts?

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 *Kohlrabi*

Kohlrabi is a hardy, annual vegetable that is primarily consumed in some European countries, although it has also become a staple vegetable in northern India. It is actually a cultivar of cabbage and was specifically bred as a hardier version of cruciferous vegetables, which often can't grow in as harsh of conditions. The small or large bulbous vegetable is encased in two harder shells of leaves, which typically do not soften when cooked. You can use the kohlrabi root as well as the leaves in your diet. They both have significant amounts of nutrients and minerals like copper, potassium, manganese, iron, and calcium, as well as vitamins, such as vitamin C, B-complex vitamins, vitamin A, and vitamin K. Kohlrabi tastes somewhat like a broccoli stem, although somewhat more palatable, and is often softer, even taking on the consistency of an apple at times. While the roots/stems are often used in salads in a similar way as carrots or broccoli. The whole stem can be hollowed and stuffed with meats, grain, and veggies and then baked, or you can make a simple roast with parmesan to enjoy these hardy roots.



What's in the Box?

Organic Kohlrabi, Lake Divide Farm, *Stockbridge*

Organic Brussels Sprouts, Lake Divide Farm, *Stockbridge*

Strawberries, Peckham Farms, *Lansing*

Organic Red Potatoes, Monroe Family Organics, *Alma*

Organic Spinach, Monroe Family Organics, *Alma*

Organic Red Onions, Monroe Family Organics, *Alma*

Pea Shoots, Blue Mitten Hydroponic Farms, *Okemos*

Ginger, Hunter Park GardenHouse, *Lansing's Eastside*

Add-ons

Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, *Holt*

Coffee, Bi-Weekly, Monthly, and Decaf

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

Kombucha, Apple Blossom Kombucha Co., *Lansing*

Honey, Beebehavior Ranch, *Ovid*

Meat Variety (Weekly), Heffron Farms, *Belding*

Chicken Add-on (Bi-Weekly), Heffron Farms, *Belding*

Beef Add-on (Bi-Weekly), Starlight Farm, *Lake Odessa*

Pork Add-on (Bi-Weekly), Heffron Farms, *Belding*

Recipes and Tips!

Pea Tendril and Pistachio Pesto

- heaping ½ cup pistachios, chopped & toasted
- Full share of Veggie Box pea tendrils
- zest & juice of 1 small lemon
- 1 last week's Veggie Box garlic clove
- salt & pepper
- olive oil (a few tablespoons to ¼ cup)
- optional: handful of fresh basil or mint
- optional: grated parmesan cheese

In a food processor, pulse together everything except for the olive oil. Drizzle the oil in slowly while the blade is running. Add as much or little olive oil as you want. Less oil will make a chunkier pesto, more olive oil will make it more smooth. Taste and adjust seasonings. Enjoy on pasta, on top of an omelet or spread on toast--however you usually enjoy pesto!

Adapted from loveandlemons.com

Roasted Kohlrabi

- Veggie Box kohlrabi bulb, peeled
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 last week's Veggie Box garlic clove, minced
- salt and pepper to taste
- ⅓ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F. Cut kohlrabi into 1/4-inch thick slices, then cut each of the slices in half. Combine olive oil, garlic, salt, and pepper in a large bowl. Toss kohlrabi slices in the olive oil mixture to coat. Spread kohlrabi in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake in the preheated oven until browned, 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally in order to brown evenly. Remove from oven and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Return to the oven to allow the Parmesan cheese to brown, about 5 minutes. Serve immediately.

Modified from Allrecipes

Maple Roasted Brussels Sprouts Stalk

- 1 stalk Veggie Box Brussels sprouts
- 3 tablespoons cooking oil
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- Kosher salt
- freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 400°F (use convection setting if your oven has it). Rinse and dry Brussels sprouts stalk and place on a large rimmed baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Combine oil, maple syrup and balsamic vinegar in a small sauce pot over medium-low heat. Cook until heated through, whisking constantly, about 2-3 minutes. Pour or spoon the mixture evenly over the Brussels sprouts stalk, turning the stalk as you pour to coat each side. Season the stalk generously with Kosher salt and pepper. Roast for about 30 minutes, turning the stalk on the baking sheet every 10 minutes. Brussels sprouts should be a dark golden brown when finished and knife tender. Remove from the oven, slice each Brussels sprout off the stalk with a sharp knife to serve.



Strawberry Spinach Salad

- Full share Veggie Box spinach
- Veggie Box strawberries, hulled and sliced
- 3 tablespoons of olive oil
- 2 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup of water
- 1 teaspoon of Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon of sugar
- 1 avocado, diced
- ¼ cup nuts or seeds of your choice

In a medium bowl, add the sliced strawberries and sugar. Gently toss to evenly coat them with the sugar and set aside for 5 minutes.

In a large salad bowl, combine the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, water, Dijon mustard, salt, and pepper. Whisk until creamy. Taste and adjust seasoning levels. Set aside.

Toast the nuts or seeds on a pan over medium heat. Be careful because they can burn quickly. As soon as they begin to very slightly char, turn off the heat and remove the nuts or seeds from the pan. Set aside.

Whisk the dressing one more time and add the spinach. Stir gently until evenly coated with the dressing.

Add half of the strawberries and pecans and mix well. Top with the rest of the strawberries and nuts or seeds and serve.

Modified from Plantbased on a Budget

Tip: Kohlrabi Storage

Store your Kohlrabi in the fridge to maximize its lifespan. Alternatively, you could blanch and then freeze kohlrabi. If you want to further its shelf life, you can try kohlrabi pickled!

