

# Veggie Box Newsletter

Fall 2024 · Week 5 · Tuesday, October 15th

Did you know that October is Michigan's Apple Month? Apples are synonymous with Fall here in the Midwest, particularly in Michigan where over 14.9 million apple trees in commercial production cover 34,500 acres on 775 family-run farms! Apples are the largest and most valuable fruit crop in Michigan, which is also known as the variety state due to apple farmers growing more than 16 varieties of apples in a diverse array of flavors. It is estimated that Michigan apple growers will harvest an estimated 1.239 billion pounds of apples in 2022, making Michigan the second-largest apple producing state in the nation.

Apples were brought to North America by colonists in the 17th century and the first apple orchard on the continent was planted by Reverend William Blaxton in 1625. Apple varieties were brought as seeds from Europe and spread along Native American trade routes in addition to being cultivated on colonists' farms.

You can celebrate Apple month in a number of ways (if you haven't already) such as by going to a U-pick farm (Michigan has over 200, in!), visiting one of Michigan's many cider mills, or enjoying apple treats like apple butter, apple pie, and more.

Over the last 10 years, apple consumption in the United States has seen a 10% decrease. Support apple producers this Apple Month by enjoying the Cameo apples in this week's box, from Hillcrest Farms in Eaton Rapids! This variety is great for eating as is, chopping into salads, or baking!

## Producer Spotlight *Tomac Pumpkin Patch*

Tomac Pumpkin Farm is a 4-generation family run operation located in Chesaning, Michigan. They started as a 4-H and FFA project selling a few pumpkins, but have grown to primarily raise corn, soybeans, and wheat over the last 30 years. They also now offer almost 100 different pumpkins, gourds and squashes as well as other traditional fall decorations like corn stalks, straw, and flint corn.

## Crop Profile *Hakurei Turnips*

Today's Hakurei turnip share includes a mix of pink and white bulbs. The pink are a little spicier, and the white are a bit sweeter. Both are great raw! Enjoy the greens, too--this bunch is a one-stop shop salad! Like all turnips, the Hakurei, or Tokyo, turnip is a member of the Brassica family. This Japanese variety is sometimes referred to as a salad turnip, due to its crisp, delicious raw flavor. Unlike other turnip varieties, hakurei taste great both raw and cooked. They have an even-textured density and the flavor pairs well with a variety of different food items. Eat them whole, chopped/grated in salads, make a quick pickle, or cook to enhance their natural sweetness. For long-term storage, cut off the greens and store in the crisper drawer with a slightly damp cloth -- they can last months if stored correctly.



## What's in the Box?

**Garlic**, Green Eagle Farm, *Onondaga*

**Salad Mix**, Swallowtail Farm, *Mason OR Magnolia Avenue Farms, Lansing's Eastside*

**Organic Hakurei Turnips**, MSU Student Organic Farm, *Holt*

**Organic Purple Sweet Potatoes**, Monroe Family Organics, *Alma*

**Acorn Squash**, Tomac Pumpkin Patch, *Chesaning*

**Cameo Apples**, Hillcrest Farms, *Eaton Rapids*

**Paw Paws**, Dragonfly Downs Farm, *Grand Ledge*

**Sweet Peppers**, Swallowtail Farm, *Mason*

## Add-ons

**Bread**, Stone Circle Bakehouse, *Holt*

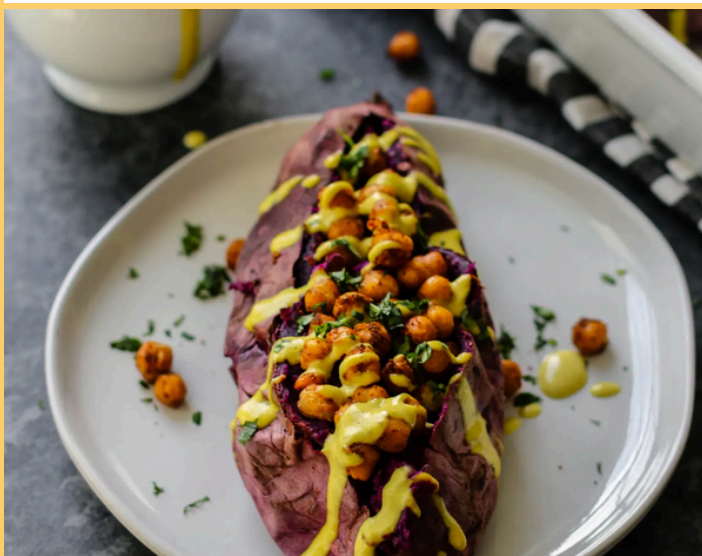
**Meat Variety, Organic Ground Beef**, Starlight Farms, *Lake Odessa*

**Eggs**, Grazing Fields Cooperative, *Charlotte*

**Honey**, Beebehavior Ranch, *Ovid*

**Cheesecake**, Mr. Leslie's Cheesecakes, *Lansing's Eastside*

# Recipes and Tips!



## Stuffed Purple Sweet Potatoes with Turmeric Tahini

- Full share of Veggie Box purple sweet potatoes, scrubbed
- 1 15-oz. can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 tsp Tandoori Masala seasoning
- ~1 tsp cooking oil
- 1/4 cup tahini
- 3-4 Tablespoons water + more as needed to thin
- 2 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup or honey
- 1/4 tsp Himalayan sea salt
- Black pepper, to taste

Preheat oven to 350°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place scrubbed purple sweet potatoes in aluminum foil and bake them for ~2 hours, until flesh is fork tender.

Prepare the dressing by blending tahini, water, lemon juice, turmeric, maple syrup (or honey), Himalayan sea salt, and black pepper. Add more water as needed to reach desired consistency. Refrigerate until ready for use.

When purple sweet potatoes are done, increase the oven temperature to 400°F. Prepare the chickpeas by tossing them in oil and Tandoori Masala seasoning. Add the chickpeas to a parchment covered baking sheet and bake them for 20-25 minutes, shaking 2-3 times to ensure even baking.

To serve, split your purple sweet potatoes down the center and fluff the insides with a fork. Divide the spiced chickpeas between the potatoes and top with turmeric tahini dressing, and fresh parsley if desired.

Ideas for substitutions:

- Use Garam Masala or your favorite curry powder in place of Tandoori Masala if needed.
- Use black beans in place of chickpeas, but skip the step where you toast them. Warm on stove and season

Adapted from [floraandvino.com](http://floraandvino.com).

## Honey Glazed Hakurei Turnip Salad

Salad:

- 1 bag Veggie Box salad mix, washed
- 1 bunch of Veggie Box Hakurei turnip greens, washed and chopped
- 2 Cameo apples, cut into matchsticks

Honey Glazed Turnips:

- 1 tablespoon butter or oil
- Full share (1 lb) Veggie Box Hakurei turnip bulbs, diced
- 1/2 tablespoon honey
- 2/3 cup water
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Pepper to taste

Place the diced turnips in a heavy bottom skillet and add enough water (about two-thirds of a cup) to reach halfway up turnips. Add the butter/oil, honey and salt. Cover the pan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes. Boil turnips, uncovered, until tender and the liquid has evaporated, about 8 minutes.

Continue to cook the turnips over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, about 5 minutes longer. Set aside.

Clean and dry your greens. Mix your thinly cut apples, salad mix and turnips greens in a large bowl. Once slightly cool, mix your honey-glazed turnips in. Top with your favorite salad dressing--maybe last week's lemon balm vinaigrette!

## Baked Eggs in Squash Rings

- 1 Veggie Box acorn squash
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- Fresh herb of your choice, for garnish

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Wash the squash and cut crosswise into approximately 3/4- to 1-inch slices. Scoop out the seeds and hollow out the middle of each slice to allow room for an egg.

Arrange the squash on the baking sheet and brush each ring with olive oil inside and out, then season with salt and pepper. Bake on the center rack of the oven for 20 minutes, until the squash has softened. Remove the baking sheet from the oven and gently crack and slide 1 egg into the center of each squash ring. Season with salt and pepper, drizzle with olive oil, and return to the oven. Bake about 8 minutes, until the egg whites are set and the yolks are firm but not fully set.

Top with Parmesan, garnish with fresh herbs, and drizzle with olive oil. Enjoy!