

Veggie Box Newsletter

Fall 2024 · Week 3 · Tuesday, October 1st

Welcome to week 3 of the Fall Veggie Box! Plants provide food, medicine, shelter, dyes, fibers, oils, resins, gums, soaps, waxes, latex, tannins, and even contribute to the air we breathe. Ethnobotany is the study of how people make use of native plants; the study of a region's plants and their practical uses through the traditional knowledge of a local culture and people. Current use of the term implies the study of Indigenous or traditional knowledge of plants. It involves the Indigenous knowledge of plant classification, cultivation, and use as food, medicine and shelter. However, many Indigenous peoples believe that this study can be exploitative in numerous ways. Perhaps it is worth mentioning that Richard Evans Schultes, 'the father of ethnobotany' was a white American. Though he was a conservationist and worked closely with Indigenous peoples, the person who tells a story or disseminates information, matters. The voices of Indigenous people and the interests and perspectives of Indigenous communities should lead discussions. The economic focus of biological prospecting "discoveries," has highlighted important issues concerning Indigenous rights, cultural knowledge, and traditional resources. A more "precautionary" approach to ethnobotanical inquiry would assist Indigenous communities in protecting cultural heritage. The issues raised by publishing Indigenous plant knowledge are intensified by the significant uncertainties surrounding subsequent impacts on Indigenous communities whose value systems, priorities, expectations, and time frames may differ from those of the academic community. How do we ensure Indigenous voices are prioritized? What does this have to do with our food system and Veggie Box? Thank you for supporting local food!

Producer Spotlight *Swallowtail Farm*

Anne, also known as 'Farmer Anne' is a plant geek who has the pleasure of managing Swallowtail Farm along with help from her family and an awesome employee or two. It brings her joy to know that she's growing veggies, fruit and flowers in a sustainable way for folks in her community to enjoy. She wasn't always a plant geek. When she was in college she took a practical botany class because it sounded like a great way to 'blow off' her science requirements. Little did she know then, she was beginning a lifelong journey of learning and awe with all things green.

Crop Profile *Strawberries*

Strawberries are one of the first fruits to emerge in the spring so it may seem strange to be getting strawberries in your box this first week of October. This is related to the variety of strawberry- while some varieties are June bearing and produce once a year, ever-bearing and day-neutral varieties grow two or more batches throughout the year. Strawberries are a perennial member of the rose family that are cultivated worldwide. Despite their name, strawberries are not actually berries—unlike berries that have seeds on the inside, strawberries are considered an accessory fruit. While the popular garden strawberry started being cultivated in 18th century Europe, wild strawberries have been enjoyed since Ancient Roman times. Unwashed strawberries can be refrigerated for 3-5 days or can be frozen for up to two months to save for making smoothies, baked goods, and more with.



What's in the Box?

Organic Garlic, Michigan State University Student Organic Farm, Holt

Strawberries, Peckham Farms, Lansing

Organic Cabbage, Lake Divide Farm, Stockbridge

Radishes (Mixed Variety), Swallowtail Farm, Green Wagon Farm, MSU SOF

Sweet Peppers (Mixed Variety), Swallowtail Farm, MSU SOF

Organic Carrots, MSU SOF, Holt

Organic Arugula, Monroe Family Organics, Alma

Organic Tomatoes, Monroe Family Organics, Alma

Add-ons

Bread, Stone Circle Bakehouse, Holt

Meat Variety, Chicken, Heffron Farms, Belding

Eggs, Grazing Fields Cooperative, Charlotte