

THE PRODUCE BOX

Jul 6 & 7, 2011

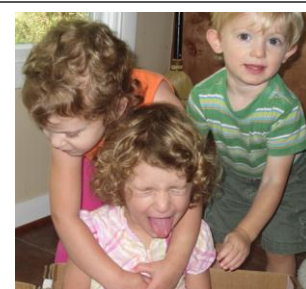
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Volume 4: Issue 13

BOX A*	BOX B*	BOX C*	BOX O*	BOX F*	SPECIALTY ITEMS / EXTRA SHARES
WATERMELON!!	PEACHES & PEAS!	LOTS OF BERRIES!	<i>all pesticide free or organic</i>	Peaches (1 quart)	<u>Extra Produce Available</u>
Blueberries	Peaches: 1 quart	Blueberries	German Johnson Tomatoes	Blueberries (1 pint)	Corn (6 ears): 3
Corn (six ears)	2 sprite melons	Blackberries (2 half pints)	Cantaloupe	Blackberries (1/2 pint)	1 pint blueberries : \$3.00
Cucumbers (3)	Pink Eyed Field Peas	Cantaloupe	Slicing cucumbers (2)	Sprite Melon (2)	1 pint blackberries: \$5.00 (NOT half-pint)
Roma Tomatoes (5-7)	Field Tomatoes	Cherry Tomatoes	Kale	Personal Watermelon	Blackberry Stock-up box
Personal Watermelon	Green peppers (3)	Zucchini	New Potatoes (1 quart)		12 half-pints for \$24.00 (great price!!)
Sweet Pepper Mix	Savoy Cabbage	Sweet Banana Peppers	Surprise Item		<u>Specialty Items</u>
Red Potatoes (2 quarts)		Pickler cucumbers			Bottle of Local Blackberry Cider: (25 oz) \$5.25
		Eggplant			Great Harvest Cinnamon chip bread: \$7.50
					Oberry Center Honey Glazed Peanuts: \$2.00
					Oberry Center cinnamon sweet pecans: \$6.50

*Box contents listed as Most Persishable to Least Perishable

Congratulations to **SONYA R,**
One of our Winners of the
What I Did with My PRODUCE BOX Contest!
Sonya wins FOUR FREE PRODUCE BOXES!!



"It's okay sweetie, the produce is LOCAL!"

Sonya's story: "When **THE PRODUCE BOX** was starting up this year, we almost decided not to do it. Last year, there was easily an 8-week stretch in which we composted a little something out of each **BOX**. So when Courtney says, "you know who you are," I raise my hand and say, "Yep, I was."

You know why? I am a lazy cook. To be fair, I'm a busy mom: I have two three-year-old girls who love to clean the overflow drain in the bathroom sink with their toothbrushes, and I have a 20-month-old who learned from his 7-year-old cousins last week how to climb the *outside* of the staircase. To make matters worse, we have chosen some of our **BOXes** by default because we forgot to log on to order. This season, I got the totally intimidating, *gargantuan* Napa cabbage and equally enormous Savoy cabbage that way. We are a vegetarian family of five, so we appreciate food with a high funk factor (as my husband calls it) – lentil loaves, bean burgers, and plenty of ancient grains – but still, some things are just outside of our comfort zone. Sometimes, the kids (and my husband) would rather have something frozen and breaded, than something fresh and new, that was elaborately prepared. And to be fair, I'd much rather be having fun chasing the kids around the house than using my time figuring out how make something palatable out of something that doesn't particularly excite me, either.

Earlier this season, I couldn't bring myself to cook collard greens that weren't directly tied to my luck for the New Year, so they ended up on the compost pile. We were going to cancel our membership because we *hate* to waste food though. I stood there thinking that it seemed a little criminal to share those previously lovely, fresh greens with the worms. I didn't have to till for, sow, tend, or harvest them – I didn't even have to schlep the kids to the Farmers' Market to get them; all I had to do was cook them, and I hadn't even managed that. It was the final embarrassing straw for me, and so I've taken ownership of coming up with strategies for using everything we order. I am proud to say that I have used *everything* from my past **five BOXes**, including the massive cabbages.

Some of the box contents we receive come and go easily. Some... present unique challenges for me. But, although I'm a little lazy, I'm a mom who wants to provide fresh, varied, and nutritious food for my family, so in this house – finally! – all of the **BOX** contents get used."

*Find Sonya's recipes for **Israeli Couscous Salad** and **Boysenberry (or Blackberry) & Peach Buckle** in our recipe insert. Her other fabulous recipes can be found on our Facebook page.*

Our next two weeks' newsletters will feature the stories and recipe of winners Melissa B and Catherine Moga Bryant, so stay tuned!!

Member benefit: Look for archived newsletters at: **WWW. THEPRODUCEBOX.COM**

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THE PRODUCE BOX



StepUP Ministry is a community program that serves and gives care to people who need help finding jobs. Often times, this ends up being people previously incarcerated or struggling with substance abuse. StepUP assumes these people are talented and able. So they join with their participants to help them: overcome their past; see themselves in a positive light in the present; and work to achieve hopeful goals. In short, StepUP believes the very best about our participants and works hard to help them achieve self-sufficiency.

The entry point is a week-long jobs class that occurs every two weeks. At this class, participants learn interpersonal skills, how to handle themselves in an interview and how to carry themselves in a professional, courteous manner. In 2010, StepUP placed 225 participants in jobs. They have weekly jobs meetings to build job connections and find fresh leads for employment.

Regardless of a person's past or present situation, StepUP works tirelessly to help them believe the very best about themselves and be moving towards positive goals and a great future. StepUP has connections to over 35 area congregations and job placements within many area corporations and small businesses.

In March of 2011, **THE PRODUCE BOX** hired three StepUP homeless Veterans and in doing so, helped each of them on the road to recovery and stability.

As a Business Owner, I know that once placed, StepUP offers assistance for the participant as he or she learns how to best serve the program.

As a Member of our Box Program, you know that every time you buy a **PRODUCE BOX**, you are helping the life of a StepUP participant, our local farmers and our local economy.

Interested in helping StepUP? Contact Kathleen Hofstadter, at khofstadter@step-up.us

We want to reward your kids for EATING THEIR VEGGIES!!

We've arranged for all PRODUCE BOX kid-members and their families to visit MARBLES KIDS MUSEUM for FREE one day in August (If you feel they have earned it). We will be sending out gift certificates to families interested in participating beforehand, so you can tell them the good news. This will be a fun way to show your kids how proud you are and continue to encourage them to try new things. More info coming soon!!

THE PRODUCE BOX

SPECIALTY ITEMS

This Week

Great Harvest Bread's Cinnamon Chip
O'Berry Center's

The Old Log Cabin Mercantile

Honey Glazed Peanuts 4 oz or
Cinnamon Sweet Pecans 10 oz

Next Week

The Bread Shop's
Texas Three-Seed Bread



Berry Towne Crafts
HANDMADE
from
NORTH CAROLINA



THE PRODUCE BOX MARKET STAND

Need a few extra fruits or
veggies?

Supplement your
PRODUCE BOX
with

Farm-Fresh Produce
from our
MARKET STAND

Open Every Thursday, 4-6 pm

Located at **Eclectic Furniture
Garden**

1932 Wake Forest Road
(Across the street from
Snoopy's Hotdogs, on Old Wake
Forest Road)



Great Harvest Cinnamon Chip Bread

is a crowd pleaser.
Kids love the sweet
goodness and adults
approve of the pure and
simple ingredients. Made with
freshly milled whole flour,
cinnamon chips, water, honey,
yeast, cinnamon and salt –
Cinnamon Chip Bread
makes a great anytime snack –
and the best
French toast you will ever taste!

WORKING WITH MEDIUM AND SMALL FARMS.....One of the nice things about running this program is the chance to meet such a large number of farmers that are SO proud of what they are growing. As many of you know, this includes a good number of medium sized farmers like James Sharpe, who specializes in melons, lettuces and strawberries, as well as William Wise and Robbie Cox, who also have booths at the State Farmer's Market.

This year, we added a LOT of smaller growers to the mix, people who are excited about growing a little bit of everything or a good bit of one thing. What this means for Kevin, our Crop Coordinator, is that his job is somewhat more challenging, though. Especially when it comes to crating the menu each week with me.

When working with growers of different sizes, we have to take several things into consideration. Do we work with a small grower and give him somewhat of a big order? If we do, it means that he may need two days to pick enough, or even three, versus a larger grower who can pick everything in one day. Also, there's sometimes an education curve with smaller growers in terms of the quality we need. We bought about 100 pints of strawberries earlier this season from a woman who called us, and when she brought them to us, they just weren't up to par. But....since we'd said we would buy them, we did and just used them as a gift for the HUB staff. So that worked out fine, but it is an example of what we have to think about, when working with new farmers.

With pricing, a smaller grower's cost is higher than a larger, because they just don't have the equipment to help seed or pick the fields like a medium grower does. So we may pay 30%-50% more for the same item from two different growers. What's great is that WE ARE FINE WITH THAT. We can leverage the higher price from a smaller grower with a lower price from a larger grower. This week, we did that with the blueberries and blackberries. We had two small growers that needed an outlet for their fruit, and we could provide it. Even though they were quite a bit higher in price, we could afford to do it because we had saved with some other growers.

Anyway, I wanted to share a little bit about the "behind the scenes thinking". Let me know your thoughts and comments! *Courtney*

Did you know?

A worm in the corn means "Little to NO" pesticides and a healthier choice for your family. If a worm has visited a bit of your corn, just cut off or cut out that portion and cook as usual. Of course, if more than 1/3 is unusable, we are happy to replace it

Did you get a cantaloupe in your **BOX**? My mom's favorite summer fruit dessert- now my family's too- is a wedge of ripe cantaloupe, with a scoop of vanilla ice cream. Simple and delicious!
~ Laurie Rosenfeld, Editor

STORAGE & USAGE *Remember, all TPB produce is very ripe. If you see a * eat this first!*

***Peaches**- Store peaches on the counter at room temperature until they are the ripeness you prefer. When ripe, peaches should be stored in the crisper bin of your refrigerator and will keep for up to five days. **Easy freezing method:** When freezing, peaches should be ripe and soft but not mushy. Wash peaches thoroughly in cold water (ice water is preferable for keeping the fruit firm). Peel and slice a small amount at a time, mixing about 1 teaspoon ascorbic acid (available at grocery and drug stores - is not harmful and will not affect the taste of the fruit) with 1 cup sugar, then sprinkle over sliced peaches. Pack in air tight containers or jars (suitable for freezing), and fill to 3/4 full, then freeze.

***Sweet Corn** - Eat corn as soon as possible after harvest for maximum sweetness. If sweet corn cannot be eaten right away, leave in husks, remove long shanks and store uncovered in the refrigerator. **See last week for how to freeze!**

Sweet Pepper- Store peppers for short-term use by refrigerating them in the produce drawer of your refrigerator. With proper refrigeration, a healthy bell pepper should last from three to five days in the refrigerator.

***Cantaloupe or Sprite Melon**- Ripe melons should be stored in the refrigerator. If a melon has no fragrance and is still quite firm, leave on the kitchen counter for a day or two to ripen. Once the melon has been sliced or cut into chunks, it should be kept in a sealable container in the refrigerator to keep it from drying out.

Watermelon- Keep whole watermelons at room temperature for up to 2 weeks. Once cut, wrap tightly and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

***Blueberries & Blackberries**- Keep berries refrigerated, unwashed, in a rigid container covered with clear wrap. Water on fresh berries hastens deterioration, so do not wash before refrigerating. Berries are highly perishable so do try to use them as soon as possible.

***Summer Squash**- To store summer squash, place unwashed in plastic bags in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Wash the squash just before preparation. As with most vegetables, water droplets promote decay during storage. The storage life of summer squash is brief, so use within two to three days.

***Field & Cherry Tomatoes**- Unless you're planning to store your tomatoes for over a week, a windowsill, counter-top or bowl works fine. If you know you won't use them in the next few days, then lower temperatures (a cool entryway, the refrigerator) will help preserve the fruit. Contrary to our common practice in the US, storing in a refrigerator is not otherwise recommended, as the cooler temperatures can reduce flavor and cause mushiness. Your fresh-picked tomatoes will last longer on the kitchen counter than store-bought ones, which are probably a few days old when you get them.

Eggplant- Uncut eggplants will stay fresh for about a week in the refrigerator. Be sure to place them carefully without cutting or scuffing the skin. The skin is an important part of the plant that keeps them fresh for a longer period of time either in or out of the refrigerator. Storing eggplant in the vegetable drawer keeps it away from the freezer compartment so that it stays cool without freezing. Use the eggplant as soon as possible and within 5 days of refrigeration to avoid shriveling and aging.

Field & Pickling Cucumbers- Store in crisper or on bottom shelf of fridge.