


THE PRODUCE BOX

Put Your Money Where Your Food Is: *Imagine a Million People Investing in Local Food Systems – It Starts with YOU*

Congratulations, The Produce Box Members! YOU are already doing YOUR part!

May 25 & 26, 2011		Find us on facebook! 		Volume 4: Issue 7	
BOX A	BOX B	BOX C	BOX O	BOX F	EXTRAS
<i>Grilling and Snacking</i>	<i>Traditional Spring</i>	<i>Adventurous</i>	<i>Organic/Pesticide Free</i>	(Add-on only)	Extra Produce Available
TWO pints of Blueberries	1 pint blueberries	1 pint blueberries	Snow Peas or Sugar Snaps	\$14.00	Green Leaf Lettuce \$3.50 each
Romaine Lettuce	Pointed Head Cabbage	Spring Onions	TWO Pints blueberries	FOUR PINTS	Kale \$3.50
Sweet Red or White onions	1 bunch sweet Texas onions	Radishes	4-5 tomatoes	of blueberries	1 Pint Blueberries \$4.00
Green Squash	Sweet Potatoes	3-4 Tomatoes	Bibb or Green leaf lettuce		Specialty Items
Garlic Scapes (like scallions)	3-4 Tomatoes	Sweet Potatoes	Cucumbers		Honey Whole Wheat Bread: \$5.75
Roasted NC Peanuts	Yellow Squash	New Red Beets			Cherry Chocolate Chunk Granola: \$8.00
Local Herb Seasonings (Yah's)	Cucumber	Cucumbers			Almond Delight Granola: \$8.00
					Sweet/Spicy Pecans: \$4.00

Have you ever been LETTERBOXING???

This weekend, we took our kids, small spiral bound notebooks and personal stamps in hand (my daughter has a horse one) and went letterboxing. This is an adventure we take every few weeks or so and is a great way to spend some time together as a family, get outside and do a bit of treasure-hunting. They are 7 and 9 now, but we started when they were 3 and 5...much shorter trips then, of course. **What is letterboxing?** It's kind of a "twist" on geo-caching, if you've heard of that, but much easier and more fun for kids. We use the site: www.atlasquest.com.

So..... letterboxes are containers with generally one stamp and a notepad hidden all over the counties of North Carolina and really, all over the US. There are some on the grounds of the museum of art, at Shelly Lake, at Mordecai Park and even in a coffee shop in downtown Raleigh. The idea is to take the clues for the "hunt" from the website, and find the container. Be sure to bring along a stamp of your own, so you can "leave your mark" when you find the container, and a notebook on your own, so you can use THE STAMP YOU FIND to record in your notebook. We use a teeny tiny spiral bound notebook I got from CVS I think for \$1.00. Anyway, it's a neat record of their finds and fun to look through each year and remember what we've done. Also a great way to practice writing as we record in our notebook "where" we found the box. Under a rock, behind a tree, under a bridge, etc. It's a great time and I'd encourage you to try it..... and let me know what happens! Just be sure to take bug spray. ☺

Courtney Tellefsen,

A QUESTION FROM A MEMBER

Hi Courtney,

I received my first delivery yesterday and am overall very pleased with the produce. I was disappointed to receive only four tomatoes (which look awesome), and unfortunately two of the tomatoes were split open. I planned to use them on Saturday but now must use sooner. The lettuce was very brown and slimy in places. I'm sure once I clean off the outer leaves I'll have great lettuce. But the produce box looked a bit disgusting from the slimy pieces. I cleaned it the best I could and will return on Wednesday. I am looking forward to this summer with all this great produce! (Jean, TPB member)

Hey Jean....Yes, it's always a challenge putting in the right amount of ripe/less ripe tomatoes. Julie sends us the less ripe ones, which are good to "hold" and let ripen on their own, and Mr. Harrington sends us the much riper ones, that need to be eating immediately. We try to put a good balance in, but sometimes one will look fine, and turns out to be a bit riper than we thought. We'll get better at it, and of course, you'll have more tomatoes once the field ones come in. They are just SO expensive right now (greenhouse ones, I mean). You wouldn't believe how much a case of those are! At least double the price of regular field, and triple the price of the ones we get in the middle of the season. AS I'm sure you know, we are at the tail—end of lettuce season, and the plants are a bit older and bigger. This means they are susceptible to more injury and disease. One cut or tear and they start degrading. This will be the case with each crop, as we get to the end of the crop's production "life". Anyway.....thanks for being willing to accept a less perfect product...it REALLY helps the farms "move" more of their veggies and allows us to further partner with them to create a more sustainable and workable food system. (Courtney Tellefsen, Founder, The Produce Box)

OUR NEWEST FARM PARTNERS:

We're excited to introduce you to Tom Kumpf of Double T Farm in Zebulon, NC! Tom and I met about three years ago and have had lots of fun and sometimes animated conversations about the state of agriculture in NC, what families want and how to get it to them. Tom is a former high school teacher with TWIN toddler boys that are the most talkative children I've ever met. They come by it honestly I have to say. ☺ Tom farms a good amount of land each season and grows the extra-large lettuces you saw last week in the boxes and as an add-on along with LOTS of other delicious veggies. You can also find him most Saturdays at the farmers market at NORTH HILLS. Just look for the straw hat. Although not certified to be organic, he farms using those principles and is proud of the way he's managing his land. He's planning his fall crops now, and we look forward to spinach, lettuces and other delicious greens in the fall once the weather cools down again. Welcome Tom!

Alan Justice is another of my favorite farmers. Kevin, our Crop Coordinator, and I took a trip to see him during the winter and even then, his place was absolutely beautiful. He's in Person County near Roxboro and sent us the baby herbs that will grow and produce for all of us this entire season...just don't forget to water them! He has the kohlrabi we were all intrigued by, as well as those YUMMY sugar snap peas that he will be planting MORE OF NEXT SEASON, I promise!. He and his son have some really neat melons for us this summer, asian melons I believe that are very sweet and juicy. As long as the deer don't get them! Welcome Alan!



THE PRODUCE BOX MARKET STAND

Need a few extra fruits or veggies at a FANTASTIC PRICE????

Supplement your
PRODUCE BOX
with
farm fresh produce
from our
MARKET STAND

Open Every Thursday, 4-6 pm
at our HUB
located at
1053 E. Whitaker Mill Road, Raleigh
(on the corner of Atlantic Ave
and E Whitaker
Mill Road)

Check out our facebook page
for details!

How do I use those???

Garlic Scapes

Heads, or bulbs, of garlic are an essential part of any kitchen, but did you know that there's much more to garlic than its cloves? Garlic scapes- also known as *garlic tops, garlic shoots, green garlic, spring baby garlic, garlic spears, early garlic greens, or garlic "flowers"*- are the curly tipped, extremely tasty green shoots that grow from "heads" of hardneck, (or topset), garlic. Garlic scapes are a versatile and nutritious culinary treasure that are valued in Korean, Chinese, Thai, Polynesian and coastal French cuisine.



THE PRODUCE BOX

SPECIALTY ITEMS AVAILABLE TO ADD TO YOUR BOX!

This Week	Next Week
Old Log Cabin Mercantile's	Stick Boy Bread Co.
Sweet & Spicy Pecans	Julia's Pantry Yellow Grits
Great Harvest Bread Company's	Chapel Hill Creamery's
Honey Whole Wheat Bread	Thunder Mountain Swiss
GroWILD Granola's	
Cherry Chocolate Chunk	
Almond Delight	

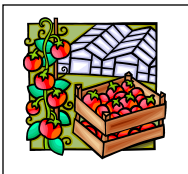
Julia's Pantry

Yellow Corn Grits: coming soon to TPB members!
(*hint-hint*)



You will literally smell the "corn" as you stir up these delicious grits. The creamy taste and texture are winning over grits fans (and not so grits fans) - left and right. And, what makes these grits even better? Our yellow grits are kosher and certified organic.

BIG HAIL STORM IN LEE COUNTY RUINS ONE OF OUR FARM-PARTNER'S GREENHOUSES!



Last weekend, John Gross' greenhouse was destroyed by a spring hail storm. He sent me a picture of one of the pieces and I'd say it was golf-ball sized at least. (Thank goodness he had insurance) And I told him how sorry I was that it had happened but he was just about as matter-of-fact as you could be. "Well, thank goodness we had most of our stuff out of there, and only lost a few things", he said. I'm learning a lot from these guys, and one of the biggest is to just take things in stride and move on. When you're at the mercy of Mother Nature, that's the only thing you CAN do. Thanks, John, for all of your hard work and delicious asparagus. We're looking forward to next spring already!

*Psst! If you're reading this, you can enter our drawing for a FREE Produce Box!
Email: laurie@theproducebox.com
Subject: contest
Two lucky winners will receive a FREE Box each!!
Winners announced next week.



***A LARGE cooler** will best support the entire contents of your Produce Box. Especially this week in **NINETY degree temperatures!!** Look for *coolers* and *ice packs* to go on sale in time for Memorial Day. What a great way to protect *your investment* in Local Produce!

"We had chicken with grilled squash, onions, fresh broccoli, salad with tomatoes and bread. It was a fresh yummy dinner thanks to The Produce Box. Thanks. We love our Boxes."

Dru Hale, Apex Member

"I LOVE the new format of the newsletter. I have tried 3 different recipes in two weeks!! It's been great - much improved over last year. I also love the storage and usage tips on the back. Thanks! Everything was wonderful and so tasty!"

Ricci McKenna, Raleigh Member

Playing with Produce

Help Your Lil' Sweet Potatoes Grow & Reuse!

Looking for something fun to do with the kids this summer? This is a great way to reuse some products that most of us have in our fridge and to start your little sweet potato off with the right train of thought. Clean out any small yogurt cups or biodegradable egg cartons. Put a small amount of dirt into the cups (whether it be the yogurt or egg carton). Have your child add their favorite seeds- flowers, herbs, watermelon... Lots of great options! Add water and some sun and watch them grow. Once the seedlings appear help your child transplant them to a small gardening space for the seedlings to really thrive! If you have planted the seeds in the biodegradable egg cartons you just need to soak them in water and clip the bottoms off before planting. The cartons will decompose and your plant will grow! A fun activity with your kids and great approach in helping them to understand the benefits of eating local!

Michelle Cardillo, Area Manager

THE PRODUCE BOX

STORAGE & USAGE Visit www.theproducebox.com for more info!

**Eat first!*

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

Red Beets- wrap in plastic and store for several days in the refrigerator. **Beet roots:** may be washed but should be allowed to dry before being stored. Cut off the tops two inches above the root, and refrigerate beets in plastic bags. They will keep for one to two weeks.

Early 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.

***Snow or Sugar Snap Peas-** There are two common varieties of peas: green garden peas that need shelling and edible-pod peas that are eaten whole. Green garden peas are legumes just like dried peas, except they are eaten at the immature stage. Snow peas, sugar snap peas Chinese pea pods and many others fall into edible-pod category. They are low fiber pods with small wrinkled peas inside. The entire pod is eaten, cooked or raw. Fresh peas keep for 2 to 3 days in the refrigerator. The sugar in them quickly begins to turn to starch even while under refrigeration.. Store unwashed peas in perforated plastic bags for a few days. The sooner they are eaten the better.

Early Texas or Spring Onions- Store **spring onions** in the refrigerator, loosely covered with a plastic bag. Since spring onions are fresh, they have high moisture content. Use them within a week — but that should be easy. **Mature onions-** A great method that takes up almost no space is the "nylon hose" storage system. Take the leg of a sheer (the sheerer the better) lady's nylon hose and drop in an onion all the way to the toe. Tie a knot about 2 inches above the onion. Drop in another onion and tie another knot, and repeat until the whole hose is used. The finished product will look a lot like a lumpy sausage. Hang the hose with onions in a cool, dark, dry location. When you want an onion, cut off the bottom section.

***Romaine, Bibb-** Wrap in paper towels and storing open plastic bag in crisper. Avoid storing lettuce with apples, pears or bananas. These fruits release ethylene gas, a natural ripening agent that will cause the lettuce to develop brown spots and decay quickly.

Cabbage- Green cabbage is sometimes called Dutch White. The outer leaves are dark green and the inner leaves are smooth and pale to medium green. If you plan to eat the cabbage raw, use within a few days. Cabbage that you plan to cook can be stored in the refrigerator for about two weeks. Or shred or chop, wash and drain well, then freeze in ziplock bags. **Cooking:** the notorious odor problem is a result of over cooking. Cabbage contains isothiocyanates that break down into smelly sulfur compounds during cooking. The reaction is even stronger in aluminum pans. The longer the cabbage is cooked the more smelly the compounds become. The solution; a brief cooking time. Cook just until tender and use stainless steel pots and pans.

***Garlic Scapes (Green Garlic) -** Treat green garlic as you would an herb: Wrap it in a damp paper towel, put it in a sealed plastic bag, and refrigerate it for up to five days. Trim green garlic as you would a leek: Remove the root end of the bulb and any tough dark-green leaves. (Reserve discarded leaves for stews and sauces; they can be tossed in whole, like a bay leaf, for flavor.)

Sweet Potatoes, Orange- Store in a paper bag in a cool, dark place. Sweet potatoes will keep for several months, getting sweeter along the way. Roast them whole or chunked; with butter, cinnamon and sugar; or with olive oil, salt and herbs; use in place of white potatoes in soups, stews or hash browns; slice thick or thin for oven chips or fries, sprinkled with sweet, savory or spicy seasonings.

Tomatoes- Leave tomatoes out at room temperature until cut or cooked, then refrigerate. Dice tomatoes, sauté in olive oil, cool and pack in sealed containers; freeze for use later in soups, stews or sauces. Or make a fabulous, fresh tomato sandwich!