



# Tantre Farm CSA Newsletter IMMUNE BOOSTER Week 152 Share – March 25, 2023

Hello Fellow Locavores,

Welcome to the Immune Booster Week 152 newsletter and menu breakdown. As always, thank you for joining hands with us on this local food mission. This week's share revolves around Italian cuisine and is called the 'Amo La Cucina Italiana', which translates to "I love Italian food!" This week we will explore some of the rich, diverse, and super tasty dishes that Italy has to offer, with some DIY ideas for the fresh produce that will pair up beautifully with the Italian-themed prepared foods. This is a voluptuous share with many underlining collaborations threaded throughout the menu. So with that, let's take a break from the daily grind, grab a warm drink or a glass of wine and let's unveil this share of plenty, step by step, of how it all came to be.

As is tradition on this local food mission, we will begin with the leafy greens in this week's menu, starting with a **Lettuce Mix** from [Sell Farms and Greenhouses](#). This hydroponically-grown lettuce goes from seed to your plate in roughly 35 days and is grown in a state-of-the-art greenhouse in Ypsilanti, MI. Locally grown thus reducing fossil fuel miles, this lettuce is light, crisp, and full of healthy nutrients. Perfect for an Italian chopped salad that could be topped with all the other produce featured in this week's share. To push your Italian salad game further, maybe try to sprinkle some cooked farro on your chopped salad or try your hand at an antipasto salad with bocconcini and green-olive tapenade or a tomato, haricots verts and potato salad for the overachievers. Mamma Mia!

Riding shotgun next to the lovely lettuce, we have hoop house-grown, **Baby Red Russian Kale** from [Garden Fort](#) in Dexter, MI. Garden Fort believes in a 'moreganic' growing approach that is based around healthy clean soil, water, seeds and sunlight and nothing else besides a gentle breeze. To harm the soil with synthetics of any type or heavy fertilizers only damages the biome of the soil anatomy which is the 'gut' of all crops. Similar to human health – poor gut equals poor health. Growing kale in hoop houses during this time of year produces the sweetest and most tender kale of the season until we get back into late fall. The gentle light and the protection of the hoop house from the frosts is the perfect combination for high quality taste and texture, whether consuming it raw or cooked. Kale is a major ingredient in my personal favorite

'Zuppa Toscana' soup and the delicious 'Italian Wedding' soup whose recipes can be found online. Combine your kale with other produce items, beans and bread for a simple Ribollita, one of Tuscany's most traditional dishes. For a quick and simple yet tasty wilted salad, mince your kale with some garlic, add olive oil, salt and a pinch of pepperoncino and sauté for a few minutes. So many great options!

Leaving the greens behind, we move on to some super tubers! A **Potato Mix** from [Tantre Farm](#) in Chelsea, MI. In your share, you will receive any combination of blue, gold or pale red skinned varieties. These field grown potatoes were collected out of the Tantre fields late last fall and stored away in their underground cellar just for a share like this. Aside from being served mashed, fried, boiled or roasted as a side dish, in Italy potatoes are also shown the limelight when made into tasty potato gnocchi, crispy potato croquettes, or mixed with ham and mozzarella for the rustic Napolitan gatto di patate. Check out some online recipes and transform these versatile potatoes into some tantalizing Italian comfort dishes. You will be amazed at what you can achieve!

Rolling right along, this could not be an Italian-themed share without some **Red or Yellow Onions** from [Wayward Seed Farm](#) in Marysville, OH. These field grown onions were rounded up from the fields in early fall, hung inside a barn to cure and then boxed up and stored in a cool dry indoor space just for a future share like this one. Onions are a staple culinary item to most Italians and can be used almost at every savory opportunity. From sweet or savory pickled onions that are canned and later thinly sliced and served on salads to pizza toppings, soups, pasta dishes, potatoes or seafood dishes. You name it, the chances are high that onions are in it. So mince, roast, fry, pickle, or BBQ these baby onions for their mildly sweet taste and their many potent, health benefits.

Keeping with the roots to knock off the Italian boots... Ha! - Pun intended. Next up, we have an organic **Celeriac Root** also from [Wayward Seed Farm](#). This highly nutritious root was field grown into late fall where it experienced several light frosts to sweeten it up. Celeriac is full of vitamin C and anti-aging properties, and protects against heart disease, cancer, and Alzheimer's. It is exceptional when peeled, cubed and added to soups, peeled and thinly shaved onto salads or peeled, thinly cut and fried or baked in the oven for a crisp and flavorful side dish the Italian way. This week, I boiled equal parts potatoes and celeriac root and made a creamy mashed potato mix and served it with roasted chicken and steamed carrots. For the adventurous, try your hand at a celeriac and potato sformato, a true Italian dish which is similar to a quiche or flan. Give it a whirl as there are numerous recipes online that look delicious and relatively easy to follow.

Rounding out the roots in this week's share and the last of the savory produce, we have organic **Orange Carrots** again from [Wayward Seed Farm](#). These sweet and juicy carrots were also field grown and harvested late last fall after a few mild frosts just to jump up the sugar content in them. Italian herb-roasted, whole carrots would be a great starting point for these sweet roots. Another Italian staple dish to use up these carrots, some of those yellow onions and that celeriac root would be to try your hand at a soffritto recipe. If you find yourself with a lot of leftover produce towards the end of next week, why not make a minestrone style soup? Ingredients are flexible, and you can tailor it to your taste.

Ending the fresh produce for this week's share on a sweet note, is a trio of organic **Fuji, Enterprise, and Gala Apples** from [Almar Orchards and Cidery](#) in Flushing, MI. These sweet and crisp apples all pack their own nutritional make up, sweet notes and color. Harvested in October of last year and stored in temperature-controlled rooms at 34 degrees Fahrenheit, these apples are as juicy and flavorful as the day they were picked. Most storage apples are stored in nitrogen which acts like carbon and actually pulls the flavor out of the apples. Not the case here! If you want to get creative with these apples, Torta di mele, aka classic Italian apple cake is a dessert that all Italians are familiar with. Alternative sweet Italian treats include apple crostata or apple torte. Test your talents and watch your family devour them!

As a side note, I am in the initial stages of working with Jim Koan, the owner and operator of this fourth-generation apple farm, on a podcast that will go public on the Farms for Tomorrow website hopefully before this fall's apple crop is picked. The podcast will cover the history of all things Almar Orchards and Cidery, from the soil anatomy to the apples on your plate as well as what it takes to be an organic apple farmer. Jim is well known at MSU in the agriculture department and has given many public dissertations on what he does as an organic apple grower. I am honored that Farms for Tomorrow asked me to lead the interview, where we will put Jim in the hot seat, and I will ask the questions we all want to know the answers to. It's extremely exciting and has already been such a rewarding experience to get this opportunity and work with one of the best farmers ever to grow in the state of Michigan. As the project wraps up and the podcast goes into digital format, I will share the link in the newsletter once it is complete.

As we switch from fresh produce to fresh baked bread, this week we have a **Rustic Italian Loaf** from [Zingerman's Bakehouse](#). This classic Italian, organic, white bread is simply composed of organic wheat flour, water, sea salt and yeast. It has a golden, crispy, thin crust and a tender crumb that packs a natural, mild sweetness from its 11+ hours of fermenting. It's the perfect dance partner for the rest of the prepared foods yet to come and perfect for wiping those salad bowls clean, so get ready to slice, swoop, and swirl this tasty bread.

For starters this week, we have soup and a salad, so let's start with the vegan **Minestrone Soup** from [Juicy Kitchen](#). This fine Italian soup is composed of Yukon potatoes, zucchini, summer squash, carrots, yellow onion, edamame, northern beans, spinach, pasta noodles, low sodium vegetable broth, tomato paste, lemon juice, oregano, thyme, parsley, red pepper flakes, bay leaves, salt, pepper and extra virgin olive oil. Wowzers, there is a lot going on in this ultra-healthy soup that was all hand chopped and slowly simmered late into the afternoon on Friday and pintoed up just for your very own share box. If you have never visited Juicy Kitchen, then now would be a great time to check out what they are all about. Their ever-rotating menu is primarily plant-based, and they offer a wide range of breakfast, brunch and lunch fan favorites, so pay them a visit and tell the staff Ryan sent you.

Switching back to the green theme and a little bit of everything in between, next up we have a splendid, **Italian Salad with House-made Balsamic Dressing and Vegan Parmesan** that is vegan and gluten-free from [Nourish Juicery and Kitchen](#). This hyper-local salad is composed of love, Goetz Farm

red curly kale, buttercrunch lettuce, red radishes, and green onions. It also has Holtz Farms beets, a solid dose of organic tri-color quinoa, olives, green onions, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, raw cashews, nutritional yeast, hemp hearts, Italian seasoning, Dijon mustard, garlic, sea salt and black pepper. A bundle of love awaits you in this salad, and Sarah, the head chef and owner, always goes the extra mile to source local ingredients from local farms, so kudos to her efforts. She is a strong believer in supporting the local food systems and serving people fresh, in-season, local food. She is located in Blissfield, MI, which is south of Ann Arbor and worth a drive just to kill the curiosity. If you do make the trip, the oatmeal cream pies and a fresh press juice will most definitely hit the spot, so pay her a visit and grab a few to-go items while you're there.

Moving onto the main course, this week we have a fresh-pressed pasta and hand-made pasta sauce to fill the bill. First up is the **Fresh-Pressed Fusilli Pasta Noodles** from [Carosello Pasta](#) in Dexter, MI. This clean and healthy pasta is composed of organic heirloom whole wheat flour, organic semolina and water. The ingredients are hand mixed and then gently machined to bind all of the ingredients evenly. Squeezed through a press that gives it its shape, and then portioned out into 1-lb compostable, card stock containers. There will be simple cooking instructions on the package, and since it is fresh it will need to be refrigerated. Mike, one of the owners, has Italian roots and spent a total of five years living and working in the culinary scene in Italy, so he knows a thing or two about pasta making. Upon returning to Michigan, he and his partner Chelsea decided to set up an Italian-style mini grocery store that is ever-evolving. They sell a variety of fresh pasta by the pound right out of a cooler deck every day, as well as local shelf-stable products and some locally grown produce from Garden Fort. In addition to that, they have hand-selected mostly organic, shelf stable products from Italy to fill in the rest of the shop, so this place definitely has a little something for everyone and is well worth a visit to collect another round of pasta and sauce and a few other yummy goods along the way.

We can't have the pasta without the sauce, so this week we solicited Dave over at [Dave Makes Pasta](#) for an **Amatriciana Pasta Sauce** to complement the fresh pressed pasta. This slow-simmered, hand-made sauce is composed of tomato, guanciale (cured pork jowl), pecorino cheese, olive oil, salt and red pepper flakes. I had the pleasure of sampling this sauce this week, and I found it to be very tasty, rich, and quite satisfying after I had a second round of it just to make sure I was catching all the flavor profiles. Wink wink! This pasta and sauce duo is the real deal from some very talented, local folks. Dave is also a head chef at Bellflower restaurant in Ypsilanti, and he offers a weekly pasta and sauce combo kit sign up. The pick-up location is at Bellflower, so if you do subscribe to one of his boxes, you might as well eat over there at Bellflower whilst picking up your pasta kit. It's worth every penny as Bellflower also supports a wide range of local farms and fisheries in the state of Michigan. Just make sure you come hungry!

Our final item for this week's share is **Michael's Granola** from [Harvest Kitchen](#). This ultra-healthy granola is composed of organic rolled oats from Ferris Organic Farm, organic sunflower seeds, organic pumpkin seeds, organic almonds, organic walnuts, organic sesame seeds, 'Mind Your Beeswax' wildflower honey and organic canola oil. This granola can be served as a hand-to-mouth snack, served as a cereal or added to baked goods. It's great to take

on hikes for a little trail snack, and if it leaves you hankering for more you can re-up your granola supply every Saturday at the Food Hub if that is your pickup location or you can go and visit Keith in the Kerrytown Farmers Market, where Harvest Kitchen has a fully stocked booth with all their cooked meals, muffins and granola for purchase.

As we ride off into the sunset on this Italian-themed menu, we hope we have left you satisfied, full and happy with your purchase of this local food share. Each week it takes hours curating these colorful shares, visiting farms, talking with chefs and exploring all the different options available to make a complete and well-rounded package. It's an amazing adventure week in and week out that leaves me giddy with excitement on who I might meet, what chefs' ideas may get thrown my way, and how I will pull down a full menu that is attractive to the public. Every menu is a gift, and I am very grateful to all the folks who work with local food for allowing me to engage them and share their stories, food and time each and every week. On behalf of Tantre Farm and all the other vendors who made this share possible we appreciate your continued support, and we look forward to seeing your smiley faces at both pick up locations this Saturday.

**RECIPES:** Here's a link to Tantre's treasure trove of recipes, where you can get some additional ideas for using this week's share: <http://tantrerecipes.blogspot.com>. Please always keep in mind many more combination of recipes can be found by typing any combination of vegetables into your preferred search engine with the word "recipe" after that, and it is amazing what concoctions can be created in your very own kitchen!

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** Follow us on Instagram [@immuneboosterbytantrefarm](#) or [@tantrefarm](#) to learn more. We are also active on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) with regular posts of photos and blurbs detailing life on the farm and what is happening in the weekly Immune Booster CSA shares.

Don't forget to keep an eye out for our next email on Sunday, March 26, regarding Tantre Farm's Immune Booster CSA Share, Week 153, for pick up on April 1.

All the best,

Ryan Poe and the Talented Tantre Farm Crew

*\*\*We look forward to hearing your weekly feedback on the shares and welcome any suggestions on how to improve. Please understand that we try to give you an accurate listing of the produce in your box each week; however, since this menu is published before we pack the boxes on Fridays, we may sometimes have to substitute some vegetables for others. Mostly we are able to update you of changes in our Friday newsletter, but sometimes our decisions are made after the newsletter is published. Please let us know whenever you think you are missing anything, and we will try to find some way to make amends. Thank you for your patience and understanding, as we try to keep things as smooth as possible. Please contact Ryan, Carrin, and Deb with questions or comments at [immuneboosterbytantre@gmail.com](mailto:immuneboosterbytantre@gmail.com).*

**Tantre Farm**

2510 Hayes Road, Chelsea  
MI 48118 United States



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