



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

[www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com](http://www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com)

October 2 - 3, 2020

## What's In The Box?

**ITALIAN GARLIC:** The more finely you chop garlic, the greater the release of the compounds in garlic that give it its kick. If you really want to maximize the garlic flavor in a recipe, chop the garlic finely.

**LEEKS:** Check out **this week's vegetable feature** to learn more about this week's allium selection! Make sure you clean leeks well before using them. There may be fine dirt in between the layers of the leeks, so cut them first, then rinse them in a colander or wash them in a sink or bowl of clean, cold water.

**VARIETY OF LARGE TOMATOES:** Your tomatoes will likely be on the green side and need to be ripened. Do so at room temperature and check them daily. If you see a spot forming use them right away. Or....use them as a green tomato! Fried Green Tomato sandwiches and green tomato chutney are two good options!

**JALAPEÑO PEPPER:** Pepper season is winding down, but there are still quite a few jalapeños still hanging on the plants. The crew will be covering them with row cover to protect from frost. We may get lucky and have a warm October. If so, we will continue picking until they are gone!

**PURPLE, WHITE OR CHEDDAR CAULIFLOWER:** The cool days and nights we've been having are perfect for fall brassica crops such as cauliflower and broccoli. Use the florets and the stem portion. Just cut away the base and outer leaves. While they are technically edible, they are not the most delectable portion of the plant.

**GERMAN BUTTERBALL POTATOES:** This variety has gold skin and gold flesh. This is a good potato to use for soups such as potato leek soup. You can also use it for roasting, pan-frying, and frying. If you want to use it for mashed potatoes, try to minimize the mashing as the potatoes may become sticky and a little paste-like.

**BROCCOLI:** This is the start of our run on fall broccoli. Hopefully we'll have more to pack in upcoming weeks! Roasting is great for root vegetables, but is also a wonderful way to prepare cruciferous selections as well. Toss your florets with olive oil, tahini, garlic and lemon juice and roast for 10 minutes.

**GREEN TOP RED RADISHES:** Use the whole radish, greens and all, in Food & Wine's recipe for **Roasted Radishes with Radish Greens**.

**ITALIAN FRYING PEPPERS:** We're picking the remainder of the sweet peppers as fast as we can before the frost! This week's boxes will contain either red or orange Italian frying peppers!

**BUTTERSCOTCH BUTTERNUT SQUASH:** We source the seed for this variety from Johnny's Seed Company and have found this cute little butternut lives up to the description in their catalog: "Our proudest butternut breeding achievement to date. Bred for sweetness, richness, and complex flavor, surpassing all others in its class. The perfect size for dinner (no leftovers)." We find this variety is best simply cut in half, baked and served with a pat of butter, salt and pepper!

**GREEN BOSTON LETTUCE:** We have been fortunate to have a cool fall which is perfect for growing lettuce! This week's green Boston head lettuce may be used in salads with a light vinaigrette or use the leaves as "wraps" for fillings.

**ORANGE CARROTS:** While carrots often go in salads, you can also use them to make a vinaigrette or dressing to go on the salad! Check out this week's **Cooking With the Box** article where you'll find a link to a recipe for **Carrot Ginger Dressing**.

## Vegetable Feature: Leeks

By Chef Andrea

We continue our journey through the seasons with yet another selection from the allium family. This week's vegetable from the allium (onion) family is leeks! In this region, leeks are grown for harvest in the fall. We plant them from seed and transplant them early in the season, just after we transplant all of our storage onions. They need more time to grow than onions, but we also need to harvest them before it gets too cold. They can take some frost, but once the temperatures start to get into the twenty's we risk damaging them. In some more mild climates growers are able to actually overwinter leeks. Our Midwestern winters are too harsh for overwintering them, so we'll just have to enjoy them when they are in their prime!

If you've never cooked with leeks, it's important to note that leeks are not "just another onion." While the flavor profiles are similar for all alliums, each one has its own distinct characteristics and qualities that set them apart. Leeks are much different than the chives and ramps we delivered early in the season or the Sierra Blanca white Spanish onions we delivered in early summer. Leeks are more mild and subtle in flavor. They are best cooked using more gentle methods such as braising, lightly sautéing or cooking them into soups, sauces and broths. When cooked using these more gentle methods, the texture of leeks becomes silky and tender. Leeks have fewer sugars than onions, so they do not caramelize in the same way as an onion. When you are sautéing leeks, do so at a low to medium temperature just until they are soft. Do not try to brown them.

Leeks have a long white shank that turns to more of a bluish green color as you reach the top of the leek. The shank is made of many thin layers and is the portion of the leek most often used. However, the green portion on top is equally edible and at the very least should be added to stock for flavor. Throughout the growing process, dirt is hilled up on the leeks to cover the shank and block sunlight which keeps it white. As a result, dirt may get between the layers. While you need to take care to carefully clean the entire leek, the upper portion may have a bit more dirt between the layers and may need a little more attention. I find it easiest

to wash the exterior of the leek and then slice them. Place the chopped leeks in a sink of clean, cold water and swish them around to remove any dirt. Remove the leeks from the water and place in a colander to drain. If there isn't much dirt between the layers, you may also just place the sliced leeks in a colander and rinse them.

Leeks pair well with many fall vegetables including potatoes, celeriac, and other root vegetables such as parsnips and carrots. They are often incorporated into cream soups, gratins and egg dishes such as quiche. A traditional use for leeks is to make Leek & Potato Soup, of which there are many variations. They also pair well with late season sweet peppers and tomatoes, bridging the gap between summer and fall. Many recipes utilizing leeks also include complementary ingredients such as white wine, lemon, cream, cheese, apples, walnuts, chicken, bacon, fish and fresh herbs to name just a few ingredients.

Leeks will keep for several weeks if stored in the refrigerator, loosely wrapped in plastic. We hope you enjoy this delicate allium and appreciate the subtle way it adds flavor to your meals this week!

### Braised Leeks with Pappardelle & Parmesan

Yield: 4 servings

#### Braised Leeks:

3 large or 4 to 5 small to medium leeks,  
white and light green parts only  
3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil  
3 Tbsp water  
½ cup crisp white wine

4 Tbsp butter, cut into bits  
A few sprigs thyme  
2 tsp kosher salt  
5 peppercorns, optional  
10 coriander seeds, optional

#### For the Pasta:

12 oz pasta, such as pappardelle  
Parmesan cheese, shaved, to taste  
Freshly cracked black pepper, to taste  
Optional herbs: finely copped parsley,  
or chives, to taste  
Flaky sea salt, to taste

1. Heat oven to 325°F. Trim the leeks of any roots. Slice each leek lengthwise through the bulb, then once more to make quarters—if you are only making the braised leeks, it's OK to keep the leek end intact; if you are making the pasta, cut enough of the base off so that the leek does not stay intact. Fill a large bowl with water and submerge the leeks in it. Swish them around and carefully bend the pieces, using your fingers to release any dirt trapped between the layers of the bulbs.
2. Once clean, lift out the leeks, drain, and place in a snugly fitting roasting pan or Dutch oven—ideally something that can go on both the stovetop and oven if you plan on making the pasta—no more than two layers deep. If your leeks are extra long, cut them to fit.
3. Add the remaining ingredients. Cover and place in the oven. Braise until the leeks have dulled in color and are quite tender to a knife, and bend and flex effortlessly, about 45-50 minutes. Taste for salt. Continue on to the next step if you are making this entire pasta dish, or cool to room temperature if you are making the braised leeks portion of the recipe and want to make the leeks portion of the recipe in advance. Store in the fridge for up to 1 week or in the freezer for 3 months.
4. Meanwhile, if making the pasta, bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add 2 Tbsp kosher salt. Cook pasta al dente (times will vary according to package). Reserve at least a cup of pasta cooking liquid.
5. Place the pan of braised leeks on the stovetop over low heat. Transfer the cooked noodles to the pan with the leeks and toss with tongs to combine. Add pasta cooking liquid as needed—approximately ½ cup. Shave Parmesan to taste over top and season with fresh cracked pepper to taste as well. If you seasoned your pasta cooking liquid as directed, you should barely need any salt here, but taste, and adjust seasonings as desired.
6. If using herbs, add them, and toss to coat. Serve, shaving more Parmesan and cracking more pepper over each serving if desired.

Recipe borrowed from Alexandra Stafford's blog, [AlexandraCooks.com](http://AlexandraCooks.com).

### Lemony Leeks with Chickpeas and Feta

Yield: 2-3 servings

3 large leeks  
1 cup vegetable broth  
1 cup cooked chickpeas  
½ cup crumbled feta cheese

Dressing:  
2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
1 tsp liquid honey  
Juice and zest of one lemon

Pinch of sea salt & Freshly ground  
black pepper  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 small bunch fresh dill or parsley

1. Slice off the root end of each leek, cut in half lengthwise, then cut the stalk into 1-inch chunks on the diagonal. Use both the white and pale green portion of the stalk, discarding the dark green tops. Submerge leek slices in a large bowl of water to remove dirt between the layers.
2. In a large frying pan or saucepan, heat the vegetable broth until simmering. Remove leeks slices from water and place in the broth. Cover and let simmer for 4-5 minutes on medium heat.
3. While the leeks are cooking, make the dressing by combining all ingredients except for the lemon zest and dill or parsley.
4. When leeks are just tender (do not overcook!), remove from pan with tongs and set on a serving platter, leaving the remaining broth. Pour chickpeas into the pan and heat in the broth for about one minute, tossing to warm through. Add half of the dill/parsley and toss.
5. Remove pan from heat and place chickpeas on top of the leeks. Pour dressing over top, sprinkle with remaining dill/parsley, feta, lemon zest, and plenty of freshly ground black pepper. Serve immediately.

Recipe borrowed from Sarah Britton, [www.mynewroots.org](http://www.mynewroots.org).