



Locally, Sustainably and Educationally Grown  
MSU Friends of Local Foods

# Towne's Weekly

August 27, 2009



## Veggie List

Carrots

Summer Squash

Beets

Onion

Peas

Green Beans

Leeks

Garlic

Tomatoes



## NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Well, any day now, we might see our first frost here in the Gallatin Valley. Those tomatoes could use a few more weeks above 90 degrees, but you will see your first red, ripe beauties at distribution today! Our peas are nearly finished, and the green beans have come on full swing, as well as cucumbers. As you can gather, our root crops, carrots, beets and potatoes, have preformed really well and taste great! We will likely be distributing carrots and beets without tops in the coming weeks to reduce labor and increase storage capacity. Once we see cooler temperatures, our winter squash will begin to cure and be ready for harvest. This week's tomatoes are from our cold frames / greenhouses. We will keep our fingers crossed for those tomatoes out in the field, but you might keep your eyes open for green tomato recipes in the meantime!

## MEET YOUR FARMERS

Hello, it's **Sam Robbins** here. I'm currently lamenting the start of school, but very pleased to have spent another summer at Towne's Harvest Garden. This academic year, I will (hopefully) be completing my MS in Nutrition, as well as my course requirements to become a Registered Dietician. Before my recent return to the academic world, I spent nearly a decade working in therapeutic programs for troubled adolescents. (Vegetables have been a nice break from teenagers!!) When not getting dirty at the farm, you can find me traipsing the hills on my bike or skis. As consumers, I appreciate the significant impact we can have upon our local communities and I thank you for your support of us here at THG!!



## A SPECIAL THANKS

We'd also like to take a moment to thank our advisors David Baumbauer, Alison Harmon, Bruce Maxwell, as well as SFBS Coordinators, Mary Stein and Bill Dyer. Folks, let me tell you, this is quite the team. These are our go-to's for supplies, information, funding, inspiration, vision, advice and even labor when we are in a pinch. Many young ambitious students are involved with THG, but faculty support is the foundation that will allow this project to grow into a long term, successful endeavor. Thanks so much!

# Leeks

## Recipe: Leek and Potato Soup

Serves 4-6

- 2 pounds leeks
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 2 thyme sprigs
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt
- 1 pound yellow potatoes, peeled, sliced
- 6 cups water
- 1/3 cup crème fraiche or heavy cream

Trim off the root and tough upper greens from the leek. Cut in half lengthwise and slice thin. Rinse in a bowl of cold water. Melt butter in a heavy bottom pot and add the leeks, then thyme, bay leaf and salt. Cook until soft, about 10 minutes. Add the potatoes and cook for 4 minutes, then add water. Bring to a boil and turn down to simmer until the vegetables are tender, but not falling apart, 30 minutes. When done, stir in the cream. Do not boil once cream is added. Season to taste, remove thyme and bay leaf.

- \*garnish with black pepper, chives
- \*use stock instead of water for more flavor
- \*omit the cream, puree the soup before serving and garnish with herb butter

### Nutrition Information:

Leeks are excellent for weight loss because they are high in fiber and have diuretic properties, they are also a good source of Vitamin B6, Iron and Magnesium, and a very good source of Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Vitamin K, Folate and Manganese.

**Season:** Midsummer through late fall

### History and General

**Information:** Leeks are wildly popular in Europe, and are especially associated with many French dishes. They are gaining esteem and availability in the U.S. because of their sweet and delicate taste. Leeks can be used in much the same way as an onion, but yield a more refined integration of flavors when substituted or combined. Leeks will not overpower other flavors in a recipe as onions and garlic sometimes do. Leeks can be challenging to grow in Bozeman because they require a long growing season, however they are very hardy.

**Basic Handling:** Leeks should be selected based on their firm, white stalks and stiff, dark, green tightly wrapped leaves. Store them whole in a damp towel and keep them in a plastic bag in the refrigerator and they will keep for most of a week. They can be blanched and frozen for up to 3 months. When ready to prepare leeks, they must be washed carefully because dirt often finds its way into the base of the roots. Trim the roots just at the base of the stem. Trim the tops, leaving several inches of the tender green leaves on the stem. Then, cut lengthwise and run under cold water, making sure to get between the layers. It is easiest to clean them thoroughly by soaking them in a bowl of water for several minutes to let the dirt settle out, before scooping them out. Cut them up and prepare further according to recipe.

### Serving Ideas:

- Use discarded tops to flavor soups and sauces.
- Sauté leeks with fennel, lemon juice and herbs and serve as side dish for meat, fish or poultry.
- Chop fine and add to salads or egg dishes.

