

# The Worm's Voice

Red Wiggler's CSA Newsletter

Summer 2023 Week 5  
August 9 & 12

## IN THE SHARE

- Potatoes
- Garlic
- Cherry Tomatoes
- Summer Veggies
- Summer Greens

## PICK-YOUR-OWN

Look for the **BLUE** flags on items ready to pick!

### **RED**

Dill, Cilantro, Thyme, Oregano, Chives, Shiso, Russian Sage, Tarragon, Peppermint, Spearmint, Lavender, Gem Marigolds, Giant Marigolds

### **ORANGE**

Sorrel, Thyme, Marigolds, Fennel, Basil, Celosia, Gomphrena, Sunflowers, Cosmos, Salvia

### **BROWN**

Anise Hyssop, Verbena, Rubeckia

### **PINK**

Parsley, Lemon Basil, Basil, Thai Basil, Cilantro, Zinnias, Sunflowers, Pincushions (Scabiosa), Dill, Statice, Strawflowers

### **YELLOW**

Lemon Balm, Sage

## **NEED HELP?**

Ask a Red Wiggler staff for help finding these in the PYO, ideas on how to use them, or anything else!



## DID YOU KNOW?

*Potatoes are one of the world's most important foods, but it wasn't always that way. How did these lowly tubers get from the Andes Mountains to our plates so successfully?*

Potatoes were domesticated in the Andes Mountains approximately 8000 years ago. The tubers would vary, sometimes dramatically, from region to region, but all became an important food source for indigenous communities over the next several thousand years. The rise of the potato on a global scale starts in 1532 with the Spanish invasion of the "new world" and the Columbian Exchange.

Over the next 150 years, potatoes were slowly adapted to new climates, and embraced by new cultures, especially Ireland. By the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, potatoes were the staple food for the Irish peasantry due to their exceptional nutritional content and high yields. One acre of potatoes and one dairy cow could keep a family of 6-8 fed and healthy! The rest of Europe took notice—by the early 1800s, potatoes were a staple food for the peasant class across most of the continent. In some areas, as many as 40% of the population ate no solid foods except potatoes! Elites and military strategists, previously skeptical of this new food, took notice of the increased vigor of their peasant classes: they started promoting the health benefits of potatoes and fueling their armies with them. Wearing potato flowers in your hair or lapel even became a fashion trend!

The potato frenzy continued until the Great Potato Famine from 1845-1852. Crops across Europe were devastated, and many people starved. Nowhere was harder hit than Ireland, where over a million people died and many more emigrated, mostly to the US. The famine led to the realization that relying on only a few varieties of such a staple crop was dangerous. Work began to diversify the potato, and introduce more genetic variation into the European varieties (farmers in the Andes had been successful for so long because of this diversity—there were an estimated 5000 varieties of potato grown in the area!).

That diversification work has continued, and helped potatoes to grow in popularity across the globe. Today, potatoes are the fourth most important food crop in the world, behind rice, wheat and corn. From their humble beginnings in the Andes Mountains, potatoes have been naturalized in just about every corner of the world. Food historian, Rebecca Earle, calls the potato "the world's most successful immigrant" because "it's grown practically everywhere in the world, and practically everywhere, people consider it one of 'our foods'."

\*\*Want to learn more? Check out these [Smithsonian](#), [BBC](#), and [wikipedia](#) articles!\*\*

# Recipes

**VEG- Vegetarian DF- Dairy Free GF- Gluten Free**

## Colcannon **VEG, GF**

*Not only is colcannon a traditional Irish dish that illustrates the cultural importance of potatoes and milk; it is also a creamy and delicious comfort food. A version of this was likely common on the plates of 17th and 18th century Irish peasants; the potatoes and milk supplemented by whatever seasonal greens were growing in the garden. Serve as a side, or as a main dish topped with a fried egg or slice of smoked salmon.*

### INGREDIENTS

- **1.5 lbs potatoes, scrubbed (peeled if you prefer) and cut into 2-inch chunks**
- 2 to 3 tablespoons butter, plus more as needed
- Olive oil
- ½ cup sliced leeks, onions or shallots
- **2 garlic cloves, sliced**
- **1 bunch/bag greens**
- 2 to 4 tablespoons milk or cream
- Salt and pepper



### DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium pot, combine the potatoes with enough water to cover them by 2 inches and a large pinch of salt. Boil until tender enough to easily pierce with a fork, 15 to 25 minutes. Drain.
2. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, melt butter, along with a drizzle of oil, then add leeks, onions or shallots and a pinch of salt. Sauté over medium heat for 5 minutes or so, until they are starting to turn golden.
3. Add the garlic cloves, and cook them for a minute until fragrant. Then, toss in the greens. Season with more salt and cook, tossing them, until the greens are wilted and very tender. Add a splash of water if pan is dry.
4. Now add the potatoes to the skillet and mash them (so they're either smooth or chunky), and add some milk or cream and a lot of butter, to reach your desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
5. Serve garnished with pats of butter and bacon bits, **chives**, and/or **parsley**.

## Irish Parsley Sauce **VEG**

*For some reason, parsley struggles on our farm. This year is no exception; you might have noticed that some of our plants look a bit under the weather. We recommend making your favorite parsley recipes soon, just in case it doesn't make it through the season. Need a fun and different parsley recipe? Continue the Irish theme with this creamy parsley sauce. Top fish or chicken, steamed veggies, or the colcannon above.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 2¼ cups whole milk
- ½ onion, peeled and sliced
- 1 bay leaf
- 8 whole peppercorns
- pinch nutmeg
- 2 ounces butter
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup finely chopped fresh parsley
- Salt and pepper to taste

### DIRECTIONS

1. Add the sliced onion, peppercorns, bay leaf and nutmeg to the milk in a saucepan. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, then turn off the burner and let it stand for 10 minutes.
2. Strain the infused milk and discard the onion, peppercorns, and bay leaf. Keep the hot milk ready for making the sauce.
3. Melt the butter in a saucepan. Then add the flour. Stir the butter and flour together over the heat for at least one minute.
4. Gradually add the hot milk to the roux whisking all the time over medium heat. Bring to simmering point while whisking.
5. Add the chopped fresh parsley, then stir into sauce. Serve immediately, and garnish with more chopped parsley