

The Worm's Voice

Red Wiggler's CSA Newsletter

Fall 2023 Week 7
October 25 & 28

IN THE SHARE

- Sweet Potatoes/Squash
- Leeks/Garlic
- Pepper Choices
- Root Veggie Choices
- Cooking Greens

PICK-YOUR-OWN

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

RED

Dill Seeds, Lovage, Oregano, Chives, Marigolds, Russian Sage, Tarragon, Peppermint, Spearmint, Lavender, Thyme

ORANGE

Sorrel, Thyme, Cosmos, Fennel, Basil, Celosia, Gomphrena, Salvia, Snapdragons, Dill

BROWN

Verbena

PINK

Parsley, Lemon Basil, Basil, Thai Basil, Zinnias, Scabiosa, Roselle, Statice, Strawflower

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!

HOW TO CLEAN A LEEK

This week will be the last chance for leeks, so if you haven't tried them yet, now is the time! Many people are daunted by the amount of dirt leeks sometimes have in their layers, so here's a quick guide to how to thoroughly clean a leek. **To slice for soups:** first, rinse the whole leeks. Then, cut off the root ends and slice the leeks lengthwise. Make crosswise cuts up the leek, depending on how thick you want the slices and how much of the green you want to use (the greens get less tender the higher up you go, but they have great flavor. If you make stock, save the last couple inches of the greens for your stockpot). Place the chopped leeks in a bowl and add cold water. Agitate with your hands to release any trapped dirt. Finally, scoop out the clean leeks with your hands or a sieve into a new bowl. You can give them a quick spin in a salad spinner if desired. **To use whole:** Place a leek on a cutting board. Insert the tip of a sharp knife about a ¼-inch below the lowest opening in the leek. Cut straight through, up to and through the green ends, leaving the pale part whole. Fan open the leek and run under cold water to release any trapped dirt. Trim fan back to desired length. Finally, cut off the root end, staying as close to the roots as possible. This will help the leek stay together better. Repeat with the rest of your leeks.

VEGGIE HIGHLIGHT: PEPPERS

We've had quite a hefty pepper season this year. But all good things must come to an end, and with the cooler temps, the peppers are on their way out. The veggies have been stripped, the plants are coming out this week, and the beds will be put to rest for the winter. It's the last hurrah for peppers in the CSA share as well—choose from bell peppers, mini bells, shishitos, banana peppers and hot peppers. If you haven't yet, maybe it's finally time to try some [pepper poppers](#), [shishito peppers](#), or [stuffed peppers](#). Or just stock up on peppers for winter use. Peppers freeze wonderfully. I just chop bell peppers up, spread them on a baking tray covered with parchment paper, freeze, then transfer to a freezer bag. It's so easy to grab a handful or two whenever you need them. Bonus tip: do the same with several onions, and you've got a quick-start to so many meals! Hot peppers are easy to preserve as well. Check out this [newsletter](#) from last year about how to freeze hot peppers for later use.



OREGANO
CHIVES
PARSLEY
LAVENDER
TARRAGON
LOVAGE

TIME TO DRY HERBS
FOR WINTER USE!

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE

FENNEL
DILL
LEMON BALM
PEPPERMINT
SPEARMINT
SAGE

Recipes

VEG- Vegetarian DF- Dairy Free GF- Gluten Free

Squash and Lentil Soup **GF DF Veg**

This soup, adapted from a recipe on www.acouplecooks.com, seems almost custom-made for this week's CSA share! Squash, garlic, leeks, greens, carrots...it's got it all. You can use pumpkin or kabocha squash this week, or save the recipe for next week, when butternuts make their debut. Don't love squash? Use sweet potatoes instead!

INGREDIENTS

- 2-3 garlic cloves
- 3 carrots
- 1 pound leeks, or 1 large yellow onion
- 1 medium squash—kabocha, pumpkin or butternut
- 1 bunch cooking greens
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon kosher or sea salt
- 8 cups vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 ½ cups brown or green lentils
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme
- 2 teaspoons fresh oregano
- Fresh ground pepper
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice



DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare the squash.*
2. Mince the garlic. Scrub and chop the carrots into moons or half-moons.
3. Clean and chop the leeks using the above steps for slicing for soup.
4. Wash, stem and chop your chosen cooking greens.
5. In a large pot over medium heat, heat the olive oil; add the leeks or onions and sauté until softened, about 4 to 5 minutes. Add carrots and garlic and sauté for 3 to 4 minutes until softened.
6. Add broth, lentils, thyme, oregano, and salt. If starting with raw squash, add it here too. Bring mixture to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 20 minutes until the lentils and squash (if added raw) are soft. In the last few minutes, add the chopped chard, squash (if added roasted) and simmer until tender. Add additional salt and pepper to taste. Stir in the lemon juice just before serving.

*You've got a choose-your-own-adventure decision to make: raw or roasted squash, or sweet potatoes! I am a big fan of roasting squash before doing anything else with it. So for this soup, I would start by [roasting](#) a kabocha or pumpkin, scooping out the flesh, breaking it up into pieces, and then add it to the soup in the final minutes. If you prefer to add your squash raw, or use sweet potatoes (2-3 lbs), you'll need to peel and dice it, then add it at the beginning of the cooking process. The different methods yield different results: roasted squash will break apart and thicken the broth into more of a stew-like dish. Raw squash or sweet potatoes will retain their shape and texture, and make the soup a bit more toothsome. Any and all options will be delicious, I promise!

Final "friends and family" tour and market of the season, this Saturday! Tour meets at the barn and starts at 10 am.