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# THE WSU ORGANIC STANDARD

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## Onions, Fresh and Cured

We've been thankful for the mild weather this month as we're still trying to make up lost time for the rough weather back at the beginning of the season. Just last week saw the peak in tomato production with 600 pounds coming out of the field over the two harvest days! And we're still waiting on the corn. It looks great but will probably not be ready until the next week. We have 6 weeks left until the planned end of the CSA and that usually means winter squash. Because there hasn't been a frost yet it's very difficult to get into the planting to see where all the squash is hiding. Normally we plan to have a different winter squash each week until the end of October but I'm not so sure they all matured this season.

The onion crop turned out great this year except for our slightly smaller Walla Walla's. The storage onions are going through the curing process and will hopefully be boxed and packed away in the next week. All of our onions store well into the winter if cured correctly *except* for the Walla Walla's. You've been mostly seeing the large red onions that have been coming out of the field fresh. This means we've harvested and cut tops and roots, all before they've been allowed to dry. These onions are considered fresh and need to be eaten soon.

To prepare a storage onion it first must be allowed to cure. This process begins when the onion tops (leaves) naturally fall over. Once this happens we help them out and step on the rest of their "necks". Sounds a little rough, I know, but it's got to happen. At this time we also turn off the irrigation to the onions to help them begin to dry. After about a week or so we then go back and pull out every single onion that's left in the field and lie

them out on the ground to continue to dry. We're ultimately looking for the necks to turn brown and shrivel up at the top of each onion. During a dry September this can all occur in the field. This year, with the spotty rain, we've moved the onions into the hoopouses to keep them dry.

Once the necks have dried, the onions can be cleaned and boxed. The roots and tops are cut and if the curing has gone well the onion will be sealed from moisture and bacteria. These cured onions will store all winter in a cool dry location at your home, safe from freezing temperatures. I'll make sure to let you know when these show up in the CSA so you can put some away if they don't get eaten right away.

--Brad

### SAVE THE DATE!

The annual Fall Harvest Party is planned for **Saturday, October 2, from 10-4** at the farm. We're trying for an earlier date this year after we lost the pumpkin crop to the early freeze last October. (Remember 17 degrees on October 9<sup>th</sup>?) The pumpkins look great this year and we'll have all the usual fun events including hay wagon rides, face painting, warm apple cider, u-pick pumpkins, and fruit from the orchard.

We're still looking for volunteers to help with this event! If you're interested in helping out, even for a few hours, please let us know. Contact the student coordinator for the event, Lauren Young, at

[levyoung@wsu.edu](mailto:levyoung@wsu.edu)

This week we'll enjoy potatoes and leeks. Leeks are related to onions, though their bright white bulb has a more delicate flavor. Leeks are delicious sautéed in butter for about ten minutes with a pinch of salt and a sprinkling of thyme, then used to top a savory tart or homemade pizza. A simple, satisfying soup can be made with 2 pounds of leeks, a pound of potatoes, butter, salt, a few thyme sprigs and a bay leaf. Just thinly slice the leeks and sauté in the butter and herbs for 10 minutes, slice and add the potatoes with 6 cups of water, simmering until the potatoes are soft. Once cooked, whisk in a heavy splash of cream.

The recipe below is Asaph's favorite way to enjoy potatoes. You can try substituting the carrots and peas with other colorful vegetables you have on hand.

If you won't use the leeks right away, wrap them in a slightly dampened towel and then place in a plastic bag in the fridge. While you might be tempted to trim the green stalks to save space, don't. Leeks keep best untrimmed. The leeks are best when used within the week.

--Jamaica

### **Samosas**

*From Moosewood Cookbook, by Mollie Katzen (Ten Speed Press, 1977)*

Prep time 1hr

Serves 4-5

#### **Filling:**

2 large potatoes- peeled, boiled & mashed	½ cup diced carrots, cooked until just tender
1 cup finely-minced leeks	½ cup cooked green peas
2 medium cloves crushed garlic	1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon fresh-grated ginger root	Juice from ½ lemon
½ teaspoon mustard seed	2-3 tablespoons butter
½ teaspoon ground coriander	Cayenne pepper to taste

Heat butter in heavy skillet. Add garlic, ginger, onion, salt and mustard seeds. Sauté 6-8 mins, or until onion is soft and clear. Combine all ingredients, except peas and mix well. Fold in peas last, taking care not to smash them.

#### **Pastry and Procedure:**

2 cups white flour	⅓ cup yogurt
1 teaspoon salt	Water
4 tablespoons melted butter	

Sift together flour and salt. Add melted butter, yogurt and enough water to make a stiff dough. Knead until smooth and elastic. Role out very thin (¼ inch) and cut into 4-inch circles (inverted drinking cup). Roll and cut until all the dough is used. Place 1 tablespoon of filling in the center of each circle leaving edges free. Brush edges with a little water, fold over and seal ends by pressing with a fork.

Heat a 3-inch pool of all-purpose oil in heavy skillet to about 365°. Oil should bounce a drop of water on contact. Fry samosas until golden, drain well and serve!

