

# Leek



**In the supermarket, leeks cost a premium; harvested from the garden, they're a bargain. Leeks are most famous for leek and potato soup, but they're also good steamed like asparagus, oven-roasted, chopped in quiche, or wrapped in ham and baked (perhaps with a little cheese on top).**

## ***Allium ampeloprasum***

- **Use:** Grace your dinner table with an easy-to-grow, elegant onion cousin: the leek. Sweet and mild, leeks are gentle on the digestive system and play the role of onion in dishes, only toned down. Unlike onions, leeks don't produce bulbs, but stash their flavor in thick, juicy stems that look similar to giant scallions. Leafy stems are pretty, and growing leeks doesn't require much room in the garden.
- **Exposure/Soil:** Full- part sun (but must be 5-6 hours of sun) . Well-drained sandy soil. Tolerates summer drought, but should be kept moist during growing season.
- **Growth:** Grows 1-3' tall and 1-2" wide.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 5-10; Perennial
- **Harvest:** You can start pulling leeks from the ground just about anytime. Typically, you'd let them get least 1 inch or larger in diameter for the big white stems, but you can dig young ones to eat like scallions. If the soil is moist, they may just pull right out of the ground. If they resist, use a spading fork to loosen soil and then gently pull leeks by grabbing them at their base.
- Wash the stems thoroughly to remove soil and grit that may have collected between the leaves.
- For short-term storage (up to one week), tuck stems into an airtight plastic bag and place in the refrigerator crisper.
- To freeze leeks, wash, slice, and blanch for 1 minute in boiling water. Drain, drip dry, and toss into plastic freezer bags. Add the frozen leeks to soups, stews, and other dishes.

**Google search UGA and growing leeks for a great handout.**