



Leeks



Plant: There are three main varieties of leeks divided by harvest season; early, mid season, and late season. Early or summer leeks are planted in spring while mid and late season leeks are overwintered for a larger and more pungent crop. Start leeks, plant indoors 8-10 weeks before the last expected spring frost. Plant $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep in pots at least 6" deep, thin plants to 1" apart when the seedlings are 3" tall. Grow from 60-65 degrees. Set out seedlings in the garden as soon as the soil can be worked. Dig a 6" deep trench and set the seedlings in a row in the bottom. Gradually fill trench with soil as the plants grow.

Grow: Water after you have set the seedlings in the holes, adding enough soil around the seedlings to cover the roots. The holes will continue to fill in on their own as the plants grow, covering and developing the stalks. You can fill up additional soil around the plants to produce the longest white stalks. Leeks need a steady supply of nitrogen and plenty of water. Feed monthly with organic fertilizer, keep well weeded.

Harvest: Begin harvesting leeks as soon as they are big enough to use. Loosen the soil around the leeks with a garden fork before pulling them up. Big stalks can grow up until the first fall frosts. Fresh leeks should be stored unwashed and untrimmed in the refrigerator for up to 5 days

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup 89g (89 g)

Amount Per Serving

Calories 54 Calories from Fat 2

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g 0%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Trans Fat

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 18mg 1%

Total Carbohydrate 13g 4%

Dietary Fiber 2g 6%

Sugars 3g

Protein 1g

Vitamin A 30% • **Vitamin C** 18%

Calcium 5% • **Iron** 10%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

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Nutrition Information:

Leeks are an excellent source of vitamin K which is essential for blood clotting and bone health. Like onions and garlic, leeks are great sources of flavonoids and sulfur-containing nutrients, which lower cholesterol and keep blood vessels from getting stiff. Leeks are also a good source of many B vitamins and vitamin A and small amounts of minerals such as potassium, iron, calcium, magnesium, manganese, zinc, and selenium.

How to Prepare:

Leeks are a great replacement for onions although they provide a sweeter and more delicate flavor. Start by cutting off the dark green part trimming to the part where the color is a pale green. Slice the stalk lengthwise. Cut the root ends, run leeks under water being sure to rinse well, and chop. The young stalks can be braised. Leeks can be roasted, used as a garnish, added to a salad or soup, or used as a side dish!



Caramelized Leeks

Yields: 8 servings

Serving size: 4 Tablespoons

Ingredients

1 ounce olive oil

1 ½ pound fresh leeks, washed and sliced

1 ounce balsamic vinegar

¼ teaspoon salt

Pinch of ground white pepper

Preparation

1. In a sauté pan, heat oil over medium-high heat.
2. Add leeks. Sauté until translucent. Reduce heat to medium and continue stirring leeks.
3. Stir in vinegar, salt and pepper. Reduce heat to low and continue stirring until leeks have a light brown color.
4. Serve on top of protein, or as a side.

Nutrition Facts per Serving:

50 calories, 4 g fat, 4 g carbohydrates, 0 g fiber, 0 g protein