



# ALLIUMS

## Cafeteria Connection

### Tell Me about Alliums

Alliums are a family of plants that include onions, garlic, leeks, shallots, and chives. Washington state is a major producer of alliums, with some popular varieties named after Washington towns, like the Walla Walla Sweet Onion (Washington's state vegetable) and Inchelium garlic. The Skagit Valley is regarded as one of the top leek-producing regions in the nation.

### Crediting Information

- The onion family credits toward the vegetable meal pattern component as volume served. For example, 1/2 cup onion credits as 1/2 cup vegetable.
- In School Meals, the onion family can also contribute to the "Other" vegetable sub-group.
- Vegetables must be fresh, frozen, canned, or full-strength vegetable juice, referred to as 100% juice, to credit as a vegetable component. Dried vegetables, including beans, peas, and lentils, must be reconstituted to credit toward reimbursable meals. Please confirm crediting requirements for dried vegetables with your specialist.



### Nutrition Facts

Since alliums are typically used in small quantities to add flavor to food, they do not contribute significant nutritional value to most meals. However, they can be added to nutrient-rich foods to make them more flavorful and appealing.



## Selection and Storage

- Onions, when purchased directly from a farm, may be either cured or uncured. Fresh, uncured onions may arrive with green tops still intact and a smooth, plump outer skin layer. These onions should be stored in a refrigerator and used within 1–2 weeks. Cured onions should be very hard with dry, papery skin. They should be stored in a well-ventilated, cool area, and will last for several months. Do not store onions near other produce, as the onions will release a gas that speeds the ripening—and spoiling—process for other fruits and vegetables.
- Garlic may also be sold fresh or cured. Fresh garlic often has intact green tops and a moist outer skin, while cured garlic typically has the tops removed and dry, papery skin. Garlic should always be stored in a cool, dry place. When stored properly, fresh garlic can be kept for up to a month, while cured garlic can be kept for 6 months or more.
- Leeks should have fresh, firm, and crisp stalks that are dark green on top and light green in the middle, with white root-ends. Yellow wilted greens and stalks are a sign of aging. Leeks can be stored in a plastic bag or air-tight container in the refrigerator for two weeks. They often have dirt inside their inner layers and should be rinsed thoroughly directly before use.



## Culinary Tips

- Onion: Cut off stem and root of onion, remove outer skin, cut in half, and lay each side on the flat side to slice or chop.
- Garlic: To quickly peel a whole bulb of garlic, separate all cloves and put in a metal bowl. With a lid on, shake the bowl for about 1 minute. This should peel the skins off all the cloves. To peel a single clove, place the flat side of a chef's knife on top of the clove and hit it a few times with the heel of your hand.
- Leeks can be eaten raw or cooked and can be used in recipes that call for onions.
- Once removed, onion stems and root ends and leek greens can be roasted and used to add flavor to soups and sauces.

## Recipes

- [Chicken Pozole with Onion and Garlic](#)
- [Washington Recipe for Schools](#)
- [Garden Salsa Louisiana Recipe for Schools](#)
- [Tuscan Smoked Turkey and Bean Soup USDA Recipe for Child Care Centers](#)
- [Marinated Black Bean Salad USDA Recipe for Adults in CACFP](#)

## Sourcing

- [Find Onions](#)
- [Find Garlic](#)
- [Find Leeks](#)

