

The Chef's Garden



Growing vegetables slowly and gently  
in full accord with nature.

# HARVEST

*fall menu planning guide*



*mixed beet blush*  
25 ct. (01MXBB-33)

FALL 2019

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I firmly believe that there's a natural rhythm to food. If you listen to your body, there are certain times of the year when it'll tell you it needs certain foods. You need beets. You need kale. You need iron. You need calcium. I almost think it's in our DNA.

Generations ago, as fall set in, folks filled their root cellars with provisions like garden-grown beets, turnips, rutabagas, apples, gourds and potatoes. It was hearty fare that would last throughout the cold seasons cooked into stews, soups, pot pies and meats from the larder. The old timers called it food that would "stick to your ribs." By that they meant it would warm and fortify their bodies to endure the physical demands of the oncoming cold weather.

In a world of modern conveniences, eating with the seasons can seem passé, the vestige of a bygone era.

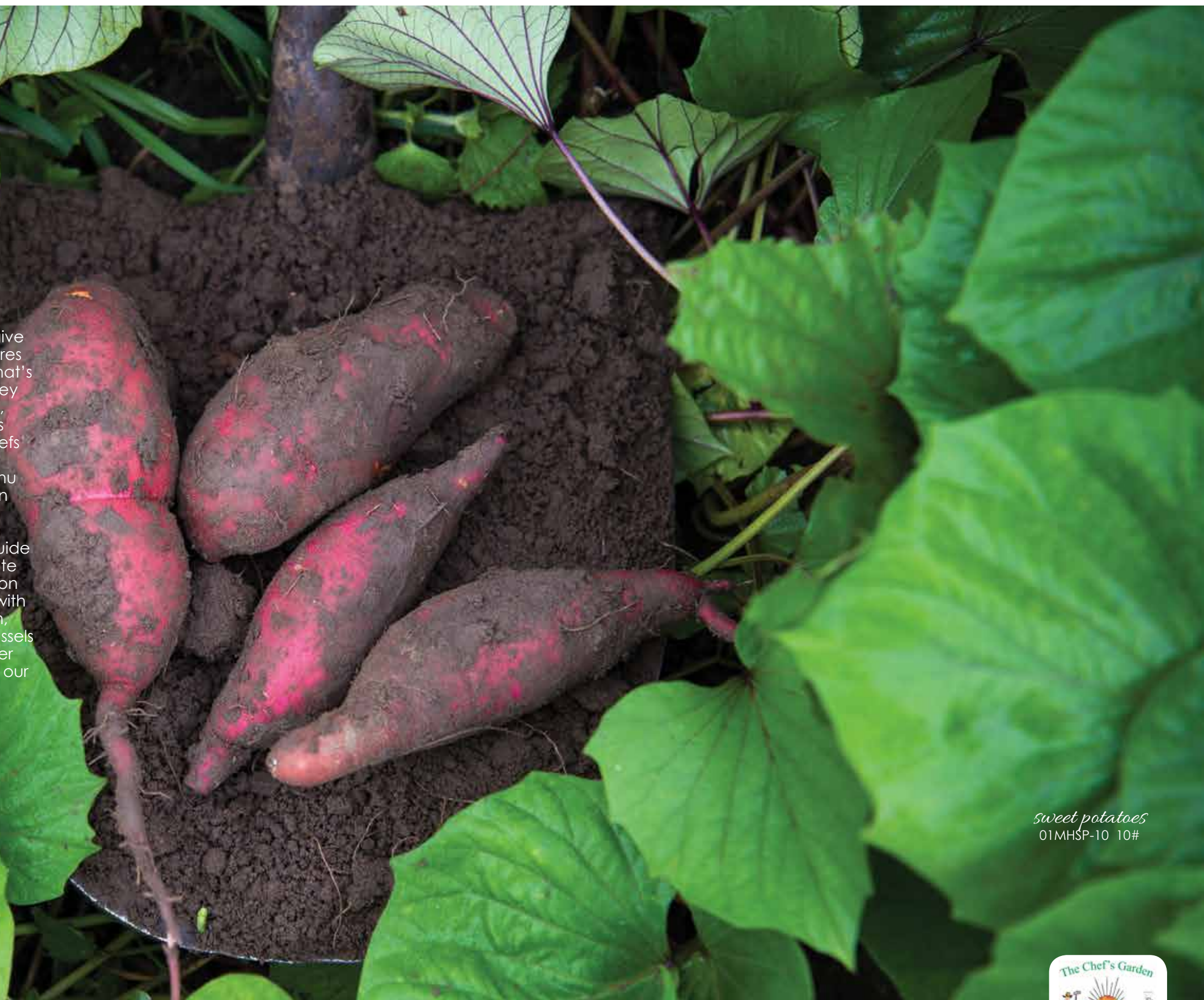
We can buy whatever we want, whenever we want, be it spring, summer, fall or winter. Everything is available all of the time, either in grocery stores or online.

Well I don't think our bodies give two hoots about what's in stores or online. They care about what's in the earth and in season. They are yearning to be fed simply, according to Mother Nature's natural ebb and flow. Our chefs get that. I've often said that Mother Nature is the best menu planner, and if we simply listen she'll tell us what to do.

This current menu planning guide is simply a visual tool to illustrate what Mother Nature is doing on the farm. Fall colors abound with the arrival of butternut squash, beets, fall radishes, purple Brussels sprouts, carrots and cauliflower and the fuchsias and pinks of our exotic kale.

*Farmer Lee Jones*  
*Eat Your Veggies*

 @farmerleejones



*Sweet potatoes*  
01MHSP-10 10#



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# The Science of Flavor

*New Lab Expands Agricultural Research Capabilities*

It stands to reason that the freshest, most colorful, most nutritious vegetables are also the most flavorful. It's not rocket science. But it is science, and it's why The Chef's Garden's team of researchers is always experimenting with better ways to improve those important qualities in the farm's fresh microgreens, edible flowers, leaves, vegetables and herbs.

"Things that look good normally are," said Research Specialist Nicholas Walters. "If you have something that has a really dark green color or a vibrant red color, chances are it's got a lot of secondary metabolites and phytonutrients that are there to help you protect and build your own body. But it's really all about flavor, and we're finding that the more we learn about some of these crops, the more we're learning how we can have a big influence on how the flavor turns out in the end."

Walters cited basil as an example. "It's not producing these flavors to be delicious for us. It's a pesticide," Walters explained. "It's a preventative measure they take to protect themselves. There's all kinds of things we can do to manipulate the growing environment, or the fertility, or all kinds of things that'll change the way the plant expresses its own body and its own flavors."

The Chef's Garden recently opened the doors to a brand new on-site agricultural research facility. The new lab and updated equipment will expand the researchers' ability to conduct soil and tissue tests to gather information about nutrient content, soil health and other flavor-influencing factors without wasting precious time.

*"Everybody thinks a carrot's a carrot's a carrot - well that's the furthest thing from the truth."*

"We can go ahead and give them the nutrients that they need right then, so it's an immediate response to the plant," said Research Assistant Sarah Hinman. "So, as we adjust or add the nutrient, it's making it available for that plant. So the plant's healthier, which will result in a healthier product or fruit."

The presence or absence of specific nutrients, such as calcium and potassium, for example, can have a significant impact on shelf life, which can in turn affect the long-term flavor of a stored vegetable.

"If you're deficient in those, your product is going to be more soft," Hinman said. "It's not going to have the quality or nutritional value. So, if you make sure those are definitely sufficient, you will have a much longer shelf life."

The new agricultural research lab also allows for testing of other shelf-life influencers, such as packaging. "In some instances, the more light the crop has, the more dry weight it accumulates, and the more it's able to slow down its cellular respiration in the package," said botanist Walters.

"We have a machine, an IRGA, an infrared gas analyzer, and we're going to be taking headspace measurements of the packaging. So, we're going to take our product, package it up, put it in a fridge, and, every day, we're going to take a little bit of gas from inside the package and measure it for breakdown products, off smells, off flavors, so we'll be able to do some robust shelf life testing with the laboratory, which I'm really excited about."



Experimenting with outdoor cover crops to observe their impact on soil biology is also important, according to Research Assistant Deanna Forbush. "We want to see if that's influences flavor," Forbush said. "We want to see if that's influencing aroma, we want to see how the actual soil health relates back to our vegetables, which relates back to our product, which relates back to how our chefs feel about our product."

The role of soil-building healthy microbes on flavor are another target for testing, according to Forbush.

"There's not really a lot known about microbes and how they influence the flavor of something, but that's what we're working to figure out," Forbush said. "We want to eventually start culturing the microbes and bacteria to see what we actually have, and inoculate one pot with that colony to see if we get a better color, if we get a better aroma, if we get a better flavor, or whatever our chefs are really looking for."

To test for specific nutrients in specific vegetables, Research Chemist William Koshute said he'll rely on the lab's new gas chromatograph.

"This instrument will analyze the components within, say, a carrot, and let us know how much is there," Koshute said. "We're trying to analyze them, to find out what their flavor components are, and their nutritional components, so that we have exact answers that we can offer our chefs."

"I do a lot of carrot research right now, and we are looking to have not only the best tasting carrots, but the most nutritious carrots."

Koshute's colleagues agree that the addition of advanced equipment will make a huge difference in the farm's future research efforts and the continuous pursuit of ultimate flavor.

"I really think that using the gas chromatograph is going to be the key," Forbush said. "I think doing a lot of the essential oils and flavor profiles is going to be really neat overall to see. We've been working on some of them, trying to figure out what is really an aromatic compound, what is an actual flavor compound. What smells nutty to one person can smell woody to another, but this really breaks it down and tells you what that compound is. So I can break it down to say, 'this is why it smells lemony,' or 'this is why it tastes tangy or spicy.'"

The Chef's Garden's founder "Mr. Bob" Jones Sr. is an ardent supporter and champion of the agricultural research efforts. Never one to rest on his laurels, Jones is always scanning the horizon for a better way to grow a better vegetable.

"Everybody thinks a carrot's a carrot's a carrot — well that's the furthest thing from the truth," Jones said. "You can have a carrot that tastes like cardboard, and you can have a carrot that is just wonderfully sweet and melts in your mouth. We test every carrot we can find — the competition, grocery store, wherever. We've got the best tasting carrot around. We have that now. But we think it can be even better."

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*green brussels sprouts*  
07GBS-11 flat

# Cruciferous

The incredible diversity, flavor and health benefits of cruciferous vegetables are nothing new to us. We've been saying that since we started growing them. The quality, flavor, freshness and color of our cauliflower, kohlrabi, greens, kale and Brussels sprouts are unmatched and perfect for fall. Our cruciferous collection comes in a riot of colors — frilled pinks, purples, whites and golds that maintain their color and integrity beautifully, no matter how you cook them.



baby mixed kale # (07BKM-9)



orange cauliflower 16 ct. (07BOC-26)



kalettes 50 ct. (07PFSPRT-33)



alverdale cauliflower 16 ct. (07ACAL-26)



*with or  
without tops*

green kohlrabi # (07BGK-9)  
purple kohlrabi # (07BPK-2)



romanesco 16 ct. (07BROM-26A)



red brussels sprouts flat (07BRBS-11)



purple cauliflower 16 ct. (07PCB-26)



petite exotic kale 50 ct. (07PKM-33)





*baby spinach*  
04SP1B-2 #

# Greens

Our collection of greens includes arugulas and mustards that add bold flavor and texture to the plate – from the lacy leaf structure and peppery heat of our ruffled red and wasabi mustards, to the buttery texture and mellow richness of our spinach. As summer yields to fall, more substantial greens are a natural part of heartier cool-weather menus.



baby arugula # (08ARB-2)



baby asian blend # (09BA-2)



baby wasabi mustard # (09WAM-2)



baby ruffled green mustard # (09GRM-2)



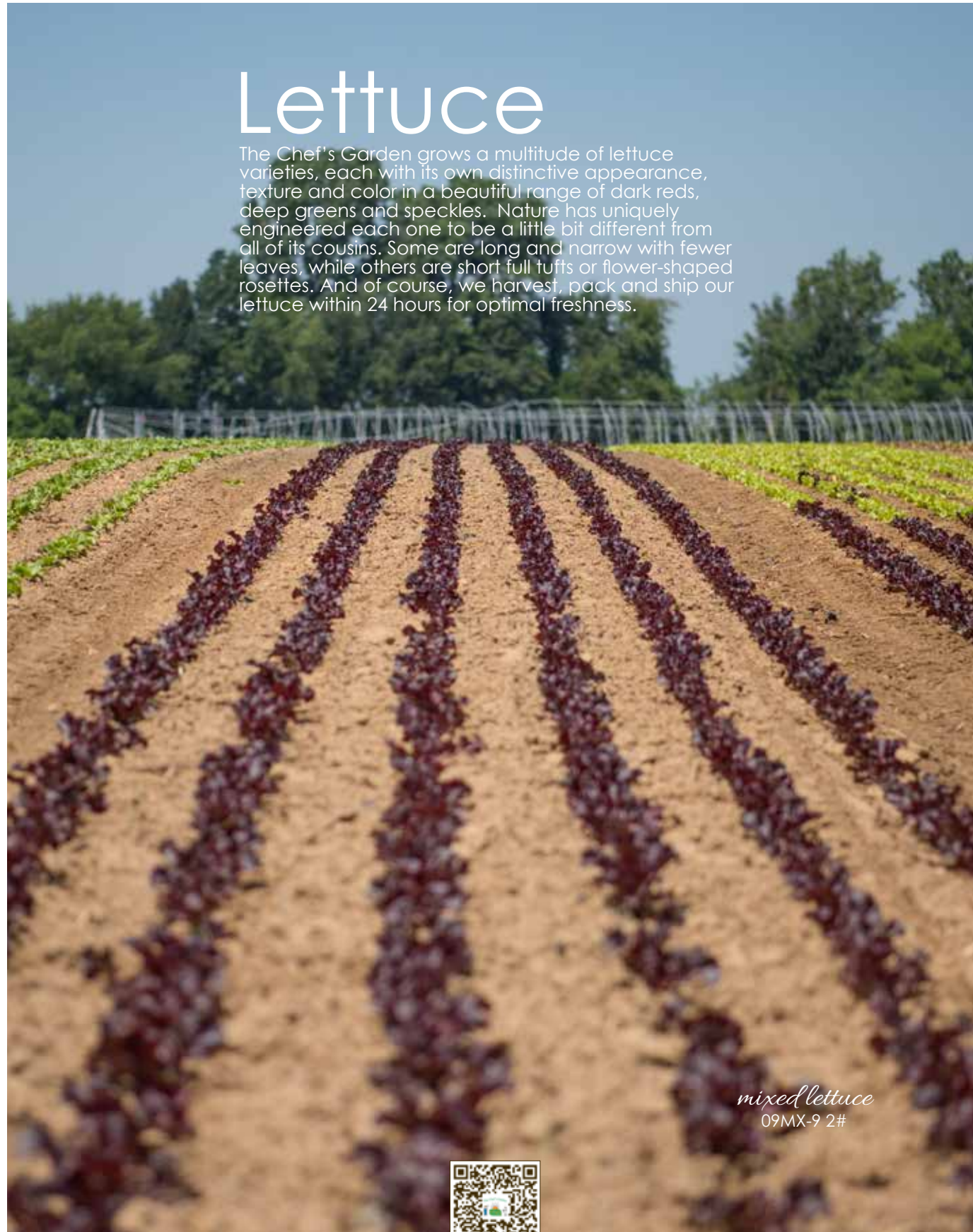
petite arugula 50 ct. (08NGPMA -33)



baby ruffled red mustard # (09RRM-2)



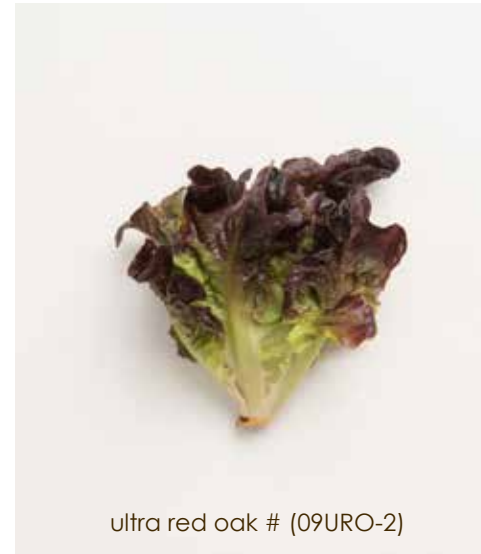
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# Lettuce

The Chef's Garden grows a multitude of lettuce varieties, each with its own distinctive appearance, texture and color in a beautiful range of dark reds, deep greens and speckles. Nature has uniquely engineered each one to be a little bit different from all of its cousins. Some are long and narrow with fewer leaves, while others are short full tufts or flower-shaped rosettes. And of course, we harvest, pack and ship our lettuce within 24 hours for optimal freshness.

*mixed lettuce*  
09MX-9 2#



ultra red oak # (09URO-2)



ultra sweet romaine # (09USR-2)



ultra speckled density # (09USWD-2)



ultra green oak # (09UGO-2)



ultra red rose romaine 50 ct. (09URRR-33)



ultra green tango # (09UTA-2)



ultra reine des glaces # (09URDGL-2)



ultra lolita rossa # (09ULR-2)



ultra green rosette 25 ct. (09GLRO-24)



# Micro Greens

bulls blood (04BB-33-S)

fennel (04FEN-33-L)

memo chives (04MCI-33-E)

cilantro (04CL-33-L)

thyme (14MTH-33-S)



watercress (14MWA-33-L)

sage (14MS-33-S)

gold memo chives (04GCI-33-H)

arugula (04AR-33-L)

burgundy amaranth (04BAM-33-S)







# Micro Greens

Plating is about precision, proportion and balance, both visually and in terms of flavor. Chefs shouldn't be locked into a one-size-fits-all limit of options. That's why we've separated our smallest greens and herbs into specific categories according to their stage of development — the tiniest being "micro." The incremental size differences may seem minute, but it's our goal to provide our chefs with every opportunity to find the perfect fit for their perfect plates, every time.

*cutting celery*  
04MCE-33-L



mixed shiso (04MSM-33-L)



red ribbon sorrel (04MRRS-33-E)



sunflower (04SS-33-L)



mache (04MA-33-L)



parsley (04MPA-33-L)



carrot(04MCT-33-L)



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# Potatoes

Potatoes from The Chef's Garden are as varied as autumn leaves – in flavor, texture and color. All of our potatoes, whether sweet or traditional, are resplendent in orange, blue, purple, red, white and gold. Each variety has its own distinctive, complex characteristics of flavor, texture and beauty. What they all share in common, though, is potential. Roasted, poached, pureed and beyond, in our chefs' hands the potential for the humble potato is exponential.

*german butterball*  
(available in various sizing)



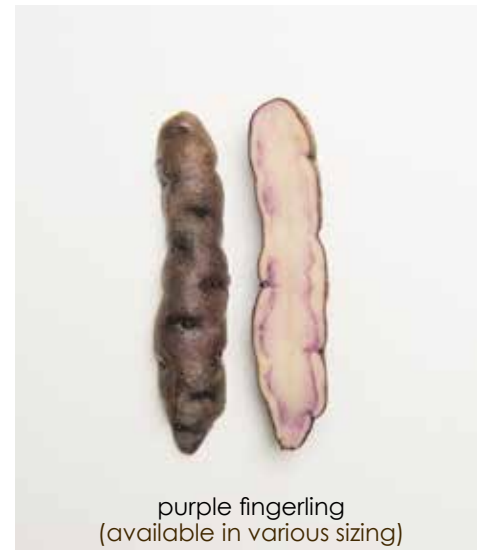
austrian crescent  
(available in various sizing)



red thumb  
(available in various sizing)



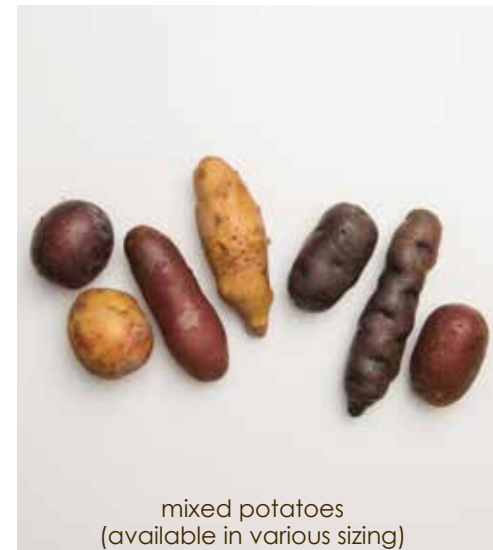
all blue  
(available in various sizing)



purple fingerling  
(available in various sizing)



red thumb  
(available in various sizing)



mixed potatoes  
(available in various sizing)



purple sweet potato 50 ct. (08PSPL-33)



neon sweet potato 50 ct. (08NSPL-33)



mixed sweet potatoes  
(available in various sizing)



# Edible Herbs



demi mint sampler 75 ct. (08MSB-33)



dill blooms 50 ct. (05DILLB-33)



full size tri color sage (08STC-33)  
demi tri color sage 75 ct. (08TSB-33)



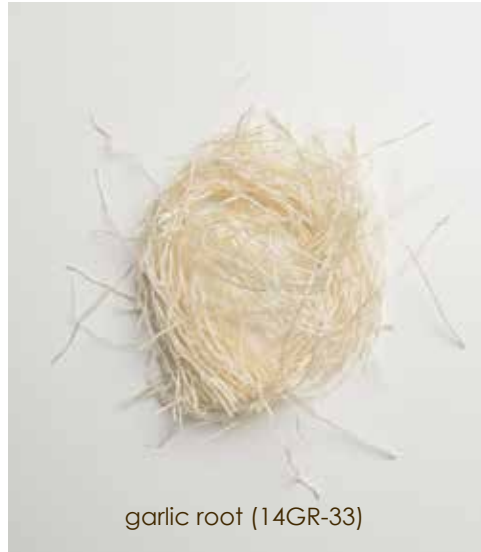
oyster 50 ct. (08OYL-33)



root beer 25 ct. (08RBL-33)



citrus lace 50 ct. (05CMLV-33)



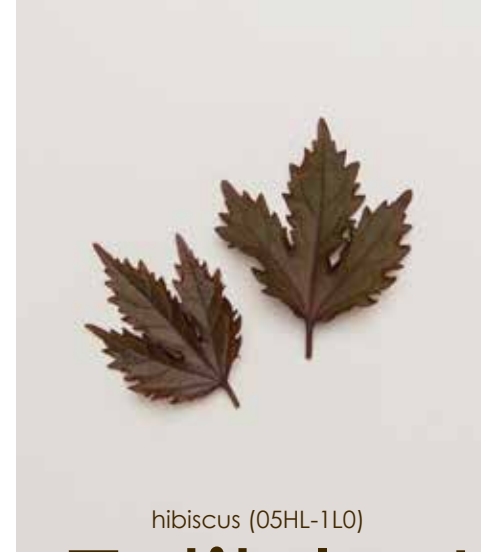
garlic root (14GR-33)



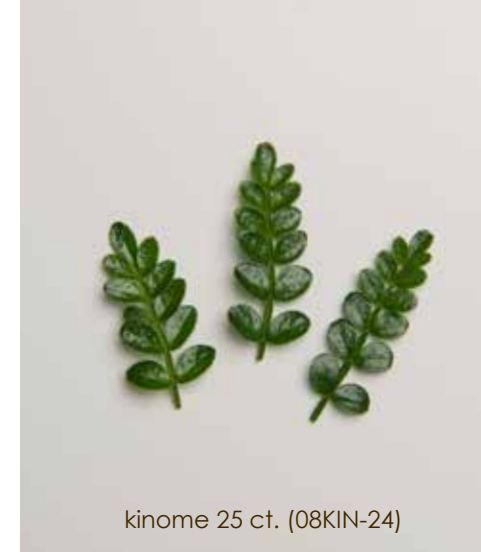
full size anise hyssop (08AH-33)  
demi anise hyssop (08AHD-33)



full size lemon verbena (08LV-33)  
demi lemon verbena 75 ct. (08LVB-33)



hibiscus (05HL-1L0)



kinome 25 ct. (08KIN-24)



amethyst sorrel 50 ct. (14AS-33)

# Edible Leaves



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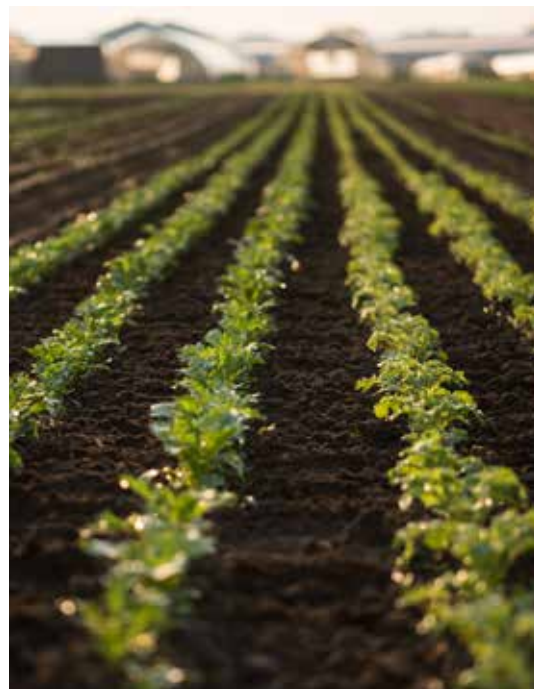
# Growing *Quality Plants Forward* with purpose

As the “plant forward” movement gains momentum, putting vegetables front and center is heightening the demand for high-quality, earth-grown, farm-fresh ingredients. And, with fresh vegetables cast in the starring role, they have to satisfy customers' palates, and also their appetite for sustainably farmed, responsibly sourced, highly nutritious, flavorful food.

“There are so many choices today,” said The Chef’s Garden’s Farmer Lee Jones. “And I think people are understanding what quality is, and respecting it and appreciating it and paying for it and demanding it. And I think chefs are hearing that.”

“Food enthusiasts, people who are going out to eat, are more savvy, more in tune, more aware, more conscientious of food sources than ever before,” he continued. “There are more farmer’s markets than at any time in the history of the United States. More vegetable seeds were sold last year than at any time in U.S. history. It’s exciting to see. People are getting it that we need to be more plant forward.”

As reliance on commercially grown produce and produce grown outside the U.S. gobbles up more than its fair share of the marketplace, Farmer Lee said small farms like The Chef’s Garden are more essential than ever.



“We don’t produce anything in America anymore, because we can do it so much cheaper someplace else, so small family farms are kind of like that last vestige of hope that we can produce something of quality and value and integrity, and to know that there’s a conscientious team of people who are attempting to grow it in an almost spiritual, holistic, healthy, meaningful way,” he said.

At The Chef’s Garden, rather than focusing on high yield, the goal has always been to grow a wide variety of superior quality, unique, specialty vegetables using regenerative farming practices that enrich the land rather than deplete its nutrients.

“It really is like a garden,” said Bob Jones, Jr., the Farm Manager. “The largest planting of any one crop is a quarter of an acre as opposed to 500 acres.”

Farmer Lee likes to use the phrase “products with purpose.”

“It’s about growing with a purpose,” he said. “What’s the purpose? Why? I’ve been seeing that more and more, and I’ve been talking about that.”

The Chef’s Garden’s “why” is in the stories and the people behind the final product, according to Farmer Lee. More and more customers are placing higher value on the compelling stories about where their food grows, and who grows it. He said that sharing those food source stories can make a difference in a chef’s bottom line.



White Pea Blossoms



Sunchoke Purée. Carrot. Confit Potato. Brussel Sprout. Beet. Root Spinach. Amaranth.



Micro Watercress

“If the mentality is to push the price down as far as they can and squeeze all the blood out of a turnip, it’s no fun for anybody,” he said. “It’s no fun for the vendor, it’s no fun for the food and beverage person. There’s only so far down you can go and something gets compromised - quality of life, quality of product.”

“Where the real opportunity is, then, is instead of paying two dollars on your food costs, pay three dollars.

You can tell people where the product came from, that there’s a conscientious group of people, a team of growers on a farm in the United States producing this, growing it in a regenerative fashion.”

“I think people underestimate what the end user recognizes as quality, and that they’re willing to pay a little bit more to have it. That’s why storytelling is so important. It’s important for us, but it’s also important for us to give chefs stories that they can tell.”

Farming according to the flow of nature’s seasons is another surefire way to grow the best quality, farm-fresh vegetables, according to Farmer Lee. “There’s a natural rhythm to food,” he said. “And if you listen to your body, there are times your body will tell you that it needs certain foods. You need beets, you need kale. I think there’s an emerging group of people who are really listening to their bodies. It’ll tell you that you need iron. It’ll tell you that you need calcium. I almost think it’s in our DNA.”

“If you listen to Mother Nature, she’ll tell you what to put on the menu. When it’s in season, celebrate it. When it’s out of season, move onto the next thing.”

Philosophies, strategies, stories and economic logic aside, Farmer Lee said if the vegetables doesn’t taste good and people don’t eat it, quality becomes irrelevant.

“I don’t think we can ever talk about the importance of flavor enough,” he said. “Flavor and quality go hand in hand. Flavor is the single most important thing that we do. It can be nutrient rich, it can be nutrient dense, it can be healthy, but if it doesn’t taste good ... how do you get a kid to eat a vegetable? For it to taste good. How do you get an adult to eat a vegetable? For it to taste good. All the other things don’t matter because they’re not going to eat it if it doesn’t taste good.”

“I’ve heard adults say ‘I don’t do beets,’” he continued. “Maybe they had a beet when they were a kid. Remember those huge jars of pickled beets on the store counter? They’re nasty. I’ve had people eat a fresh beet that has flavor, and it’s almost like an awakening. They’re literally in tears because they’re like ‘oh my god, I didn’t realize what I was missing.’”

“For us on the farm, we’re never going to do it cheaper and we’re never going to do it extremely efficiently,” he said. “There’s a misconception among chefs that they can’t afford to use it, and I think it’s almost exactly the opposite of that. They can’t afford not to.”

“IT’S ABOUT GROWING WITH A PURPOSE,” HE SAID. “WHAT’S THE PURPOSE? WHY? I’VE BEEN SEEING THAT MORE AND MORE, AND I’VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT THAT.”



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# Fall Favorites

Butternut squash is a foundational, versatile fall vegetable. It's at home in a cozy soup, roasted and topping a salad of fresh field greens like Swiss chard, or on the Thanksgiving table. Badger flame beets, with their fiery interior, are eye-popping visual beauties. Baby leeks are a fresh green way to inject a mild onion flavor to all things fall. Our collection of mixed herbs, and spicy arugasabi blooms add bright flavors all over the menu.

*butternut 898*  
06BFBS-26



leaf sampler 50 ct. (08LFS-33)



arugasabi blooms 50 ct. (05ASB-33)



demi herb sampler 75 ct. (08HSB-33)



badger flame beet 10# (01YBFBT-26)



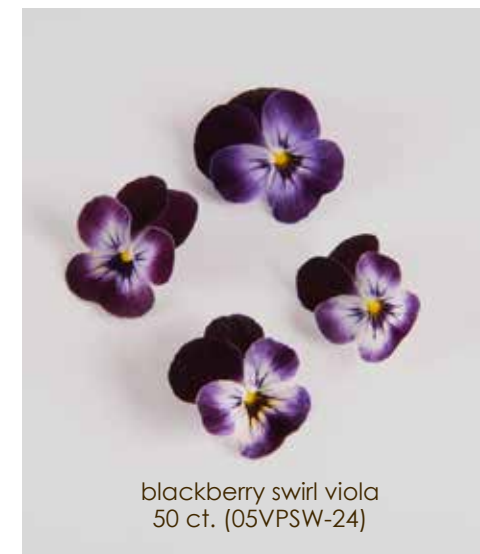
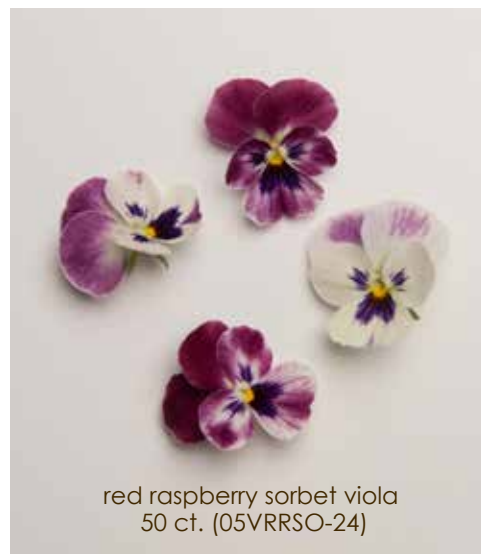
ultra rainbow swiss chard  
50 ct. (04URCP-33)



baby leeks # (01BLK-2)

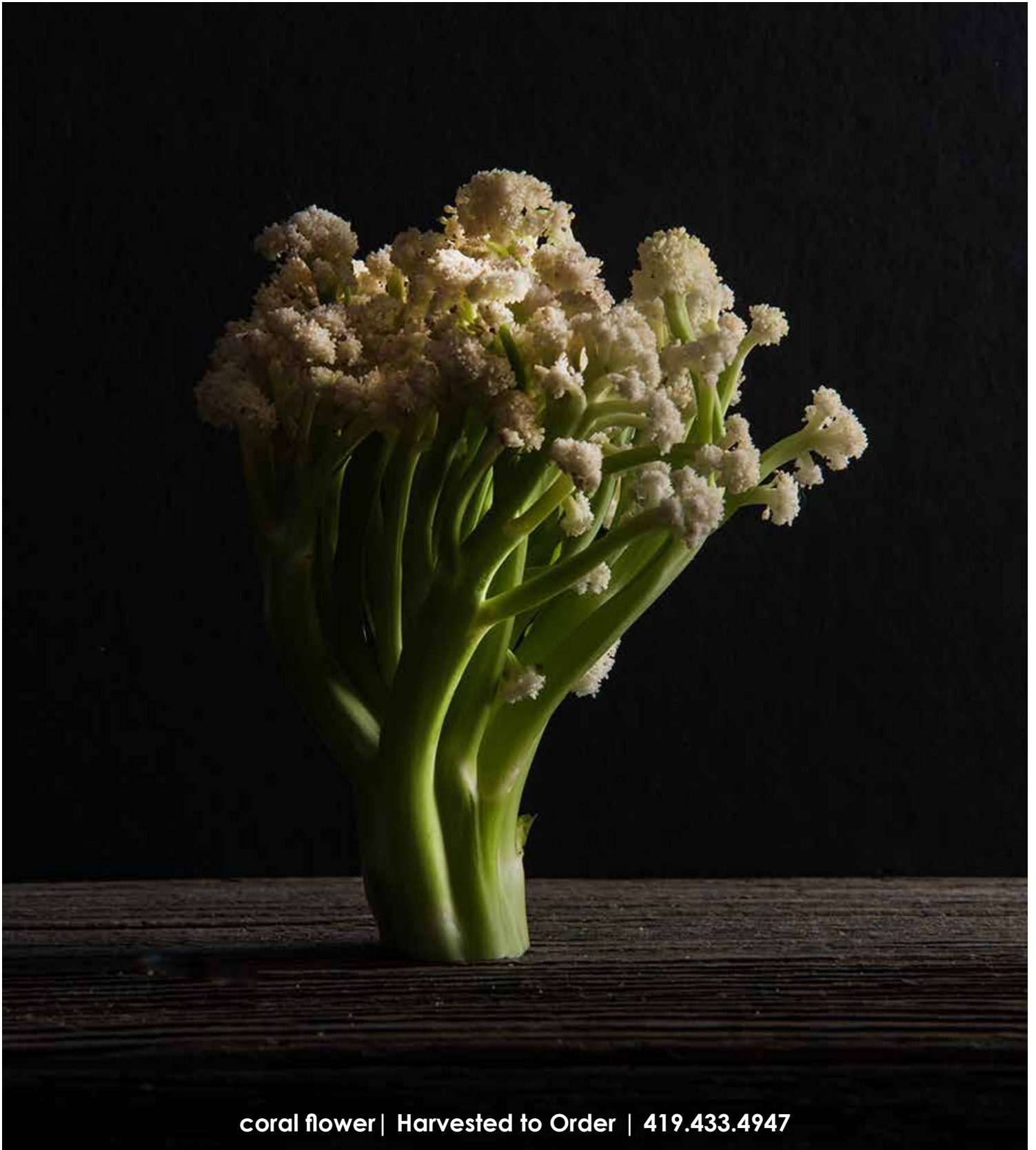


# Have You...



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