

# Did You Know?

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## Ramps – *Allium tricoccum*

- Common names include ramps, wood leek, wild onion, spring onion, and wild garlic.
- Ramps resemble a green onion, though have oval leaves, smell like garlic and onions and have an onion-like flavor.
- Garlic, onions, leeks and chives are other edible members of the Allium family.
- The native range for ramps are the woodlands of the eastern part of the United States and Canada.
- The city of Chicago is named for the ramps plant, which comes from *shikaakwa* (*chicagou*) in the language of local native tribes.
- Native American tribes such as the Iroquois and Cherokee have traditionally used ramps to treat cold symptoms and as a spring tonic.
- Since it is one of the first plants to emerge in the spring, rural people within this plant's native range in particular, considered it a spring tonic plant.
- USDA lists ramps as a plant of special concern in Main, Rhode Island and Tennessee. Tennessee also list ramps as a concern for commercial exploitation. Yet ramps are on the invasive species list for Arkansas.
- Ramps are listed on the United Plant Savers "To Watch" list due to their increased popularity and potential for over harvesting.
- Harvesting one leaf per plant and leaving the bulb is a sustainable method of harvesting, now advocated by conservationists. Ramps mature slowly, taking 7 years to reach maturity in the forest.