

## reason2.be informed



Photo: Wild flanders poppies

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### What's new

This month we are introducing fresh organic milk for delivery. We have received quite a few requests for milk, so we are happy to start providing it for our subscribers. The milk is not only organic but also bio-dynamic, which is an holistic farming method. For more information on the milk please see the below article. If you would like to add milk to your delivery, just visit the [manage subscription](#) link on the

website. You may also want to choose the cool box option if you are usually not at home during the day.

Our newsletter this month is focusing on seasonal lettuces. There are actually many varieties being grown organically in Belgium and they range from the ubiquitous iceberg to the bitter tasting radicchio. Find out more about the varieties on page 2. We'll

be delivering different varieties while they are in season.

We are excited to be attending some promotional fairs next month. Specifically the "Fete de environnement" and the "I am not a tourist" (see back page for details). Why not pop down to say hello to myself and Valerie—we'd be happy to see any of you and talk about any aspect of the business.

Thanks Ben

### Organic Milk

From the middle of May we have started to sell fresh organic milk. The milk is produced in Holland by Zuiver Zuivel.

The farming is of course organic, but also goes a step further by using an agricultural method that takes into account the complete cycle of farming. This means that the farm is treated as an ecosystem where there is an integration of crops and livestock, recycling of nutrients, maintenance of soil, and the health and well being of crops and animals. The farmer too is part of the whole. This leads to a series of holistic farming practices.

# zuiver @zuivel

### Clover in the chain

As far as we're concerned the emphasis is on cohesive interaction. For instance, our dairy cows assist arable farming. They consume grass and purple lucerne-clover that combine nitrogen from the air. They can roam freely in 'straw yard' dairy barns and the straw, which is freshly distributed to them on a daily basis, is eventually converted into quality manure for the soil, which in turn guarantees a sustainable future for man and his natural environment. Young people living at the 'Gezinsboerderij' (Home Farm) can experience for themselves how all the different aspects of the natural environment come together.

**Piet van IJendoorn of the 'Zonnehoeve' (farm) in Zeewolde**

### Zuiver zuivel bio-dynamic milk



## Reason2.be seasonal: Lettuce

Batavia



- **Batavia** *Laitue Batavia* in French and *Batavia Sla* in Flemish)

Batavia lettuce is classed as a loose-leaf lettuce, or semi-heading lettuce.

In hot weather the leaves retain their crispness and are slow to bolt (i.e. going from flower to seed before having the chance to harvest).

It is popular in France, owing both to its taste and its good shelf life after harvesting. It takes about 50 days from seed to maturity.

Varieties include Blonde de Paris, Doree de Printemps, Glorie du dauphine and many more.

**Make:** Oily dressings cling easily to its leaves.

Oak leaf



- **Oak leaf** (*Laitue feuille de Chêne* in French and *Eikenbladsla* in Flemish)

There are 2 different types of oak leaf lettuce, Green and red. Both are loose leaf lettuces and have oak tree-like leaves that are only close to each other at the stem. The green leaves have a very mild bitterness that make them popular in mesclun mixes.

The red oak leaf lettuce has a slightly more bitter taste than the green, and has wine-red leaf tips.

**Make:**

The green oak leaf lettuce has a taste that mixes well with other lettuces in a salad. These lettuces wilt easily but can be revived in cold water.

- **Iceberg** (*Laitue iceberg* in French and *ijsbergsla* in Flemish)

Iceberg has a firm, tight head of crisp, pale green leaves. The leaves have a great deal of moisture in them and have a mild flavor.

Iceberg lettuce is the most popular of all varieties due to the long life and crunchy texture. Apart from potatoes, it is the best selling vegetable of any type.

**Why?** Iceberg is not as nutritious as lettuces with darker leaves but only has 6.5 calories and 1 g of fat.

**Make:** Cut out the core, wash then chop or tear leaves off or slice head into wedges.

Iceberg



Scarlote



- **Escarole** (*Chicoree scarole* in French and *Escarole* in Flemish)

Escarole is the broad leaved version of endive. Of all the members of the endive family, Escaroles has the most bitter taste.

With its broad leaves, Escarole looks like a traditional head of leaf lettuce, but can be recognized by the jaggedy edges and the color. It has bright green leaves on the outside and paler green leaves at its heart. The pale leaves have the mildest flavor.

**Make:**

It needs washing twice to get rid of all the dirt. It is slightly bitter, so use the leaves as you would raw spinach for use in more robust salad. Can also be cooked in soups or braised.

- **Lollo Bianca/rosso** (*Laitue lollo* in French and *Lollosla* in Flemish)

Lollo Rosso is a loose leaf lettuce with a bit more bitterness than other traditional lettuces, but with the full bitter tang of escarole or chicon.

It has soft, ruffled leaves that are a medium-green colour with a deep purply-red tinge on the frilly edges.

Lollo rosso grows 15cm to 20cm wide and tolerates heat well without boiling. The lettuce can be partially harvested and it will continue to grow. It takes 55 days from seed to maturity.

**Make:** Lollo rosso can add some redness without the bitterness.

- **Radicchio** (*Laitue Radicchio* in French and *Flemish*)

Radicchio is a leafy salad vegetable with dark red leaves. It is variety of chicory, making it a member of the endive family.

The plants are harvested with green leaves, then stored in cold, dark rooms until they are needed at the shops. The leaves turn red and take on the bitterness once the temperature is raised.

**Why?** Per cup, (about 40g): 9.2 calories, 1g protein, 9g sodium, 2g carbohydrate.

**Make:** It can be used raw or in cooking. Either way, it is usually mixed with other items so that its bitterness can act as a complement to their flavours.

Lollo



Radicchio



## 4 quick lettuce recipes

### Lettuce with mushrooms

#### Ingredients:

3 cups of sliced mushrooms.  
1 small leek, thinly sliced.  
1 small clove garlic, finely chopped.  
2 tablespoons of vegetable oil.  
1 tablespoon of white wine vinegar.  
½ teaspoon of salt.  
½ teaspoon of dry mustard.

Pinch of pepper.  
1 firm head of lettuce, about 1 0.5kg, coarsely shredded

#### Directions:

In a pan over medium heat, cook and stir the mushrooms, leek and garlic in the vegetable oil, until the mushrooms are tender.

Stir in the white wine vinegar, salt, mustard and pepper.

Add the shredded lettuce.

Cover and simmer just until lettuce is wilted (about 5 minutes).

Toss, then serve immediately.

Lettuce with mushrooms



### Spicy lettuce salad

#### Ingredients:

1 garlic clove, crushed.  
¼ cup of white vinegar.  
2 tablespoons of fresh onion, minced.  
1 tablespoon of olive oil.

½ teaspoon of chilli powder.  
Pinch of salt.

16 cups of iceberg lettuce, torn.

#### Directions:

Combine all of the ingredients

except the torn lettuce in a jar. Cover and shake.

Pour over the lettuce.

Toss and serve

Spicy lettuce salad



### Lettuce rolls

#### Ingredients:

3 large Lettuce leaves.  
1 tablespoon of Sesame or sunflower seeds.  
1 tablespoon of Softened cream cheese

#### Directions:

Wash lettuce and pat dry with paper towel.

Spread a third of the cream cheese onto each lettuce leaf.

Sprinkle the seeds over the cheese and roll up the leaves.

Secure the rolls with a cocktail stick.

### Cream of lettuce soup

#### Ingredients:

1 leek.  
2 iceberg lettuces.  
1 medium onion.  
2 medium potatoes.  
50g of butter.  
1 litre of chicken stock.  
½ cup of cream.  
Salt and pepper.  
Milk, for thinning.  
Freshly chopped chives, to

garnish

#### Directions:

Wash and clean the leek and lettuces; then finely chop. Peel and chop the onion and potatoes. In a saucepan, melt the butter and gently sauté onion and leek until soft. Add the lettuce, potatoes and chicken stock, then bring to the boil, and simmer until

potatoes are tender (about 30 minutes).

Purée in a blender, then reheat in a clean saucepan. Add the cream, salt and pepper.

Thin slightly with milk if required.

Serve either hot or cold with an extra swirl of cream and freshly chopped chives

Cream of lettuce soup



## Give something back



We have recently received new books and toys for our exchange service, so thanks to the people that have donated so far.

We are still trying to build up the library of books and toys, so any further donations would be very welcome.

We will also add a French and Flemish library in the future, so any old books you don't want would help us.

If you would like to join the book and toy exchange club, you can do so for €0.50 added to your regular subscription. Go to manage your subscription to find out more.

By joining the club you will also be entitled to other services such as our glass recycling service.



## Who are we

We are a husband and wife team hailing from Manchester and Le Mans respectively.

We have a passion for organic food, and have been running reason2.be since October 2008.

We welcome any feedback or comments you may have in improving our service.



*Ben and Valerie are reason2.be*

Correspondence to:  
Vredesstraat 88F  
Kontich 2550

e-mail: [ben@reason2.be](mailto:ben@reason2.be)

## Reason2.be on tour

### Environment fair—June 7th

Celebrate our planet at the Environment Fête in Brussels' Parc du Cinquanteaire. Now in its tenth year, the event is no longer the prerogative of a handful of vegetarians, but should be the concern of every citizen.



With street theatre, organic food, information booths and a free concert,

### Expatica fair—June 14th

Experience the first "i am not a tourist" Fair in Brussels. This is Expatica's lifestyle fair for internationals and expatriates living and working in Belgium. Mark it down in your calendar and visit at Espace53 (Autoworld Museum),



Cinquanteaire - Brussels. Bring your family and friends for a fun day out.

The "i am not a tourist" Fair will have a range of valuable resources from previous European fairs, but with extra attention given to lifestyle and community related resources for the experienced expat. Those of you who already have your bearings in Belgium can therefore enjoy as many of the features as the newcomers, including food, entertainment and networking fixtures. Also artists will be exhibiting their work.