

The Washington Post

ONLINE IMPRESSIONS: 264,784

September 9, 2009

Free Range on Food

Live Discussion with the Post Food section staff

Free Range on Food: Staffers Solve Your Cooking Conundrums

Vegetable stock: A few weeks ago you had suggested not using a store bought chicken stock for use in risotto. I need to use a vegetable stock in mine, and I'm wondering would a store bought work for this purpose? If it is better to have it from scratch, what vegetables do I need to boil together to get that strong flavor that you had mentioned?

Bonnie Benwick: We did? It's easier to control the sodium if you make your own, of course. And some store-bought broths work better than others; we [taste-tested](#) them last November and rated Swanson Natural Goodness Chicken Broth the highest. Often I prefer using veg stock for risotto -- more pure flavor. Leeks, carrots, celery, onion (with skins) and mushrooms should give you a nice balance. Throw in some fresh herbs, too, such as thyme or marjoram. Bring to barely a boil, then cook with some bubbles at the edges. Season to taste. Strain before using.