

Onion Guide



Preparation

Onions prefer a loose, well drained, rich, peaty soil in full sun.

Amend your soil with **Paydirt** and **Gold Rush**, using one bag of each for a 50' row (equivalent to one bundle of 100 plants). Heavier soils can be made into raised beds, or use more



amendment. Fertilize with **Master Start** according to package directions. Soil fertility at the early stages of growth has the greatest effect on bulb size and fullness.

Rows should be 15"-18" apart. Remember that onions are shallow rooted and will need moisture near the surface.



Planting & Care

Onions can be grown from seed, bulb or transplants. Be sure to fertilize monthly through April with **Master's Tomato & Vegetable Food**. The larger and stronger the plant, the bigger the bulb it forms.

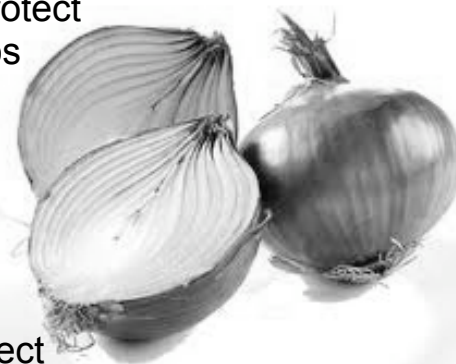
Seeds should be started in early fall to early winter, either in the ground or inside. Follow the package directions, or, generally, sow 1/4" deep, in rows 15"-18" apart or in flats. Seedlings will need to be thinned to one per 4"-6". Thinned plants can be eaten or



transplanted.

Bulbs & Transplants (aka sets) can be planted in fall. Tops of the bulbs should be 1.5" deep (on transplants, where the change in color on the plant is) and 4"-6" apart in rows 15"-18" apart. Plant them closer for green onions if you wish. Bulb size is affected somewhat by spacing, i.e. the closer the planting, the smaller the bulbs. Trim the tops of the transplants halfway.

A good mulch of humus, straw or lawn clippings will help maintain even soil moisture and protect developing bulbs from sunburn. Keep weeds at bay to prevent nutrient competition.

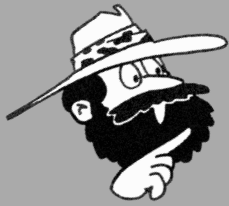


Don't expect much growth until January. Come January, they will begin to grow rapidly. High temperatures in January can cause bolting (flowering). These should have the entire bloom stalk removed as soon as noticed. You can only partially stop the bolting process, so use these onions as soon as possible because they will not store well.

Bulb size will expand through spring. In late May, the green tops will start to bend. At this time, reduce watering and hope for little rain as the onion forms its skin and matures in dry soil.

Continued on back

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Onion Guide Continued



Harvest

You can eat your onions as soon as they sprout as green onions or cut a few leaves at any time.

Scallions and Bunching Onions do not form bulbs and are harvested like scallions or green onions.

For onion bulbs, choose a warm June afternoon to bend all the tops over so that they lay on the soil and cover any expanded portion of the onion bulb that is not already covered.

When the tops are completely wilted and the onions are loose in the soil harvesting can begin.

Remember that harvest dates can vary up to 30 days depending on weather, cultural practices and planting dates.

Lay harvested onions in a dark, cool, dry place for about 10 days. Trim away most of the stem, roots and shuck off loose skin and soil.

Storage

Keep onions one layer deep in a dark, cool, dry place until needed. Length of storage time will vary by variety. In general, most yellow onions store longer than red and white onions.

Many stored onions will start to re-sprout in October. If this happens, you can replant your sprouts in the garden and use their abundant foliage for green onions.



Varieties-Transplants

Early Red Burger- Red onion that has replaced the traditional Stockton Red due to seed viability. Sweet, mild flavor. Perfect round shape and flavor for burgers, sandwiches and salads.

Stockton Yellow- Popular round, yellow cooking onion. Strong, complex, rich onion taste good for French onion soup.

Solano White- White globe shaped onion with a thin skin and very good sweet, moderately pungent flavor. Great for cooking. 190 days to harvest.

Sweet Pak- Large yellow onion with sweet, mild flavor. Vidalia type, 170 days to harvest.

Sweet Spanish-Very large yellow onion for slicing. Mild sweet flavor. Often over 2lbs!

Red Torpedo- Long, pointed bulbs. Soft, mild, large, pale red onion.

Walla Walla Sweet- Popular favorite sweet jumbo sized white/yellow onion. Yellow skin and pale yellow flesh. Great for fresh use in sandwiches. Typically does not keep for long periods.

