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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Onions

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Planting

- Most onions can be planted from seed from April 1 to June 1, March 20 to June 15, and March 10 to July 1 for eastern, central, and western Kentucky.
- Plant seeds at a depth of $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.
- Onion sets can be planted in the spring, March 15, March 10, and March 1 in eastern, central and western Kentucky.
- Plant sets at a depth of 1 to 2 inches deep.
- Final plant spacing should be 4 inches.
- Bulb onions can tolerate partial shade.
- If planting in a container it should be 6 inches deep.



Care and Harvest

- 2.5 lb/100 sq ft of a 5-10-10-10 fertilizer should be enough for a small garden.
- 10 lbs of a high nitrogen fertilizer (eg. 33-0-0) should be applied 1 to 2 weeks after bulbs start to form.
- The garden will need 1 inch of water a week, including rain. Take special care when the bulbs are enlarging.
- Onions can be outcompeted by faster growing weeds. Ensuring that the bed has no weed seeds and preventing weed growth is best. If weeding, be careful not to pull small onion plants accidentally.
- Onions are ready for harvest 40-120 days after seeds are planted. This will be about when $\frac{2}{3}$ of the tops have fallen over. Wait until tops have turned brown and died for longer storage time.
- To harvest, loosen plants with a fork and remove them from the soil whole.



Storage and Use

- Onions should be cured in the sun for 2-7 days. Partially cover the bulbs with tops to prevent sunscald.
- Finish drying inside for 3 to 4 weeks, out of direct sunlight in a well ventilated area. Spread onions out no more than 2 layers deep on newspaper or hang them in small bunches. When ready the skins will be papery and the roots shriveled.
- Remove the onion tops before storage.
- Whole onions keep longest, for several months, in a cool dark, dry place.
- Cut onions keep for 7 days in the refrigerator, with the peel left on when possible.
- Onions can be frozen without blanching. Peel and chop the onions before placing them in freezer containers.
- Onions can be canned in a water bath if pickled in vinegar. Onions will be mushy if pressure-canned.

References

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RECIPE

Dilled Salad Onions

From The Mini Farming Bible

Pack into sterilized pint jars:

- 3 lbs onions, peeled and sliced thinly

Bring to a boil:

- 1 ½ cup vinegar
- 1 ½ cup sugar
- ¾ cup water
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 ½ teaspoon dill weed

Pour into pint jars leaving ½ inch head space.

Process in a boiling water bath canner for 15 minutes.