



# ONIONS

Onions can be started from bulbs known as sets, or transplanted from seed. Bulbs tend to stay fresher longer, while transplants are more perishable and need to be planted sooner.

## VARIETIES

Although there are many varieties, most fall into categories; white, yellow and purple. Yellow are typically sweeter while white are sharper & tangier. Purple onions are the mildest and usually eaten fresh.

## PLANTING

Onion bulbs can be planted from February 15<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>. The ideal time to plant is in March. Plant bulbs shallow with the tip of the bulb nearing the surface of the soil. It is beneficial to fertilize with nitrogen once a month and they should be watered at least once a week. More water typically produces sweeter onions.

It is very important to combat weeds. It is easiest to hand pull weeds. Mulching well can help prevent widespread weed growth.

## BED PREPARATION

Onions require plenty of sun & rich, loose soil with very little clay. They prefer a pH level between 6.2 & 6.8. Soil high in phosphorus & potassium works best.

Prepare a bed by tilling the soil at least 6" deep and mixing in a few inches of compost on top. Fabric can be laid between rows to prevent weeds while allowing moisture to reach the soil.

Some suggest planting a radish bed nearby to attract maggots away from onion patches.

## HARVESTING

Onions are ready to harvest when the tops begin to yellow and bend over. This is usually in July or August or 100-115 days after planting. Carefully dig the mature onions & cut their tops to an inch above the onion. Leave in the sun for a couple of days before storing indoors.