



The Plant Professionals

Onion Planting Guide

Caring Instructions:

Plants should be planted as soon as possible. The plants may appear dry but do not be alarmed, as they are dormant. Don't worry if you cannot plant immediately, even if the roots and tips begin to dry out. The onion is a member of the lily family and as such, will live off the bulb for approximately three weeks. The first thing the onion will do after planting is establish new roots.

Preparing the Soil:

Onions are the best grown in direct sunlight on raised beds at least 4" high and 20" wide. Spacing of rows should be 35" from the center of one row to the center of the next row. Onion growth and yield can be enhanced by banding a fertilizer, such as Rocket Fuel (2-6-1), 2-3" below transplants at planting time. Make a trench in the center of the bed 4" deep, distribute 1/2 cup of fertilizer per 10 linear feet of row. Cover the fertilizer with 2" of soil and plant the transplants 6" from the trench on each side of the bed. Do not plant the transplants in the trench.

Planting:

Set plants out approximately 1" deep with 4" spacing. On the raised bed, set two rows on each bed, 4" in from the side of the row. Pull every other onion during the growing season, leaving some to mature into larger onions.

Fertilization:

Three weeks after planting, the onions will need additional Nitrogen such as ammonium sulfate (21-0-0), at the rate of 1 cup per 20 feet of row, and spread down the center of the top of the bed. Repeat the process every 2 to 3 weeks. Stop fertilizing within 3 weeks of harvest, when the necks begin to feel soft.

Watering:

Water the transplants immediately after planting. Because of the shallow root system onions require frequent furrow irrigation. Avoid overhead irrigation. If the foliage has an unhealthy, yellowish tint, the plants are being over-irrigated. Onions generally require 30" of irrigation during a growing season and the closer to harvest, the greater the need for water.