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SUCCESSFUL ONION PLANTING

Need:

Rich, well drained soil - Shale & Covington Soil Builder
Hi-Yield Ammonium Sulfate (21-0-0) or
Organic - Marine Cuisine (10-7-7) or
Organic - Nature's Guide Cottonseed Meal (6-1-1)

Onion sets
Ferti-lome Gardener's Special (11-15-11) or
Organic – Happy Frog (5-8-4)

Preparing the Soil:

Onions are best grown on raised beds at least 4" high. When preparing the soil at planting time, dig a 4" trench for the length of the area you wish to grow onions in, spread ferti-lome Gardener's Special (11-15-11) along the trenches at the rate of 1/2 cup per 10 linear feet of row, and cover that fertilizer with 2" of soil, then plant your transplants. For organic gardeners, we recommend our Happy Frog 5-8-4 organic fertilizer. In both cases, the bed should be rich in compost and well draining.

Planting:

Set plants out approximately 1" deep with a 4" spacing. If you wanted to harvest some of the onions as green onions during the growing season, you may plant the plants as closely as 2" apart and pull every other onion prior to them beginning to bulb, leaving the remainder to become larger onions. Transplants should be set out four to six weeks before the last average spring freeze. 1015 Yellow and Candy onions tend to be the sweetest, with Granex onions having more bite. (The sweeter onions don't "keep" quite as long after harvest. Keep it in mind when selecting onion types.)

Fertilization and Growing Tips:

Onions require a strong nitrogen feeding to produce well. Apply Hi-Yield Ammonium Sulfate (21-0-0) at the rate of one pound per 20" of row, three weeks after planting and every 4-6 weeks thereafter. Always water strongly after feeding and maintain moisture during the growing season.

For organic gardeners, top dress with either Nature's Guide Cottonseed Meal, Marine Cuisine, or bat guano, on the same schedule as the conventional gardener.

Any fertilizer containing sulfur will tend to give onions a sharper bite. Withhold watering the last 3 weeks before harvesting so your onions will store well. Harvest after the tops flop over and have browned out and weathered. If your onions have flowered, they will not be good for harvesting and eating.