

ANOTHER  
HERB HERBERT  
FACT SHEET

SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS  
GOURMET VEGETABLES  
Onions



*Allium cepa*



DESCRIPTION

All throughout the world onions are recognised as an addition to many dishes. Onions are now available fresh, frozen, canned, caramalised, pickled, powdered, chopped and dehydrated. Onions are used in a variety of dishes, where they are usually chopped or sliced, and can be eaten both raw and cooked. Depending on the variety, onion can be sharp, acidic, sweet, mild, pungent or tangy. Traces of onion have been found alongside other fruits such as fig, dating back to 5000 BC. However, evidence suggests that onions were cultivated some 2,000 years later during ancient Egyptian times. It is also suggested that ancient Egyptians working on the pyramids were fed onions, with their culture believing that the onions rings and shapes symbolised eternal life. In ancient Greece, athletes were said to eat large quantities of onions as they believed it would lighten the balance of blood, while Roman gladiators rubbed the vegetable on their skin to firm up their muscles. They were also prescribed to women in the 16th century to help with infertility in women. Red Bunching Perennial. Evergreen with red skin. Used as Welsh Onions. This variety has a mild sweet

taste, growing to a height of 28-30in/70-75cm. 45 days to harvest. Walking Onion (Brown Tree Onion). Perennial bulb. The name Walking Onion comes from the clusters of small bulbs on the tip of the stems bending down to take root away from the main plant. All parts of the plant can be used. Onion Walla Walla. Best when eaten raw or only slightly cooked. Sweetens any dish and are not pungent due to their low sulfur content. 105 days.



USES

Onion is used widely in cooking and is said to taste best fresh in salads and can also be used in pizza topping and quiche filling. Some onions, such as the Walla Walla onion, are said to be so sweet that they can be eaten as onions!



CULTIVATION

Onion generally hibernates in winter, but this will vary depending on the variety. The onions will grow best in fertile and well-drained soils. For best results grow in heavy soil containing mulch. Plant in full sunlight. For more information on keeping your vegetables healthy see our organic gardening fact sheet on the Herb Herbert website. Select 'Special Interest' tab and select 'Organic Gardening' in the pull down menu. Companion plant to Parsley. Grow in the same soil each year with the old stems and leaves dug into the soil for compost.



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This Herb description is for informal use only; we cannot accept any liability for any harm or illness arising from the misuse of the plant described above

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