

## ONIONS, BULBING

*Allium cepa*

**Origin:** South-Western Asia

**Edible Portion:** Swollen leaf bases

### SOWING AND PLANTING

**Climatic Requirements:** Warm growing season of 3-5 months with dry autumn conditions to aid bulb curing and harvesting.

**Preferred Soil Type:** Well structured, free draining friable alluvial loams and peats.

**Seed Required:** Precision seeding 3.5-5.5kg/ha of pelleted seed, conventional seeding 4.5-6.75kg/ha.

**Optimum Soil Temperature Range for Germination:** 10.0-35.0°C.

**Emergence Time:** 4-31 days, optimum 13 days.

**Plant Spacing:** In-row 5.0-7.5cm, between rows 20.0-35.0cm, rows per raised bed 5-9, bed centres 1.5-2.0m.

**Plants per Hectare:** Approx. 650,000.

**Method of Propagation:** In most cases the crop is sown in situ with the precision gang seed drills. Some limited transplanting of seedlings is undertaken on small gate sales properties but is not generally recommended.

**Sowing Dates:** Early spring and main crop fresh onions – April to May. Main crop keepers – August to September.

**Other Sowing and Planting Information:** Seeding depth is between 18-25mm. Seeding depth has an effect on bulb shape, shallow planting produces flatter bulbs and deeper seeding taller bulbs.

### FERTILISER

**Optimum Soil Test Levels:** N = 100-150, P = 75-90, K = 15-25, Mg = 30-50, Ca = 1-15, Na = 1-10.

**Base Dressing (kg/ha):** N = 85.0, P = 35.0, K = 80.0. The base dressing is applied either broadcast and worked into the soil before sowing or is applied as a banded dressing at sowing. For autumn sown onions for early spring maturity the nitrogen in the base dressings should be increased to 110kg/ha.

**Side Dressing (kg/ha):** N = 30.0. The side dressing is applied when the crop reaches 20-30cm in height. Side dressings are not normally applied to autumn sown crops until the late spring. The application of nitrogen as a side dressing late in the growing season can delay maturity and make field curing more difficult, resulting in bulbs with poor storage life.

**Optimum pH Range:** 6.0-6.8.

**Lime Requirement:** Lime is required regularly in order to maintain pH levels within the desirable range.

Safe Fertilisers

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# Safe Fertilisers – Crop Info



## PESTS AND DISEASES

### **Important Pests and Their Control:**

Onion maggot – diazinon incorporated at planting

Nematodes – fenamiphos

Thrips – alpha-cypermethrin, cyfluthrin, deltamethrin, diazinon, dichlorvos, endosulfan, parathion-methyl, tafluvalinate

### **Important Diseases and Their Control:**

Botrytis neck rot – benomyl, carbendazim, dichlofluanid, mancozeb, thiophanate-methyl

Downy mildew – captan, chlorothalonil, copper oxychloride, dichlofluanid, mancozeb/metalaxyl, dimethomorph/mancozeb, mancozeb, propineb

Onion smut – benomul, carbendazim

White rot – procymidone, tebuconazole, triadimenol



## Recommendations:

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## Onion Program

### **Ground preparation:**

Apply; 1 tonne/ha Lime or Liquid Lime @ 20lt/ha in 300lt/water

### **Pre Plant**

Apply 100 Kg/Ha Alroc Extra Phos

Apply 10lt/ha Vital Phos, Boom spray with 200lt/ha water

### **At Planting**

**Option 1;** Apply 350 Kg/Ha NPK 9.5.7 Supablend

With 8lt Vital Phos in 200lt water Boom sprayed onto soil before planting

**Option 2;** Apply 300kg/ha NPK 15.3.8 Supablend

With 8lt Vital phos in 200lt water Boom sprayed onto soil before planting

### **In Crop Fertiliser requirements:**

#### **Nitrogen:**

Safe Coated Urea @ 80kg/ha

Alroc CBM @ 150kg/ha side dressed

#### **Multi Nutrients:**

2 x applications of Vital Mix@ 8lt/ha in 200lt water

This can be folia sprayed, aerial applied or put through an irrigation system.

The above mentioned application rates can be adjusted to what is economical. These adjustments may not provide the ideal nutrient ratios but should replace some of the nutrients that are removed by the crop.

### **Neville Janke**

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### **Disclaimer**

The above program will be affected by soil variation, testing errors, seasonal factors and management skills. Any recommendation should be acted upon as part of an ongoing fertiliser program. No responsibility can be accepted for any of the above matters or other matters that are beyond our control.

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