

## Onions

M. Poffley\* and G. Owens, Senior Extension Officer, Crops, Forestry and Horticulture, Darwin  
\* Formerly DPIFM

### SOWING

Onions can be grown only in the cooler months in the Top End, which limits planting from the end of March to the end of May. The seed bed must be worked to a fine tilth, removing all clods and stones. Place a plank down the row and stand on it to firm down the soil. The seeds can be directly sown in drills, (30 cm between rows, 1-2 cm deep) or planted into seed boxes and transplanted when they reach 75 mm high. If directly sown, care must be taken not to sow too heavily. When the plants are 75-80 mm high they can be thinned out to 10-15 cm between plants. The thinnings may be used in salads as spring onions. As bulbs begin to develop, try not to disturb the soil around the plants as this encourages bulb rotting.

### FERTILISER

Onions are not heavy feeders and generally 70 g/m<sup>2</sup> of a complete fertiliser worked into the soil about a week prior to planting is sufficient.

### WATERING

Adequate water is essential in the early stages, but as bulbs mature and leaves begin to die, watering can be reduced accordingly.

### HARVESTING

The onions will be ready for lifting in five to six months. When the leaves have withered and died, onions can be lifted and either left to lie in the sun till they have dried or hung in a dry, well ventilated area.

When thoroughly dry, i.e. the outer skin rustles and flakes off, the tops and dry roots can be removed. If kept dry in a ventilated position, e.g. in a basket made out of mesh (chicken wire) and hung under cover they should keep for a considerable time.



## **INSECTS AND DISEASES**

Onions are fairly resistant to both.

For information on insect control, please refer to the DPIFM Entomology website at <http://pestinfo.nt.gov.au/>

Please visit us at our website:

**[www.nt.gov.au/dpifm](http://www.nt.gov.au/dpifm)**

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Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines

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ISSN 0157-8243

Serial No. 191

Agdex No. 256

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