

Home Gardening Series

Shallots

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Vegetables

Environment

Light – sunny
Soil – well-drained loam
Fertility – medium-rich
pH – 5.5 to 7.0
Temperature – cool
Moisture – moist

Culture

Planting – cloves in fall
Spacing – 4 x 12-24 inches
Hardiness – hardy biennial
Fertilizer – heavy feeder in spring

Shallots – *Allium cepa aggregatum* group

Although it is not certain that shallots have been found wild, it is most likely that this plant, which dates from about the beginning of the Christian era, is only a modification of a variety of onion.

Shallots are hardy members of the onion family that are prized for their delicate, onionlike flavor. Many gourmet chefs use shallots for sauces, stews, gravies and roasts. Shallots are planted and cared for in much the same manner as onions.

Although there are several varieties of shallots, they are usually listed in garden catalogs simply as

“shallots.” Bulbs for planting may be obtained from seed houses, from a fellow gardener or from the gourmet section of a food store.

Cultural Practices

Shallots produce a cluster of bulbs from a single planted bulb. To plant, divide the clump of shallots into individual bulbs. Plant these individual bulbs 1 to 1 1/2 inches deep and 3 to 4 inches apart. Allow 12 to 24 inches between rows. Planting during February, as soon as the soil can be tilled, will give the best yields. In the southern half of the state, the next year's crop can be planted in late October. Plant bulbs 2 to 3 inches deep. Shallots are very hardy and will survive most winters.

Shallots may be pulled as green onions when their tops are 6 to 8 inches high. Each bulb (“scallion”) will be 3/8 inch or larger in diameter. For dry bulbs, allow the tops of the plants to die down in July. Harvest and handle in the same manner as dry onions. The dry bulbs may be placed in a mesh bag and stored under cool, dry conditions. Shallots keep well and are easily stored until planting time in the spring.

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Cultivars

Crop	Variety	Days to Maturity	Bulbs/ 100 Ft of Row	Sources (see "Sources" paragraph below)	Remarks
Shallots	Dutch Yellow (Yellow)	200	2 lbs	9, 29, 33	Bulbs average 2 inches in diameter, yellow-brown bulb scales; yellow to cream-colored flesh. Each bulb will grow into a cluster of 8 to 12 shallots. Widely adapted. Fall planting.
	French Red	200	2 lbs	9	Reddish-pink bulb scales; pale purple-pink flesh; mild, distinctive flavor. Each bulb multiplies to produce up to 30 additional bulbs. Widely adapted, but does not keep well.
	Grey	200	2 lbs	29, 33	In France, grey shallots are considered the best. Large, elongated bulb, about 4 inches long. Bulb scales firm, dull, grayish brown; purple-white flesh; strong, distinctive flavor. Does not store well.
	Shallot (French Shallot)	200	2 lbs	1, 29	Each bulb divides during the growing season to form a cluster of 6 or more shallots. Can also be harvested for green onions early in the season. Dark orange-brown skin with a pink cast; purple-white flesh; delicate, garlic-like flavor.
	Prisma Hybrid	95	2 lbs	8, 27	Red skinned; long- to mid-day shallot. Smooth, thick skinned; great storage ability; easy to grow from seed.
	Matador Hybrid	95	2 lbs	8, 27	Long- to mid-day French shallot with reddish brown, thick skins; round shape; forms few clusters; excellent keeper; easy to grow from seed.

Sources

For a list of sources referred to by number, request FSA6106, *Seed Sources: Vegetable and Herb*, for current address, telephone and web site.

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