

# Shallot

*Shallots are no longer known only to gourmets. They're small, clustered onions but with more interesting flavors, and far easier to grow than large, bulbing types. Shallots are great in sauces, stir fries, stews, and soups.*

**PLANTING:** Shallots yield more when fall planted, but still produce when started in spring. Space 4-6" apart in rows 18" apart. Plant the bulb root side down, the top of the bulb one inch below the surface. Planting too deep grows elongated bulbs that don't store well.

**CULTURE:** Full sun. Needs soil that is light, loamy, rich in organic matter and plant nutrients. Well fertilized, well drained and kept moist.

**GROWING:** For really large bulbs, side-dress the overwintered plants late in Feb. and again on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Use chicken manure or any kind of seedmeal (cottonseed meal, canola meal, linseed, soybean, etc.) at a rate of about 2-3 Tblsp. per 5 row-feet or ½ to 1 gallon per 50 row feet. When the bulbing begins, any mulch or soil covering the bulbs should be pulled back so the bulbs form on the surface of the soil and dry down.

**HARVEST:** The tops of these species often make very tasty scallions. However, if you snip off too many leaves, there will be fewer and smaller bulbs. It is important that the bulbs form tough protective skins. In order to accomplish this stop watering plants them as the bulbs are forming. The time to harvest is when most of the tops have browned off and fallen over. Loosen the soil first with a spading fork, and then gently lift the bulbs. Their skins have not hardened yet so avoid bruising or tearing the skins.

The bulbs \_ with their tops still attached\_ should be air-dried for two to three weeks until the tops have completely shriveled. Then cut tops off with a sharp blade, one inch above the bulb. Spread bulbs out on wire racks in the shade or garage to cure for 2-3 months Then store for winter or replant.

**STORAGE:** Like all onion bulbs, shallots need cool, dry storage with lots of air circulation. They are best hung in mesh bags at a temperature of about 40°F, but they will keep quite well at 50°F if they have been properly cured and are not tightly packed.

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