UofA UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

Agriculture and Natural Resources

FSA6095

Home Gardening Series

Shallots

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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 var. aggregatum*

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. Pliny the Elder described the "Ascalon" onion, shallot, in his *Natural History,* AD 77.

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 inches deep. Shallots are very hardy and will survive most winters.

Shallots can be grown from seed in the northern half of Arkansas. Shallots grown from seed are responsive to day length and need to be planted early enough in the spring to respond to the lengthening days of summer for bulb formation. Plant seed 1/2 inch deep and 1/2 to 3/4 inch apart in a 2- to 4-inch band of a bed at a seeding rate of 40 to 50 seed per foot of row. This will produce a high percentage of single bulb plants. Thinner stands may result in clusters of bulbs.

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Cultivars

Crop	Cultivar	Days to Maturity	Seed or Bulbs Per 100 Feet of Row	Remarks
Shallots (fall-planted bulbs)	Dutch Yellow (Yellow)	200	2 pounds	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 pounds	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 or Griselle (French Shallot)	200	2 pounds	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.
Shallots (spring-planted seeds)	Prisma Hybrid	95	1/8 ounce	Red-skinned, long- to mid-day shallot. Smooth, thick skinned; great storage ability; easy to grow from seed.
	Matador Hybrid	95	1/8 ounce	Long- to mid-day French shallot with reddish-brown, thick skins, round shape, forms few clusters, excellent keeper, easy to grow from seed.
	Ambition Hybrid	100	1/8 ounce	French, half-long style bulb. Reddish skin with white flesh, stores well.
	Conservor Hybrid	110	1/8 ounce	Reddish-brown skin, white flesh, produces high percentage of single bulbs.
	Picador Hybrid	105	1/8 ounce	French, half-long style bulb. Reddish skin with white flesh, stores well.
	Saffron Hybrid	100	1/8 ounce	Copper skin with yellow flesh, stores well.

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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