

Egyptian Walking Onion

Planting & Growing Guide

Questions? Contact us at (888) 784-1722 or helpdesk@groworganic.com



Egyptian Walking Onions (EWO) (*Allium x proliferum*) are a perennial onion resulting from a cross between a common onion and a Welsh onion. They are red to white in color and are thought to have originated in India or Pakistan. The EWO gets its name for the way it spreads or “walks” through the garden. Common onions produce a flower stalk which is where the seeds are produced. EWOs produce topsets or clusters of bulbils which will fall over as their size increases (if not harvested) and will root where they hit the ground. This is how they “walk” through the garden.

EWO, also called Tree Onions, Perennial Onions, Winter Onions or Topset Onions, are very hardy, to -24°F and will grow in USDA zones 3-10. The onions can grow to the size of a shallot but are more pungent and spicy.

GROWING BASICS

Soil: Plant in well-drained soil, that is high in organic matter and a pH between 6.2-6.8, or fairly neutral. If soil does not drain well, plant in raised beds, hills or containers.

Spacing: Space bulbs about 10-12 inches apart and rows 2' apart.

Companion planting:

Incompatibility – asparagus, beans, peas, cabbage, turnips, squash, cucumbers or melons.

Companions – marigold, fennel, carrots, tomato, potato, peppers, okra.

Water requirements: Requires even moisture for good yields, so it will be essential to mulch in the summer and if natural rains are absent in the summer, drip irrigation will need to be in place. EWO can fail if they are allowed to grow in soggy, wet conditions.

Fertilization: EWO do not require heavy fertilization, a good organic all-purpose fertilizer is a good choice.

Weeding: Keep well weeded, does not compete well with weeds.

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Plant in full sun, but will tolerate some partial shade. **Note:** EWO are tolerant to juglone and therefore can be planted under or near a walnut tree or where one was grown prior.

PLANTING & GROWING

Plant in a dedicated bed, since they are perennials or put a in container. Individual bulbs can be planted about 1-2” deep, in well-drained soil, in full sun to part shade. Space bulbs about 10-12 inches apart and rows 1-2’ apart. Fall is the optimal planting time. Mulch with 4-8 inches of straw, making sure to remove or reduce thickness in spring.

Development of Topsets: A dominant stock will develop and a cluster of bulblets or bulbils, form at the top, thus the name Topsets. This stage is called the Candlestick Stage. Topsets are enclosed in a white papery skin. The topsets can breakthrough the papery skin as they grow and develop leaves. **Note:** Not all plants will develop topsets during their first year of growth.

Topset Stage: Topsets can be removed and planted or allowed to continue to develop on the stalk. The topsets reach maturity in the late summer. Some may develop a second stalk and develop a cluster on top. If you want bigger bulbs to develop, then remove the topsets. Flowers can develop among the topsets, especially on older plants or on crowded plants. When the topsets get heavy, their stalk will bend over and if the soil conditions are right, the topset can develop roots and grow into new plants.

HARVESTING

EWO are similar to a shallot but a bit more pungent and spicy. Yield is light the first year. Second year it will be much larger. Topsets can be harvested and eaten or planted for next year’s plants. The clump of onions that develop are similar size to shallots. To get the largest bulb size, cut off the topsets as they begin to develop. One plant can develop up to 6 onions or 6 new plants, if divided. Harvest fall through winter. If you do not harvest your onions, they will grow back the following year,

producing an even larger clump. When harvesting, make sure to leave some in the ground to continue growing or save some for replanting. The green leaves can be harvested the second year and used as scallions, making sure not to remove the topset stalk.

STORAGE

After cutting, allow the bulbs to dry out of the sun in a well-ventilated location. Store in a cool, dark and dry location. If the conditions are proper, bulbs will store for months.

PROPAGATING

Your EWO will spread if you do not harvest your topsets. To move to another location or share with a friend, just break off the topset and plant. The main clump of bulbs can also be dug and divided. Best time to divide your clumps is the spring or fall. If your mother plant becomes overgrown it is a good idea to divide it, about every 3 years, or sooner if you see a decrease in topset formation. Clumps can be lifted with a garden fork, taking care not to get too close to the EWO as this may damage the bulbs.

COMMON PESTS & DISEASES

Onion Fly: usually a problem during very wet growing seasons. Control with a product labeled for onion flies (or maggots).

Onion Thrips: Can control with insecticidal soap.

Slugs: Control by either hand picking or use a product labeled to control slugs.

Gophers: plant in gopher baskets or line a raised bed with gopher wire.

PEST CONTROL - IPM

Important to practice good cultural controls for pest management of EWO. Cultural controls such as removing plants after harvest (to avoid leaving food for insects to continue to multiply on), use healthy bulbs to plant.



Return Policy

Perishable Items (3-Day Return Policy)

We guarantee the perishable items we sell to be in good, viable condition when we sell them. Perishable items include, but are not limited to, garlic bulbs, flower bulbs, seed potatoes, onion sets & transplants, bare-root trees, vegetable crowns... etc. If your perishable item arrives in substandard condition, please contact us within 3 days of the purchase date (or delivery date) and we will provide you with a refund of the purchase price (including shipping costs), or a replacement. Accordingly, we urge you to open any boxes marked as "Perishable" immediately upon receiving them. Because some perishable items can deteriorate very quickly, we cannot accept any claims beyond the 3-day time frame as it becomes too difficult to determine if these items were delivered in substandard condition, or if they turned into such substandard condition because of having been improperly cared for or stored once delivered.

Limited Product Guarantee

Limitation of Remedy

We warrant to the extent of the purchase price only that the seeds or plants sold hereunder are as described on the label within recognized tolerances. No other warranty is given, expressed or implied, of (1) the merchantability or fitness of the seeds or plants for any particular purpose, or (2) against loss due to any cause. We cannot accept any responsibility for the many uncontrollable growing and climatic conditions (soil preparation, fertilization, weed and pest control, temperature control, irrigation...etc.) that must be met to insure the success of your crop(s) or plants.

DEFINITIONS

Heirloom: Heirloom seeds come from open-pollinated plants that pass on similar characteristics and traits from the parent plant to the next generation plant. Heirloom vegetables are old-time varieties generally which have been in production since before WWII, and have been saved and handed down through multiple generations.

Hybrid: a cross between two or more unrelated plant varieties. The two different varieties are cross bred, resulting in a seed that carries one or more favorable traits (increased yield, uniformity, color, disease resistance.) Hybrid seeds are not GMO, as they are manually cross-bred, not genetically modified in a lab. Hybrid seed is often sterile or does not reproduce true to the parent plant. Therefore, never save the seed from hybrids.

Open Pollinated: generally refers to seeds that will "breed true". When the plants of an open-pollinated variety self-pollinate, or are pollinated by another representative of the same variety, the resulting seeds will produce plants roughly identical to their parents. Genetic traits may differ only slightly due to variations created by local conditions.

GMO: Genetically Modified Organisms were genetically modified in a laboratory where DNA genes are extracted and mixed with other unrelated plants to improve characteristics. Saved seed will not always be viable and may be trademarked to prevent unauthorized use.



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