

## Martin Williams – Growing onions



I've had my allotment for five years now, and in that time I've learned a lot about growing different vegetables. One vegetable that I've had great success with is onions. Growing onions in England can be a bit tricky, but with the right techniques, you can have a great crop.

The first thing to consider when growing onions in England is the weather. Onions prefer a cool climate, which is why they do well in England. They also prefer a well-draining soil that is rich in organic matter. Make sure to amend your soil with compost or well-rotted manure before planting.

Another important factor to consider is pests and diseases. Onions are susceptible to onion fly and onion white rot, so it's important to take measures to protect your crop. I grow my onions under fine mesh or netting, which keeps the pests at bay. It also provides shade for the onions, which helps to keep them cool during the hottest part of the day.

One thing I love about growing onions is that they are low maintenance. Once they are planted, they require very little attention. They don't need to be watered frequently, and they don't need to be fertilized often. This makes them ideal if you work full-time and don't have a lot of time to devote to your allotment plot during the week.

When it comes to planting onions, you have a few options. You can plant sets, which are small onions that have been grown from seed. You can also plant seedlings, which are young onions that have been grown from seed. I prefer to plant sets, as they are easier to handle and less prone to disease.

When planting onions, make sure to space them about 3 inches apart. This will give them enough room to grow and mature. You can plant them in rows, or you can plant them in blocks. I prefer to plant them in blocks, as it makes it easier to harvest and it looks more attractive in the garden.

Finally, when it comes to harvesting onions, it's important to wait until they are fully mature. You can tell when they are ready by checking the tops. If the tops have fallen over and turned brown, it's time to harvest. Carefully dig them up with a fork and let them dry out in the sun for a few days before storing them.

In conclusion, growing onions in England can be a bit tricky, but with the right techniques, you can have a great crop. They are ideal if you work full time, and they are low maintenance. Keep them protected from pests, and harvest them when they are fully mature. With a bit of patience, you'll have a great crop of onions to enjoy.