

Onion Profile

Also known as

Allium cepa and *Allium spp*, Garden Onion, and Common Onion.

Introduction

Cultivated since pre historic times, onions were mentioned in the tomb paintings in Egypt as early as 3200 BCE and written about by the Sumerians in 2400 BCE. Archeologists discovered small onions in the eye sockets of Rameses the 4th, who died in 1160 BCE. The Egyptians felt that the onion, with all its concentric layers, represented eternal life. This being said, there were certain sects of Egyptian priests that were forbidden to eat the onion, but there doesn't seem to be any recorded reason for this taboo. Many have felt that the smell of the onion is why it has throughout time, and regardless of region, to be a food of the poor. There are many writings in Europe that claim that the rich and wealthy found the odor disgusting, therefore relegating it to the lower classes. A Turkish legend relates that when Lucifer was cast out of heaven, where his right foot fell, garlic sprouted, and where his right foot landed onions grew. The familiar garden vegetable has many medicinal applications, is easy to grow and can be administered in a multitude of ways. It has certain antiseptic properties, and was used up through the Civil War for cleaning and healing of wounds.

Constituents

Quercetin, Allicin, allyl sulfide, vitamins A, B1, B2, and C, palmitic acid, stearic acid, arachidic acid, oleic acid, linoleic acid.

Parts Used

Entire young plant except rootlets, bulb of mature plant.

Typical Preparations

Added to food liberally in all its forms either chopped, diced, whole, etc.

Can be used in teas, and is very rarely found encapsulated. Onions and soy are used as a vegan alternative to chicken soup for colds.

Summary

Onion is remarkably anti-allergenic, due to its content of quercetin. In fact, an onion a day may be likely to keep you away from the doctor than an apple a day. The quercetin of onions is absorbed through the lining of the intestine in about 20 minutes, compared to 20 hours for many other foods (including apples), and stays in circulation longer than quercetin from other foods.

In traditional herbal medicine, onion is a gentle herb for relieving toxicity and breaking up "clumps" of infections, that is, sores or abscesses. Onions induce perspiration to 'sweat out a cold,' and relieve

abdominal pain and nasal congestion.

Precautions

Onion Powder will dry out and become hardened when exposed to environments with low humidity and is especially common during the dry Summer months. It will become stable again once exposed to moisture or when the natural humidity of your region returns.

Avoid using this product when there is profuse sweating.

Botanical: Allium cepa (LINN.)

Family: N.O. Liliaceae

---Part Used---Bulb.

---Medicinal Action and Uses---Antiseptic, diuretic. A roasted Onion is a useful application to tumours or earache.

The juice made into a syrup is good for colds and coughs. Hollands gin, in which Onions have been macerated, is given as a cure for gravel and dropsy.