



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



INTRODUCING... OREGON ONIONS

Oregon onions will only make you cry for joy. With 400 farms growing many varieties and sizes of onions, Oregon is the leading storage onion producing state and among the top 3 producers of onions overall in the United States. Most onions are cultivated in the Snake River Valley in eastern Oregon. One-third of the nation's storage onions and some of the world's largest onions are grown in this valley that stretches into Idaho.

HARVEST AND STORAGE

Fresh Oregon onions are available nine months of the year thanks to Oregon's state-of-the-art storage facilities. Onions are harvested in August and then stored for shipment into the next spring. These facilities ensure onions retain freshness and firm texture by storing them out of direct sunlight and under amply ventilated conditions.

In addition to providing fresh onions to the global market, Oregon also processes onions for use in foodservice and as an ingredient. Onion processing facilities produce dried onion flakes, onion powder, frozen pearl onions, diced frozen onions and frozen onion rings.

LARGEST ONIONS IN THE WORLD

The yellow onions grown in the Snake River Valley are so large that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) created special size categories – “colossal” and “super colossal” – just for these giants. Restaurants and cafeterias appreciate such extra-large onions for the volume of flesh and reduced effort spent peeling. Super colossal sized onions are the stars of dishes such as the Outback Steakhouse's Bloomin' Onion® and oversized onion rings. The exceptional size along with attention to quality of Oregon onions, draws customers from many regions of the world.

Onions are high in Vitamin C as well as a great source for fiber and 11 other healthy vitamins and minerals.



UPCYCLING LEFTOVERS – REDUCING WASTE

Even onions or onion parts that don’t meet quality expectations for human consumption have been put to practical uses. Lower-grade onions add nutrition to animal feed. Onion skins are used as a natural dye for textiles, in lieu of harsh chemicals. Leftover onion parts have even been used to power food processing facilities to save on electrical costs.

ONION COLORS AND SIZES

YELLOW ONION

Approximately 87% of the U.S. onion crop are yellow varieties that include sweet, fresh, and storage onions. Yellow onions are very versatile and can be used in many ways. Oregon yellow onions come in seven size gradations ranging from Boiler to Super Colossal.

RED ONION

With a dark red to purple exterior enveloping each layer of a white interior, red onions stand out in dishes and have thus increased in popularity due to their common use in food service. Red onions constitute approximately 8% of the U.S. onion crop. They can be used in a variety of ways as well. Red onions come in five size gradations ranging from Small to Super Colossal.

WHITE ONION

White onions are commonly used in sauces, salads, and Mexican or Southwest cuisine. White onions do not store as well or as long as yellow or red onions. Approximately 5% of U.S. onion production is white onions.

Size Gradient	Colors	Diameter	Uses
Super Colossal	Yellow	> 4.25 inches (> 10.80 cm)	Ideal for onion rings
Colossal	Yellow	> 3.75 inches (> 9.53 cm)	Great appetizers
Large/Jumbo	Yellow, Red, White	> 3 inches (> 7.62 cm)	Ideal for any menu item
Medium	Yellow, Red, White	2–3.25 inches (5.08–8.26 cm)	Great for small dishes
Pre-Pack	Yellow, White	1.75–2.75 inches (4.45–6.99 cm)	Easy to transport
Boiler	Yellow, White	1–1.88 inches (2.54–4.76 cm)	When you just need a taste

Learn More

Idaho-Eastern Oregon Onion Committee:
usaonions.com
National Onion Association:
onions-usa.org

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Agricultural Development & Marketing Program



**OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE**

635 Capitol Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-2532 USA
503-986-4725
Ag.Market@oda.oregon.gov
Oregon.gov/ODA