



Pyaz or Kanda (Onion)



Botanical name: Allium cepa Linn.
Family names: Liliaceae.

Indian names are as follows:
Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu: Piyaz

Onions are the indispensable vegetable, the strong (yet sweet) cornerstone of modern cooking, not just in our culture but around the world. Whether it's a soup, stew, stir-fry, salad or sauce, chances are the recipe includes onions or garlic (very likely both) or one of their relatives. These members of the Allium genus (part of the lily family) don't just add flavour, they add richness and complexity.

Description

The onion is believed to have originated in Asia, though it is likely that onions may have been growing wild on every continent. Dating back to 3500 BC, onions were one of the few foods that did not spoil during the winter months. Our ancestors must have recognized the vegetable's durability and began growing onions for food.

The onion became more than just food after arriving in Egypt. The ancient Egyptians worshipped the onion, believing that its spherical shape and concentric rings symbolized eternity. Of all the vegetables that had their images created from precious metals by Egyptian artists, only the onion was made out of gold.

Today, onions are used in a variety of dishes and rank sixth among the world's leading vegetable crops. Onions not only provide flavor; they also provide health-promoting phytochemicals as well as nutrients.

Plant Description and Cultivation

A hardy biennial but cultivated as an annual. Although the bulbous plant with its long-bladed leaves has many varieties of shape and colour, it is so familiar that it is not necessary to add to what has already been said under Spice Description.

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Onion is a common kitchen-garden plant. It is propagated by seeds or sets.

Soil: Well drained, light loam that has been manured.

Sow: Mid-February through March in shallow drills 30cm (12in) apart. Thin seedlings to 5-10cm (2-4in) apart.

Plant: March-April 15cm (6in) apart in rows 30cm (12in) apart.

Aspect: Very sunny.

Harvest: Salad onions when ready and other onions when leaves turn yellow. Lift and leave along rows to dry; then store in a cool dry place.

Pyaz or Kanda (Onion) in Other Languages

Assamese	Piyaz	Marathi	Kanda
Bengali	Penyaz	Oriya	Piyaza
Gujarati	Dunzari	Sanskrit	Palandu
Kannada	Nirulli	Sindhi	Dungari
Konkani	Kandu	Tamil	Vengayam, Irulli
Malayalam	Bawa	Telugu	Nirulli

Culinary uses

Onion is a basic flavouring in the kitchen. It is used as a vegetable, or as a spice to bring out the flavour of other dishes without overpowering them. It often accompanies meat - especially mince and meat dishes such as shepherd's pie and meat loaf which would be insipid without it. Onion is also widely used in soups, pickles and cooked vegetable dishes, sauces, hearty casseroles, and bean and lentil dishes. It is a common ingredient in marinades, and an onion studded with cloves is often a main flavouring in stocks and courts-bouillons. There are many classic recipes featuring onion including such familiar dishes as tripe and onions, steak and onions, French onion soup, coq au yin, sauce soubise, to name but a few. Equally famous in India is do pvaza, a dish of meat cooked with a, much as double its weight of onions. The shallot is frequently used in Mediterranean and American cookery, the rocambale in country recipes. Spring onions are common in fresh summer salads and in Chinese and Japanese cookery.

Chemical Composition

Onion contains protein, sugars, cellulose, minerals, a fixed oil, an essential oil and over 80 per cent water. The amount of essential oil is very small but it contains the aromatic and tear-producing properties associated with onion. These are caused by sulphides which are produced by the reaction of the enzyme alliinase on an amino acid. These substances are normally in separate cells in the tissues, but when the onion is cut and bruised, rupturing the cells, the reaction takes place. Cooking has the opposite effect, preventing the enzymatic action and thus milder and less pungent flavours are produced. The chemistry of the Alliaceae family, including garlic, shallots etc, is very similar. The calorific value of raw onion is 38 calories per 100g, or roughly 20 calories for a 3oz onion.

Benefits of Onion

Though onions have very less calories, they add a flavor to a wide variety of recipes. Per serving of onions only contains about 45 calories. Onions are highly nutritious as they have a very low amount of sodium, do not contain bad cholesterol (low density lipoprotein or LDL) or fat and are a rich source of dietary fiber, vitamin C and other essential nutrients. Including onions in the diet has been known to ward off many illnesses, including some deadly diseases like cancer. Because of these numerous health benefits, onions are an integral part of every kitchen all around the world. Given below are some nutritional benefits of onions;

pyaz Onions contain allyl disulphide and allium, the two phyto-chemical compounds that have anti-mutagenic properties and help the body fight against different types of cancers.

pyaz They also have anti diabetic properties and helps in lowering the the levels of sugar in the blood in diabetics.

pyaz Onions are also considered as one of the good cholesterol sources. According to studies, individuals who consume one onion every day raise the levels of good cholesterol (high density lipoprotein or HDL) in their body.

pyaz Onions contain a flavonoid called quercetin, which has antioxidant properties and helps in reducing and eliminating the effects of free radicals in the body. It also inhibits the oxidation of low density lipoprotein and generates vitamin E.

pyaz Onions purifies the blood, improves cardiovascular health and reduces the risk of heart diseases.

pyaz Onions also reduce the growth of cancerous cells and tumors and prevent the development of different types of cancers like ovarian cancer, prostate cancer, colon cancer, breast cancer and cancer of the esophagus.

pyaz Onions have anti inflammatory properties and reduce the pain and swelling caused due to rheumatoid arthritis and osteoporosis and other complications caused due to asthma.

pyaz Onions, specially spring onions are know to mitigate sinus infections. Smelling juice of a spring onion or a slice of onion is a popular remedy in China to cure sinus infections.

Nutrition Facts about Onions

Nutrient	Nutrient Value
Carbohydrates	9.35 g
Dietary fibers	1.9 g
Total fat	0.10 g
Proteins	1.10 g
Water	97.0 g
Folate	20 mcg
Thiamin	0.045 mcg
Riboflavin	0.028 mcg
Vitamin A	6 mg
Vitamin C	7.5 mg
Calcium	25.5 mg
Magnesium	12.0 mg
Manganese	0.1 mg
Phosphorus	32.0 mg
Potassium	162 mg



History

The onion is believed to have been domesticated in central Asia. Onions were used as early as 5,000 years ago in Egypt, as depicted on ancient monuments; ancient Greek and Roman records also refer to the onion. During the Middle Ages, onions were consumed throughout Europe. They later were thought to guard against evil spirits and the plague, probably because of their strong odor. Onion skin dye has been used for egg and cloth coloring for many years in the Middle East and Europe. Columbus was said to have brought the onion to America. Folk healers used the onion to prevent infection. The combination of onions and garlic cooked in milk is a European folk remedy used to clear congestion. Onions also are used in homeopathic medicine.

Attributed Medicinal Properties

Antiseptic, diuretic, expectorant and rubefacient. Onion's antiseptic properties as a juice or paste have been used for wound healing, skin complaints (acne), insect bites, hemorrhoids, boils, toothache, ('as moch for that purpose as to lay an unyon to my lytel fynger for the tothe ache', Brinklow, 1545), earache and respiratory complaints. The raw juice is diuretic and the whole onion is an appetite stimulant and digestant. It has been used as a vermifuge. It is believed to stimulate the liver and is beneficial to the heart and nervous system.

Preparation and Storage

Onions may be used whole, sliced, chopped, diced or liquidised. It is important to observe the cooking instructions carefully, as the flavour of onions is greatly influenced by their treatment. A recipe where onions are to be 'fried till golden' will suffer if the onions are browned. Small onions and picklers are easier to peel if they are first immersed in boiling water for ten seconds and then rinsed in cold water before removing the skins. To prevent the eyes from watering, peel onions under cold water or put them in the freezer for ten minutes before chopping. Should onions be excessively strong, boil them whole for five minutes before proceeding with the recipe. Firm unblemished onions should keep for several weeks if stored in a cool airy place. Too much warmth will encourage sprouting. Home-grown onions must be quite dry before stringing. Dried onion flakes and powder should be stored in airtight containers.

Quality Assurance

As we believe in providing quality products that are close to nature, we conduct various stringent quality tests under the supervision of the experts. These tests are performed with due care from the very initial stage of procurement of the products to the final stage of delivery to the end users.

Packaging

We also provide reliable packaging of the cardamom seed oil and other cardamom products. During the packaging procedure, we keep the hygienic level high and also ensure that there is no human touch. Moreover, the packaging has also helped in the easy and safe delivery of the products.

We are dealing with various esteemed clients located in India as well as in the markets of New Zealand and Dubai. We also promise to serve a superlative range of cardamom and cardamom products which includes green cardamom powder to our new customers as we serve to our existing satisfied clientele. The frequent and concrete feedbacks from our customers have also helped in the advancement of the managerial activities and serving the products as per the demand prevailing in the market. Last but not the least; we are also looking forward to provide more beneficial deals in the forthcoming years.



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