

## **Onions for your Health**

Onions add abundant flavor, are low in calories and naturally fat and cholesterol free. Consider how you can consume more onions for your health.

Onions are a source of dietary fiber, vitamin C, vitamin B6, potassium and other key nutrients including folate, calcium and iron. They also contain compounds linked to lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels; acting as an anti-inflammatory in the body and providing protection from many forms of cancer.

Onions can be yellow, red or white, but the most common type is yellow. Green onions, also called scallions and spring or summer onions, are called 'green' because they are immature. If they are left in the ground to grow for a longer time, they mature into bulb or storage onions. Garlic, asparagus, leeks, chives, shallots and onions are in the same family of plants. Onions are the fourth most-frequently eaten vegetable in the U.S.

Green onions have a sweeter, milder taste than mature onions. Look for green onions or scallions with several inches of white, crisp flesh at the root end and fresh tender green tops. Avoid those that are wilted, discolored, or decayed. If selecting mature bulb onions, look for ones that are firm, dry and small at the top and with layers of papery outer skins. Avoid those that are split or wet, are sprouting, or that have decay, soft spots, or green areas which indicates sunburn.

If you like cooking with fresh onions, but frequently toss an unused portion, try freezing them! The following method works for fully mature onions:

Wash, peel and chop raw, fully mature onions into about 1/2" pieces. There is no need to blanch onions. Bag and freeze in freezer bags for best quality and odor protection. Speed freezing and hasten thawing by freezing onions in a thinner, flattened shape in freezer bags. A rounded shape takes longer to thaw through to the middle. Flatter packages also will stack better in your freezer. Another benefit: It is easier to remove just a portion of a package when the package is thin and flat.

Helping families and community partners connect with resources is a key component of K-State Research and Extension. Our office is open by appointment only, please contact us at 221-5450 or 441-4565 and we'll help.

*Source: [onions-usa.org](http://onions-usa.org); Fix it Fresh, K-State Research and Extension*

**K-State Research and Extension — all in-person events have been canceled through July 4**

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offices and regional research centers statewide. Its headquarters is on the K-State campus in Manhattan.