



Onions

► THE DEMAND for onion sets during the past weeks has been brisk and increasing, and many ordinarily fastidious fathers of families have dirt under their fingernails when they come in to dinner in the evening. But in a few weeks they will be joyously redolent of green onions of their own raising.

Onions are among the oldest of herbs used by man for food. This is probably partly due to the fact that even in the wild state the bulbs are large enough to repay the labor of gathering, and partly because their pungent taste appealed to primitive

man as a seasoning for his not always highly palatable food.

At any rate, onions, shalots, leeks, and above all garlic, figure in all recorded feasts since the servants of Cheops carved hieroglyphs on the stones of the pyramids.

The common garden onion has been so long cultivated that it is not found today in the wild state. The onion genus, *Allium*, includes 300 widely distributed species, of which the bulbs are made up of many successive papery coats or layers of leaf bases, and the slender tapering leaves have the familiar onion or leek taste. When in blossom, onions bear white or pink flowers in compact umbels.

Onion sets are obtained in several different ways. They may simply be small onions grown from seed during the previous season, and allowed to continue their growth. They may be "bottom sets" of the shalot or "multiple onion" type, wherein the parent onion, instead of growing as a single large bulb, has grown as a cloven group of small ones, which may be broken apart into individual units for planting.

Or they may be "top sets," the offspring of flower-stalks of onions which, instead of bearing normal flowers and seeds, have produced these little bulbils instead.

Onions were formerly the great stand-by in sailing ships on long voyages for the prevention of the dreaded disease, scurvy. We know now that the onions were valuable because of a certain vitamin. It is probably a sort of mild incipient scorbutic tendency that causes many of us, after a long winter season, to hanker for succulent spring onions.

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NUTRITION

Health Aids from Gardens

► HOME GARDENS, which many families are starting now, can help your health in three ways.

One is through the better nourishment provided when food budgets are limited. Two is through the increased outdoor exercise. Three is through the lift in morale that comes from growing and harvesting your own food crop, however small.

In deciding what vegetables and fruits to plant, be guided by the Basic Seven food plan. This plan divides the foods we eat into seven groups according to their nourishing qualities. Nutrition-conscious housewives follow it in planning the family meals.

One group is made up of the foods that can be the mainstay of the diet for vitamin A. This includes green, yellow and leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale, green peas, lima beans, snap beans and carrots. And you eat one or more servings from this group each day.

Two others of the Basic Seven food groups can come from the family garden. One of these is the vitamin C rich foods

from which one or more daily servings should be eaten. You can't, unless you live in Florida or California, have oranges and other citrus fruits in your garden, but you can have such other vitamin C fruits as melons and strawberries. And you can have tomatoes, cabbage, turnips, salad greens, and green peppers. Any of these provide vitamin C when served raw and tomatoes provide it raw or canned.

The third Basic Seven group that can come from the home garden is a catch-all group. It includes potatoes, beets, onions, turnips and radishes. These foods do their part in nourishing you by adding to the supply of various vitamins, minerals and other materials the body needs. Some of them add flavor that makes you want more of the other foods. Beets and turnips yield double harvests in their roots and their fresh green tops. You can add the green tops to your leafy vegetable group. Two or more daily servings from this third group are called for in the Basic Seven plan.

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GENERAL SCIENCE

Scientist Should Preach What He Practices

► "THE SCIENTIST should preach what he practices," Dr. C. I. Lewis, Harvard philosophy professor, told a meeting of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia.

The same methods which the scientist uses to decide between what are scientific findings of fact and what is unscientific and unacceptable should be used by the scientist to decide what course of action should be taken as a result of scientific findings, he said.

However, the scientist is ducking the responsibility of choosing what kind of action to take once he has made a scientific discovery, Dr. Lewis charged. This currently dominant conception of science is belittling to ethics, he said.

A scientific discovery is in itself a reason for action and invites action, Dr. Lewis pointed out. The choice of action based on the discovery is not merely rational, an ethically good or bad choice can be made, and it can be made in the same manner a scientist uses to choose between scientific fact and fiction.

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TECHNOLOGY

Nickel-Plated Aluminum Cuts Propeller Wear

► A SYNTHETIC rubber compound has been developed to bind nickel to aluminum to reduce pitting and corrosion of airplane propellers from the spray kicked up by landings and take-offs from the sea.

The process was described by S. G. Bart, president of Bart Laboratories, East Hartford, Conn., which developed the process jointly with the United Aircraft Corporation for the U. S. Air Force and Navy. It solves a major problem by producing a stress-free, hard, yet resilient coating for aluminum which is commonly used in airplane propellers because of its strength and lightness.

The bond between the synthetic rubber base and the nickel will stand up under a wide range of temperatures. Its hardness was found satisfactory when nickel-plated propellers were unharmed by severe laboratory tests, whereas standard unplated blades lost about 20% of their tip area during the tests.

In treating aluminum with nickel, the bond material first is sprayed on the aluminum and allowed to dry. The sprayed piece then is plated with nickel by conventional means. Mr. Bart said the entire process required approximately 24 hours to complete.

Some of the Navy's Martin P5M-1 flying boats and Grumman UF-1 utility amphibians already are equipped with the nickel-plated propeller blades.

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