

onions.

Sow: Plant sets 4in apart in late March, sow seeds 2in apart in April. Thin to 4in apart.

Soil: Grow in ground manured for previous crop. Add an organic fertiliser when planting.

Sun: Full sun or part shade.

Grow: Hates competition from weeds, so hoe the crop well, and water in dry periods.

Harvest: When the leaves start to flop over to one side, the onions are reaching maturity. Do not force the leaves over – this only encourages rotting. Leave to ripen in the sun for week or so, then gently lift before storing.

Problems: Onion white rot, a furry white mould, can devastate the crop if the soil is too damp. Do not grow any alliums in an affected bed for eight years. Onion fly is attracted by the scent of the foliage – grow among carrots or strongly-scented herbs and sow crop thinly – thinning crushes the foliage and releases the scent.

For more advice on growing and cooking onions, visit the Stylish Gardening Blog: fennelandfern.co.uk