



May-June 2005

AgriExotic Trading

Do onions make you cry?

A mild and fruitful Spring usually follows a bitter Autumn or Winter. So goes the farmers' wisdom. So far things are a little behind schedule on local harvest timetables.

That said, the local farm community contacts Agri maintains seem to think it is going to be a good yield this year. Price indices for local product will probably drop mid season amid a glut of product. This will be a very good year to take up preserving. Look for plentiful varieties of everything starting mid-April.

That's what our crystal ball says, anyway.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Local rhubarb starts					
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
		Local sweet cherries start				
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Summer squash start			Local peas & beans start		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		Local sour cherries start				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7	8	9
			Coming soon... heirloom tomatoes			



Fiddlehead ferns.



Sour cherries



Yellow wax beans.

AgriExotic Trading
280 Wilson Avenue
Newark, NJ 07105

Phone: 973-578-8200

Fax: 973-578-8411

E-mail: stukaminsky@agriexotic.com



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Onions



Do onions make you cry?

As onions are sliced, cells are broken open. Onion cells have two sections, one with enzymes called allinases, the other with sulfides (amino acid sulfoxides). The enzymes break down the sulfides and generate sulfenic acids. Sulfenic acid is unstable and decomposes into a volatile gas called syn-ropanethial-S-oxide. The gas then dissipates through the air and

eventually reaches one's eye, where it will react with the water to form a mild solution of sulfuric acid. The sulfuric acid irritates the nerve endings in the eyes, making them sting. The tear glands then produce tears in response to this irritation, to dilute and flush out the irritant.

The release of gas can thus best be prevented by cutting the onions under running tap water or completely under water, though this may not be very practical. Wetting the onions and your hands before slicing will lessen the effect, as some of the gas will react with the moisture on the onions and on your skin (instead of the moisture on your eyes). It also helps to breathe exclusively through the mouth during the preparation.



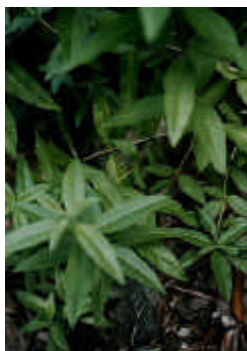
Abate Fetel Pears.



Ramps.



Lemon Verbena



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