



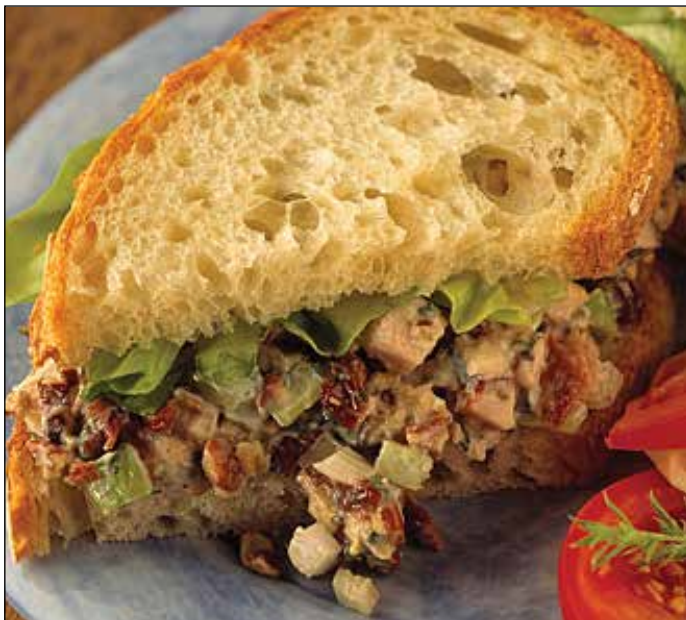
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INSIDE ONIONS

Consumer Newsletter



August 2026 | Issue No. 8 | National Onion Association



August 2026

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Handle produce the right way
Keep foods fresh on hot car ride home
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Salad with Onions and Dried Cherries
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Storage Yellow Onions - August-May

- Easy to recognize by their multiple layers of thick, darker colored skin
- Commonly lower in water content, they have a longer shelf-life
- Range in flavor from mild to pungent

* Best for savory dishes that require longer cooking times or more flavor



August is:

The basic concept of the sandwich long pre-dates the Earl of Sandwich, the real-life 18th-century aristocrat who reportedly loved them, and gave them their modern name.

The ancient Jewish sage Hillel the Elder is said to have wrapped lamb-meat and bitter herbs between two pieces of matzoh (unleavened bread) during Passover.

Early versions of the "wrap" have also been found in Asia and Africa. The sandwich grew in popularity among aristocrats in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Legend has it they were popularly shared, held with one hand, during late-night gaming and drinking.

Today, sandwiches come in countless varieties, but one ingredient consistently makes them better: onions. Whether piled onto burgers, layered into deli classics, grilled on paninis, or added fresh to wraps, onions bring crisp texture, bold flavor, and nutrition to every bite. This August, give your favorite sandwich the upgrade it deserves with fresh, flavorful onions.





The Onionista

Got a message for the Onionista? Write to
onionista@onions-usa.org

Inside Onions

Message From The Onionista

Who is the Onionista?

Hi! I'm René Hardwick, Aka The Onionista. As The Director Of Public And Industry Relations For The National Onion Association, I Wanted A Fun Way To Connect With People On The Web. That Is How 'Onionista' Was Born. She Is A Fun And Informal Way For Me To Share My Passion For Onions, Food, And Agriculture With Consumers.

In this monthly newsletter, I hope to share with you not only great new recipes and recipe videos, but nutrition nuggets to help round out the menus you serve to your family.

The National Onion Association tells the story of the bulb onion, promoting the usage and visibility of the third most consumed fresh vegetable in the U.S. with active

media relations, recipe development, culinary education and more.

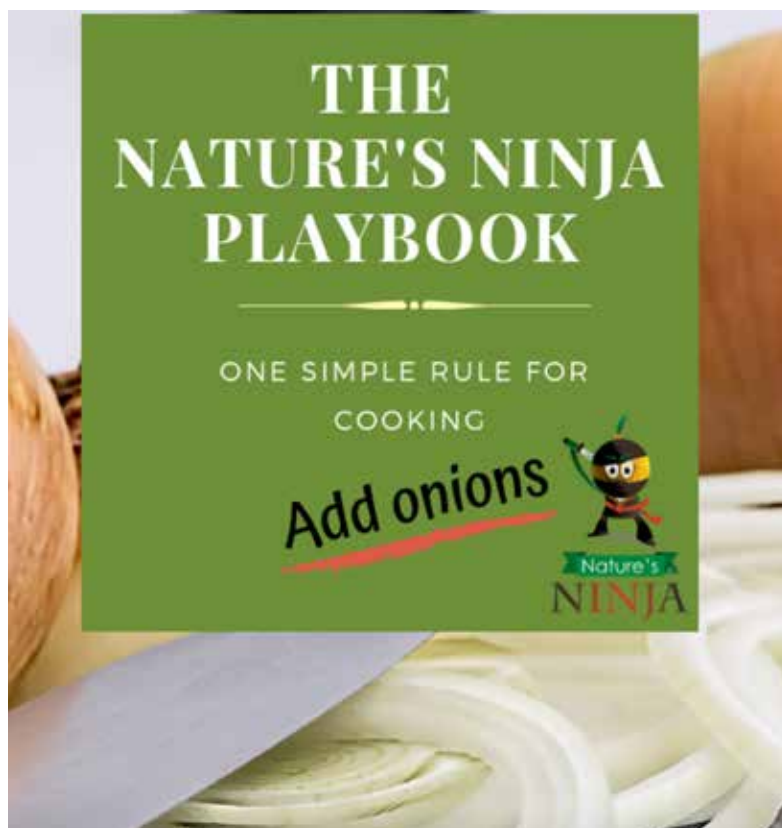
Members of NOA rely on the non-profit trade association for

up-to-date information, government representation, industry-wide networking, as well as consumer outreach. Visit www.onions-usa.org for more information.

Need onion info?

The National Onion Association has released its ebook, Nature's Ninja Playbook, a guide for selecting, cutting, and cooking onions, along with handy tips and tasty recipes to include onions in every meal of the day.

The NOA has nicknamed the onion "Nature's Ninja" for the many qualities it possesses to stay fresh and — keep those who eat it healthy. It has 12 vitamins and minerals is naturally fat and cholesterol free.



Need to Know

FOOD SAFETY

Handling fresh produce right makes it even safer

Fresh fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet, but recent foodborne illness outbreaks linked to produce have raised understandable concerns among consumers. While these events receive significant attention, fresh produce remains one of the healthiest foods you can eat. The key is handling it safely from the grocery store to your table.



Start by selecting produce that looks fresh and free of bruises or damage. Keep fruits and vegetables separate from raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs in your shopping cart and grocery bags to help prevent cross-contamination.

Before preparing produce, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under cool running water — even those with peels or rinds that you don't eat, such as melons and avocados. Firm produce like potatoes, cucumbers, and apples can be gently scrubbed with a clean produce brush.

Some consumers choose to use commercial fruit and vegetable rinses, such as Fit, as an added step. Others prefer a homemade rinse made with a solution of white vinegar and water before giving produce a final rinse under clean running water. While these methods may help remove surface dirt, waxes, or some residues, experts agree that a thorough rinse under running water is the most important step. Avoid using soap, bleach, or household cleaners on produce, as these products are not intended for food and may leave harmful residues.

Refrigerate cut or peeled fruits and vegetables within two hours — or within one hour if outdoor temperatures exceed 90°F. Bacteria can multiply quickly when perishable foods are left at room temperature.

Finally, stay informed about food recalls. If a recalled product is in your home, do not eat it. Follow the disposal or return instructions in the recall notice and clean any surfaces the product may have contacted.

Fresh produce offers tremendous health benefits, and following a few simple food safety practices can help reduce your risk of foodborne illness. A few extra minutes spent cleaning, storing, and handling produce properly can help keep your family healthy all year long.

Fresh Produce Food Safety Tips

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling fresh produce.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables under clean, running water before eating, cutting, or cooking — even if you plan to peel them.
- Use clean knives, cutting boards, and countertops when preparing produce.
- Keep fresh produce separate from raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs to prevent cross-contamination.
- Refrigerate cut or peeled fruits and vegetables within two hours (or within one hour if temperatures exceed 90°F).
- Remove damaged or bruised portions before preparing produce.
- Clean reusable grocery bags and produce containers regularly.
- Follow “use by” or “best by” recommendations when applicable.
- When dining out or purchasing prepared produce, choose establishments that practice good food safety.

What to Avoid

- Don't wash produce with soap, bleach, detergents, or commercial household cleaners.
- Don't use the same cutting board or knife for raw meat and fresh produce without thoroughly washing and sanitizing between uses.
- Don't leave cut fruits or vegetables at room temperature for extended periods.
- Don't consume produce that shows signs of mold or extensive decay.
- Don't ignore refrigeration requirements for ready-to-eat produce.
- Don't use dirty towels or sponges to wipe produce or food preparation surfaces.
- Don't taste produce if you suspect it has spoiled.
- Don't overlook handwashing — it remains one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

These simple practices help reduce the risk of foodborne illness while preserving the quality and freshness of fruits and vegetables.

BEST USES

for Yellow onions
Grilled, sautéed,
caramelized, baked
or roasted.

What do “Best By,” “Use By,” and “Sell By” really mean?

Have you ever thrown away food simply because the date on the package had passed? You're not alone. Many consumers misunderstand food date labels, leading to unnecessary food waste. Understanding what these labels mean can help you make informed decisions while keeping your family safe.

“Best By” or “Best if Used By” dates indicate when a product is expected to be at its peak flavor and quality. In most cases, foods are still safe to eat after this date if they have been stored properly.

A “Sell By” date is intended for retailers, letting stores know how long to display a product for sale. Consumers can often safely use or freeze the product after this date, provided it has been refrigerated



correctly and shows no signs of spoilage.

A “Use By” date is the last date recommended by the manufacturer for peak quality. With the exception of infant formula — which should never be used after its “Use By” date — many foods may still be safe beyond this date if they have been handled and stored properly. Always

inspect food for off odors, mold, unusual texture, or other signs of spoilage before consuming it.

Proper storage is one of the best ways to extend shelf life. Keep your refrigerator at or below 40°F and your freezer at 0°F. Refrigerate perishable foods promptly, store leftovers in airtight containers, and freeze foods you won't use before their quality begins to decline.

By understanding food date labels and practicing proper storage, you can reduce unnecessary food waste while protecting your family's health.

When in doubt, use your senses along with safe food handling practices — but remember, if you're unsure whether a perishable food has been stored safely, it's always better to throw it out than risk foodborne illness.

A little label knowledge can save money, reduce waste, and help you shop and store food with confidence.

Getting groceries home safely in hot weather

Summer heat doesn't just make shopping uncomfortable — it can also increase the risk of foodborne illness if groceries aren't handled properly. Perishable foods such as meat, poultry, seafood, dairy products, eggs, and frozen items can quickly warm to unsafe temperatures, allowing harmful bacteria to multiply.

Plan your shopping trip so refrigerated and frozen foods are the last items you place in your cart before checking out. If you have several errands to run, consider making the grocery store your final stop before heading home.

During hot weather, use insulated grocery bags or a cooler with frozen ice packs to transport perishable foods, especially if your drive home will take longer than 30 minutes. Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood in separate plastic bags to prevent juices from leaking onto fresh produce or ready-to-eat foods.

Once you arrive home, unpack groceries right away. Refrigerate or freeze perishable items immediately.

If you're shopping at a farmers market, the same rules apply. Fresh meat, eggs, and dairy products should stay cold until you get home, and fresh produce should be protected from excessive heat and direct sunlight.



A little planning can go a long way in protecting your family's health. By keeping cold foods cold and getting groceries home quickly, you'll help reduce the risk of foodborne illness and ensure your food stays fresh, safe, and ready to enjoy.

Recipe box



CATEGORY:

Sandwiches

PREP TIME:

15 minutes

COOK TIME:

0



[Click photo for original recipe](#)

Smoked Chicken Salad with Onions and Dried Cherries

2-1/4 cups diced smoked chicken
3/4 cup diced celery
1-1/8 cups diced sweet onions
1-1/8 cups dried tart cherries, chopped
1/2 cup basil, fresh minced
1 cups mayonnaise
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper, ground
1/2 teaspoon orange zest
1 1/2 tablespoons fresh orange juice

Pro tip: This recipe in its original form makes 12 servings . We cut the ingredients in half to make smaller portions.

The sandwich challenge

Celebrate National Sandwich Month by trying something new! This August, challenge yourself to create a sandwich you've never made before—and don't forget the onions.

Need a little inspiration?

Add caramelized onions to a grilled cheese.

Try pickled red onions on a turkey or roast beef sandwich.

Top a BLT with sweet onion slices for extra crunch.

Build a Mediterranean pita with grilled chicken, feta, cucumbers, tomatoes, and red onion.

Give your burger a makeover with grilled onions and your favorite cheese.

Create a breakfast sandwich with eggs, sausage, cheddar, and caramelized onions.

Add crispy onion strings to a barbecue pulled pork sandwich.

Layer fresh onions onto a classic tuna or chicken salad sandwich for a flavorful twist.

The challenge is simple: Step outside your sandwich routine and discover a new favorite. You may be surprised how one ingredient can make all the difference.



This Uptown Grilled Cheese with Sweet Onion Jam dresses up your standard grilled cheese with onion jam and bacon and Gruyere. Click the photo for a video recipe.

Back to School

Packing safe, healthy school lunches



As students head back to school, packing a nutritious lunch is a great way to fuel learning and keep kids energized throughout the day. Just as important as choosing healthy foods is making sure they stay safe to eat until lunchtime.

The biggest concern with packed lunches is keeping perishable foods out of the “danger zone”—temperatures between 40°F and 140°F where bacteria can multiply quickly. An insulated lunch bag paired with at least one frozen ice pack is one of the best ways to keep foods cold until it's time to eat. For extra cooling power, freeze a juice box or water bottle overnight and pack it alongside lunch. It will help keep foods chilled and be ready to drink by lunchtime.

Choose foods that travel well and hold up during the school day. Sandwiches made with deli meat, peanut butter, or sunflower seed butter, cheese sticks, yogurt, whole fruit, baby carrots, cucumber slices, cherry tomatoes, and whole-grain crackers are all good options. If packing leftovers, be sure they are thoroughly reheated before placing them in an insulated food container designed to keep hot foods above 140°F.

To help prevent bacterial growth, always wash your hands before preparing lunches and clean countertops, cutting boards, and utensils after handling raw foods. Wash fresh fruits and vegetables under running water

Bentgo Kids Prints Leak-Proof, 5-Compartment Bento-Style Kids Lunch Box



before packing them, and avoid packing foods that have been left out at room temperature for more than two hours.

Busy mornings don't have to mean unhealthy lunches. Prepare ingredients the night before by washing produce, portioning snacks into reusable containers, and assembling sandwiches in advance. Creating a weekly lunch plan can also save time and reduce stress.

With a little planning and proper food safety practices, you can send your child to school with a lunch that is both nutritious and safe. A well-packed lunch helps ensure students stay healthy, focused, and ready to learn throughout the school day.

6 FUN GAMES TO PREP KIDS FOR BACK TO SCHOOL!

Learning and routines can be fun! Try these simple at-home games to build confidence, healthy habits, and school readiness.



1 SCHOOL DAY CHALLENGE

Turn a day at home into a “practice school day.”

- Set an alarm like a school morning.
- Get dressed, eat breakfast, and pack your backpack.
- Follow a schedule with “class periods” for reading, math games, art, and recess.
- End with packing everything for the next day.



2 LUNCHBOX RELAY

Teach healthy lunch habits while having fun.

- Lay out a variety of foods.
- Race to pack a balanced lunch.
- Add a “food safety” twist by including an ice pack and asking which foods need to stay cold.



3 BACKPACK SCAVENGER HUNT

Hide common school supplies around the house.

- Kids search for pencils, crayons, notebooks, glue, and folders.
- When they find an item, they explain what it's used for before packing it in their backpack.



4 SCHOOL SAFETY BINGO

Create bingo cards with safe and respectful choices.



5 WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Read different school scenarios and let kids decide how they'd respond.

- “You forgot your homework.”
 - “Someone new sits by you at lunch.”
 - “Your lunch gets warm because you forgot your ice pack.”
 - “A friend is being left out.”
- Discussing answers builds confidence and problem-solving skills.



6 MEMORY TRAY

Place 15–20 school supplies on a tray. Let kids study them for one minute, cover the tray, and see how many they can remember.

This builds observation and concentration skills while reinforcing familiarity with school items.



A LITTLE PLAY TODAY CAN LEAD TO A GREAT SCHOOL DAY TOMORROW!

Kitchen gadgets

Our team has been keeping an eye out for fun and practical kitchen finds, and a few gadgets caught our attention.

Whether you're preparing weeknight meals or spending an afternoon baking, these clever tools can make time in the kitchen a little easier. Among our favorites are a handy egg separator that makes baking less messy, a delightful first cooking set for toddlers that's perfect for introducing little chefs to the joy of cooking, and a nifty microwave steam cleaner that helps loosen stuck-on splatters with minimal effort.



**LuoCoCo
Cute Egg
Separator,**



**13 Pieces Montessori Kitchen Toys
for Toddlers-Kids Cooking Sets**



**Angry Mama
Microwave Oven
Steam Cleaner**



**Mueller The Real
Original Pro Chopper
since 2013 Vegetable
Chopper Mandoline
Slicer**



Video Recipe



Easy Sheetpan Chicken Dinner

Here's a hearty meal that's packed with flavor and simple enough for a busy weeknight. This recipe brings together tender chicken legs, sweet yellow and red onions, fresh fennel, potatoes, garlic, and bright citrus for a comforting dish that's as beautiful as it is delicious. A touch of thyme, fresh parsley, and orange zest creates a fresh, savory combination, while brown rice and quinoa make the perfect wholesome accompaniment.

This recipe highlights the versatility of onions, which add natural sweetness and depth as they roast alongside the chicken and vegetables. It's an easy way to create a satisfying meal using simple, fresh ingredients.

Want to see how it all comes together? Click the photo at right to watch our video recipe. It's a delicious meal your family will want to make again and again!



Ingredients

Serves: 6

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

8-10 chicken legs

1 fennel bulb

1 large yellow onion, sliced

1 large red onion, sliced

2 garlic cloves, sliced

3 medium-sized potatoes, cubed

Juice of 1 orange, about ¼ cup

Zest of 1 orange

1/4 teaspoon thyme, dried

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 teaspoon sea salt

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

2 tablespoons fresh chopped parsley

Orange rind curls

Brown rice and Quinoa, cooked according to package directions

Directions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Line a large sheet pan with parchment paper. Place chicken legs on sheet pan. Spread vegetables around and in between legs on pan.

In a small bowl, whisk together orange juice and zest, thyme, and olive oil. Pour mixture over chicken and vegetables. Season everything with salt and pepper.

Roast at 400 degrees for 45 minutes or until chicken is cooked through and vegetables are tender. Garnish with parsley and orange curls. Serve over brown rice and quinoa.



A small family farm in New Mexico



Querencia Farm is a start-up family-run farm east of Raton, N.M., using beyond-organic principles on their land. They pull weeds by hand; crops are dry-land farmed or watered by hand from water collection tanks; and pests are managed with other flora and fauna.

They keep a hardy mixed flock of chickens that provide eggs, and are building a heritage slate blue turkey flock to

be able to offer these charming poult.

Fresh vegetables may include lettuce, beets, chard giving way to tomatoes, summer squash and herbs as summer progresses, with the real star being the fall squashes — turban squash, Styrian pumpkins, and gourds. The small orchard provides apricots, peaches apples and pears for limited stretches June through October.

Meet a young onion grower

Micah, an 8-year-old from New Mexico, isn't your average kid. While some children might wrinkle their noses at onions, Micah has loved them since he was just a year old. That love never faded — in fact, it grew. Today, he has his very own onion garden. When he was 7, he sold his onions at a farmers market in Trinidad, Colo., allowing him to reinvest in this year's crop of 300 onion sets.

He's been growing onions for about five years—more than half his life — and he does it all by himself. His secret? "Put the bulb in the ground until you see a bit of it, take weeds out of the onion patch first." Last summer, he won a first place ribbon at the county fair and began a Querencia Farm tradition of celebrating National Onion Day with a potluck of onion dishes, and onion poems and riddles.



When people think of New Mexico agriculture, chile peppers often steal the spotlight — and for good reason. The state is world-famous for its signature green and red chile crops. But beyond its iconic peppers, New Mexico's farmers produce an impressive variety of vegetables that help supply grocery stores and dinner tables across the Southwest and beyond.

Southern New Mexico's warm climate, long growing season, and fertile river valleys make it an ideal location for vegetable production. Alongside onions, growers harvest sweet

corn, lettuce, cabbage, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, radishes, pumpkins, squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, garlic, and a wide range of melons.

The state's onion industry is particularly important, with growers producing high-quality yellow, white, and red onions known for their flavor, storage quality, and versatility. Many New Mexico onions are harvested during the summer months, helping bridge seasonal supplies for retailers and consumers across the country.

Irrigation from the Rio Grande River and other water sources, combined with generations of farming



experience, allows producers to grow healthy crops despite New Mexico's arid climate. Many farms also rotate vegetables with other crops to promote soil health and improve long-term sustainability.

While chile peppers remain New Mexico's agricultural ambassador, the state's vegetable industry tells a much broader story—one of diversity, innovation, and resilience. From crisp leafy greens to flavorful onions and colorful squash, New Mexico farmers continue to provide fresh, nutritious produce while supporting rural communities and strengthening the nation's food supply.