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INSIDE ONIONS

Consumer Newsletter

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Proper storage and handling of onions

Attributes	Spring/Summer	Fall/Winter
Storage Shelf-life	30 to 60 days	30 to 180 days
Storing Ability	Typically not stored, unless under controlled atmosphere or refrigeration	Designed specifically to withstand long periods of storage
Retail Shelf-life	30 days or less	
Temperature	Room temperature - Dry storage	
Humidity	Keep in a dry, well ventilated place	
Freezing Injury	Moderately sensitive. Highest freezing point = 30.6° F or 0.8°C	Hardier than other varieties. Highest freezing point = 30.6° F or 0.8°C
Odor Sensitivity	Odors will be absorbed by apples, celery and pears. Will absorb odors produced by apples and pears.	
Sweetness	Sweet/mild to slightly pungent	Varies from mild to very pungent
Aroma	Mild to slightly pungent	Mildly pungent to strong
Colors	Yellow, red, and white	
Exterior Shell	Thin, light colored skin	Multiple layers of thick, dark skin





Fast Facts

1. If you're born in November, you join the likes of Mark Twain, Winston Churchill, Georgia O'Keeffe, Charles Schulz, Loretta Swit, Laura Bush, Will Rogers, Danny DeVito, and Billy the Kid.
2. Daylight Saving Time ends in November.
3. The Anglo-Saxons appropriately called November "Wind Monath."
4. Many poets have written about November including Emily Dickinson, William Bradford, Lydia Maria Child, Sir Walter Scott, and Guns N' Roses. However, Shakespeare never did write about the 11th month.



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, and offer some fun information for every day.

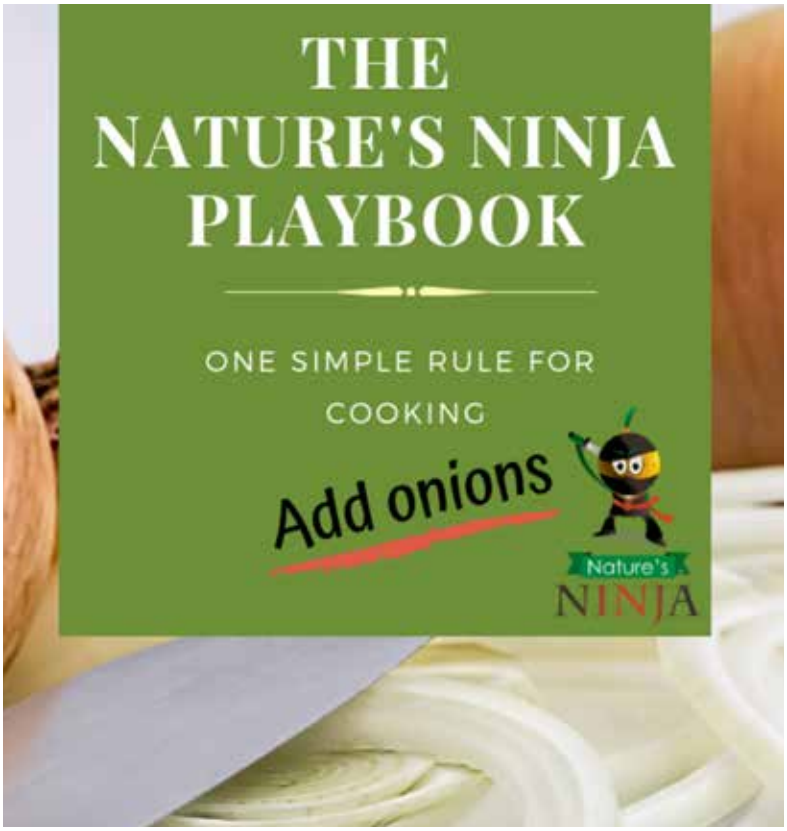
The National Onion Association tells the story of the bulb onion, promoting the usage and visibility of the third most consumed fresh vegetable in the U.S. with active media relations, recipe development, culinary education and more.

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.

Kids activities book

Click to download the Playbook





DIY Kitchens

A smaller Thanksgiving feast for less clean-up



Thanksgiving doesn't have to mean a whole turkey, six side dishes and a refrigerator that won't close. Whether you're cooking for yourself, sharing dinner with a partner or welcoming a few friends, a smaller meal can deliver all the comfort of the holiday—with less work and fewer dishes to wash.

Start by choosing the foods that make Thanksgiving feel like Thanksgiving to you. If stuffing tops your list, bake a small batch with sautéed onions, celery and sage. If you'd rather skip the extra pans, roast onion wedges, sweet potatoes and Brussels sprouts together on a sheet pan. Add one favorite dessert, and your holiday menu is ready.

Turkey breast offers another way to scale back without giving up the traditional centerpiece. In this recipe, rosemary and thyme season the turkey, while balsamic vinegar adds a tangy counterpoint to golden onions.

The full recipe serves 10, but it's easy to reduce for a smaller gathering: use one 3½-pound half-breast and halve the remaining ingredients for about five servings. For one or two people, that leaves enough for another meal without committing to a whole bird. Cooking time will depend on the size and shape of the breast, so let a thermometer guide you.

Keep the rest of the meal simple. Pair the turkey and onions with a small dish of stuffing and an easy green vegetable. Set the table with your favorite plates, pour something you enjoy and give yourself permission to leave a few traditional dishes off the menu.

Roast Turkey Breast with Balsamic Caramelized Onions

1 7 pound whole turkey breast or 2 half-breasts (about 3-1/2 pounds each)
7 tablespoons balsamic vinegar (divided)
4 teaspoons rosemary, crushed (divided)
4 teaspoons thyme, crushed (divided)
1-1/2 teaspoons salt
3/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
6 medium yellow onions (about 3 pounds)
2 tablespoons olive oil
Parsley or other fresh herbs (optional)

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Rub turkey on all sides with 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar. Sprinkle all sides with 3 teaspoons each rosemary and thyme. Sprinkle with Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of salt and ½ teaspoon of pepper. Place in roasting pan and roast at 350 degrees for 1-1/2 hours or until a meat thermometer registers 165 degrees. Halfway through roasting time, baste with 2 tablespoons vinegar.

Meanwhile, halve and slice onions. In 12-inch skillet over medium heat, sauté onions in oil for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until soft and light golden. Stir in 1 teaspoon each rosemary and thyme, 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar and salt and pepper to taste.

To serve, make a ring of onions on platter. Place turkey in center and top with a spoonful of Glazed Dried Cranberries. Pass remaining sauce. Garnish with parsley or fresh herbs, if desired. Makes 10 servings.

BEST USES for Yellow onions

Grilled, sautéed, caramelized, baked or roasted.

Video Recipe

Homemade Chicken Broth



Homemade chicken broth has a rich, savory flavor that's hard to find in a can. You control the salt, choose the ingredients and turn a few kitchen leftovers into something worth saving. Best of all, it's easy: a leftover rotisserie chicken carcass, onions, vegetables and herbs go into a pot with water, and a gentle simmer does most of the work.

There's also plenty of room to make each batch your own. Add garlic for a fuller flavor, tuck in a bay leaf or use up those last sprigs of thyme. Keep it simple for a broth that works in almost anything, or choose herbs to suit the soup you have in mind. Beyond soup, try your homemade broth in rice, gravy, sauces or a chicken pot pie filling. Once you get in the habit, that picked-over chicken and handful of vegetable scraps start looking like the beginnings of another meal.

You don't even need to use fresh vegetables every time. Keep a freezer bag handy for clean onion ends, carrot trimmings, celery tops and leftover herbs. Freeze them as you go, then pull them out when you're ready to make broth. It's a practical way to waste less, stretch your grocery dollars and give your next pot of soup a flavorful start.

Ingredients



1 de-boned rotisserie chicken
Cut up carrots, skins and stems
Onion pieces, skins and ends
Chopped celery stalks
Fresh parsely
Fresh Thyme Sprigs
1-2 bay leaves
Garlic cloves
Salt & pepper to taste

Directions



Place the chicken carcass in a large pot of water with roughly chopped onions, carrots and celery. Add garlic cloves and fresh thyme if you have them. Leftover parsley stems, a bay leaf or a few peppercorns can join the pot, too. This is your chance to get creative and use what's available. Clean vegetable trimmings work just as well as whole vegetables.

Pour in enough water to cover everything, then bring it to a boil. Reduce the heat and let the broth simmer gently for two to three hours. There's no need to hover over the stove; just check occasionally and add a little water if the ingredients become exposed.

As it simmers, the chicken, onions and other vegetables will give the water flavor, color and a welcoming aroma. Taste near the end and season as you like. Keeping the salt light leaves you more room to adjust whatever dish you make next.

When the broth is ready, carefully pour it through a fine-mesh strainer or a colander lined with cheesecloth into a heatproof bowl.

Discard the bones and spent vegetables. Transfer the strained broth into heat-safe storage jars. Let cool completly to tore in the freezer or refrigerator. Or use the broth immediately as the base for your favorite soup. Every batch will taste a little different — and that's part of the pleasure.

Make Room for Helping: A Family Project With Purpose



Finding something the whole family can agree on isn't always easy. But helping neighbors who need a meal or a safe place to sleep offers a shared purpose that reaches across generations. This November, consider making service part of your family's routine.

Start with a conversation, not a commitment. Ask everyone what they would enjoy doing: preparing food, organizing supplies, shopping for necessities or helping serve a meal. Giving children and teenagers a say helps make the project theirs, too.

Next, contact a local shelter, community meal program or organization serving people experiencing homelessness. Ask what help is needed, whether families can volunteer together and what age restrictions apply. Check about training, scheduling and food preparation requirements before buying ingredients or planning a menu. The best contribution begins with listening.

There can be a role for everyone, even when younger children cannot volunteer onsite. Little ones might count requested supplies or help shop with a parent. Older children can organize a collection, while teenagers can coordinate sign-ups or take approved volunteer shifts alongside adults. Grandparents can lend their cooking skills, help with transportation or join the planning.

If your family wants to provide a meal, work with the organization on the menu, portions, dietary needs and delivery arrangements. Ask whether meals must come from an approved kitchen. Sometimes purchasing requested groceries or contributing toward an existing meal program is the most useful option.

Keep the experience centered on respect. Talk with children about how everyone deserves kindness, privacy and a welcoming place at the table. Follow staff guidance, greet people warmly and leave cameras tucked away.

Afterward, spend a few minutes talking together. What did everyone enjoy? What would make the next visit easier? Avoid putting children on the spot for a big lesson; let their questions guide the conversation.

Then choose another date. A manageable monthly commitment can fit family life better than an ambitious project that becomes overwhelming.

You don't need a large budget or a free weekend to begin. A few willing hands, a little planning and a commitment to showing up can become a family tradition worth keeping.

A Family Kindness Challenge

Keep the spirit of helping going beyond your volunteer day. This November, challenge your family to complete seven small acts of kindness. Let everyone choose an activity, then work toward filling the card together.

Family Kindness Bingo

Aim for three in a row—or complete the whole card! Ask before helping, and check what organizations need before donating.

- Write a thank you note to a school custodian
- Help a neighbor rake leaves
- Call a friend or relative who lives alone
- Offer to bring in a neighbor's trash bins
- Donate clean, gently used coats to a program accepting them
- Collect a few items from a shelter's wish lists
- Leave an encouraging note for a family members.

At the end of the month, let everyone share their favorite experience and choose one act to keep doing.

Recipe box

CATEGORY:	PREP TIME:	COOK TIME:
Soups, Stews	20 minutes	60 minutes





Click photo for recipe directions

Raise the Dead Chili

1-3/4 lbs Roma tomatoes (or any fresh variety)
3 Poblano peppers
1 large yellow onion, peeled, cut into 4 slices
1 bulb garlic; peel the cloves (8-10 cloves)
1 teaspoon cumin
2-3 tablespoons chili powder depending on desired heat level
1/4 teaspoon Cayenne Pepper
24 ounces vegetable stock
15 ounce can of Black Eyed peas, drained
3 oz. medium sharp cheddar, shredded
olive oil
1/4-1/2 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
1 teaspoon sea or Kosher salt



Health properties of onions

Onions contain a variety of naturally occurring chemicals known as organosulfur compounds linked to lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Among some of their best-known benefits, onions contain the flavonoid quercetin, which acts as an anti-inflammatory in the body, inhibits low-density lipoprotein oxidation (an important reaction in the atherosclerosis and coronary heart disease), protects and regenerates vitamin E (a powerful antioxidant), and provides protection from many forms of cancer.

DIY Christmas - Should do your own lighting?

A little creativity can stretch your holiday budget and make the season feel more personal. Before buying decorations or another roll of wrapping paper, look around your home for supplies you can give a second life. Paper bags, fabric scraps, empty jars and children's artwork can become festive decorations or thoughtful finishing touches for gifts. These easy projects also give families a reason to gather around the table, share ideas and make something together.



Holiday Lights: Do It Yourself or Hire Some Help?

Holiday lights bring a welcome glow to dark winter evenings, but getting them up can be a chore. Should you untangle the strands and tackle the job yourself, or hire someone to handle it? The answer depends on your budget, available time and how comfortably you can reach the places you want to decorate.

Doing it yourself usually costs less, especially if you already own lights and supplies. You can work at your own pace, change the design as you go and make decorating part of a family tradition. A simple display around porch railings, shrubs or ground-floor windows can look cheerful without requiring an afternoon on the roof.

The tradeoff is the work: checking strands, replacing bulbs, putting everything up and taking it down again. Ladders, uneven ground and winter weather can also make the job harder.

Hiring a professional costs more, but can save time and effort, particularly for tall homes or elaborate displays. Before booking, ask whether the price includes lights, installation, maintenance, removal and storage. Confirm that the installer carries insurance, and find out whether you own the lights or are renting them for the season.

Professional installers are often local small-business owners who also offer landscaping or snow removal. Hiring one can support a neighbor's business while crossing a demanding task off your list.



Make your own holiday decorations

- **Paper-bag stars:** Glue paper lunch bags together, cut a simple pattern along the edges and unfold them into stars to hang in a window.
- **Dried-orange garland:** Dry thin orange slices in a low oven, then thread them onto twine. Add cinnamon sticks for a festive scent.
- **Jar lanterns:** Fill clean glass jars with battery-operated tea lights. Tie ribbon or twine around the rims.
- **Scrap-paper chains:** Cut old gift wrap, magazines or children's artwork into strips, then loop and tape them into colorful chains.
- **Pinecone centerpieces:** Arrange fallen pinecones in a bowl with ornaments and evergreen clippings from your yard.
- **Fabric-strip wreaths:** Tie strips from worn shirts or leftover fabric around a wire wreath form or embroidery hoop.
- **Homemade ornaments:** Cut shapes from cardboard, decorate them with paint or crayons and add a ribbon loop for hanging.
- **A gratitude tree:** Stand small branches in a sturdy vase. Invite family members to write something they appreciate on paper leaves or stars and hang them from the branches.

Get creative with gift wrapping

- **Decorate paper bags:** Cut grocery bags into flat sheets, turn the printed side inward and decorate with stamps, drawings or handwritten messages.
- **Wrap with fabric:** Use a scarf, tea towel or bandanna to wrap a gift. The wrapping becomes part of the present.
- **Showcase children's artwork:** Turn large drawings and paintings into colorful, one-of-a-kind wrapping paper.
- **Reuse tins and boxes:** Dress up clean cookie tins, shoeboxes or oatmeal containers with paper and ribbon.
- **Make your own gift tags:** Cut tags from last year's holiday cards or cardboard packaging. Punch a hole and thread with string.
- **Try a newspaper wrap:** Use the comics, crossword pages or a section that suits the recipient's interests.
- **Add a useful finishing touch:** Tuck a wooden spoon, cookie cutter or small ornament under the ribbon.
- **Create a reusable gift bag:** Decorate a plain cloth tote or drawstring bag that the recipient can use again.
- Make it a family tradition: Set out supplies, put on holiday music and let everyone decorate or wrap a few gifts in their own style.

Fun Thanksgiving activity for kids

Make a Thankful Paper-Bag Pumpkin



Turn everyday supplies into a Thanksgiving table decoration — and give everyone a chance to share something good.

You'll need:

- A brown paper lunch bag
- Scrap paper, newspaper or paper grocery bags
- String, yarn or a rubber band
- Crayons or markers
- Green paper—or scrap paper colored green
- Scissors and tape

Let's make it!



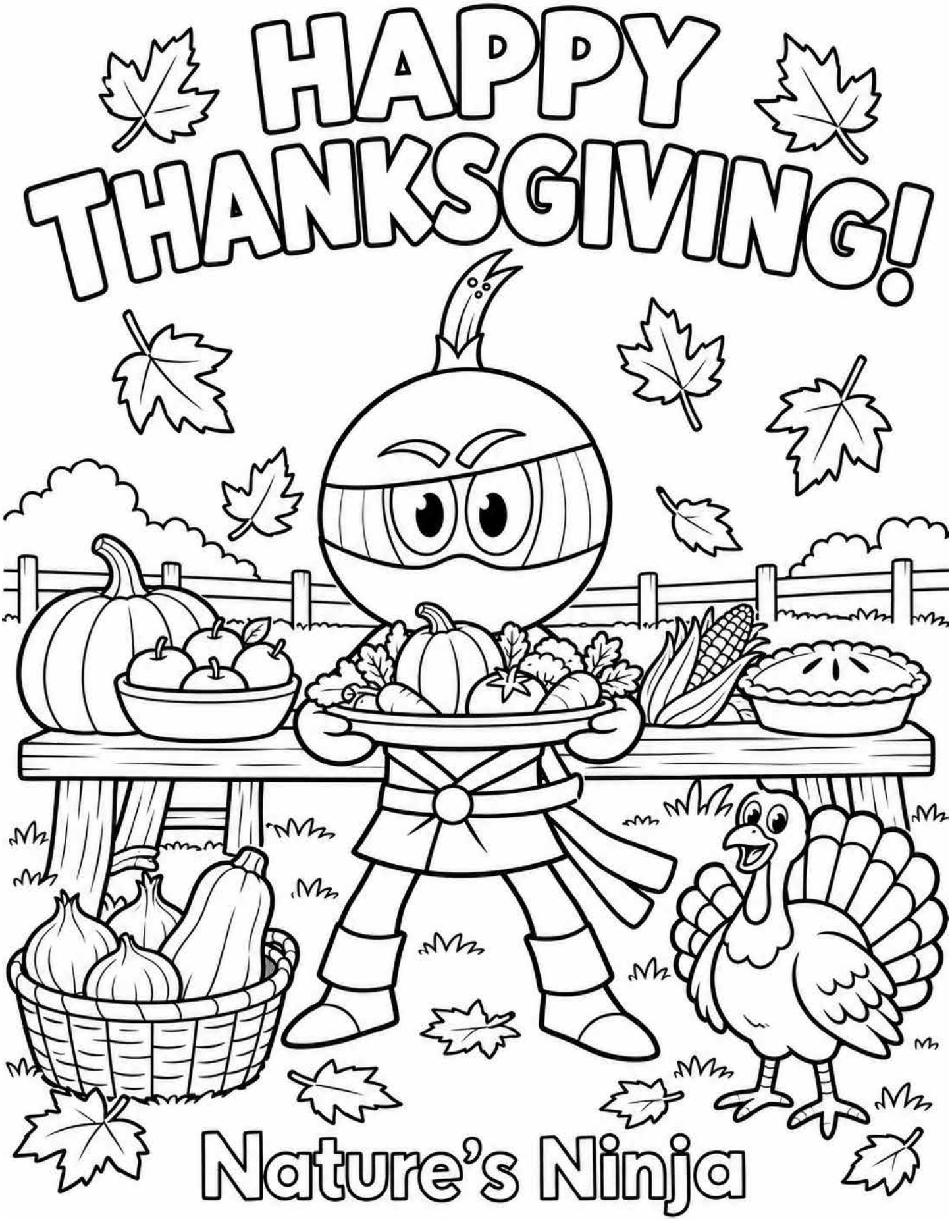
1. Share your thanks. Lay the lunch bag flat. Draw pictures or write things you're thankful for on the lower half: your family, friends, pets or a favorite place.
2. Stuff your pumpkin. Crumple scrap paper loosely and place it inside the bag, filling it about halfway. Gently shape the bottom into a round pumpkin.
3. Make the stem. Gather the bag just above the stuffing. Secure it with string or a rubber band, then twist the remaining paper into a stem. If it's too long, ask an adult to help trim it.
4. Add a leaf. Cut a leaf from green paper and tape it beside the stem. Write your name on it so everyone knows who made the pumpkin.
5. Set the table. Place your pumpkin where everyone can enjoy it. Make several for a centerpiece, or create one for each person's place at the table. Family challenge: Before your meal, take turns reading or explaining the thankful messages on your pumpkins.

Make it your own: No lunch bag? Use a square of paper grocery bag. Gather its edges around crumpled paper, tie the top and shape your pumpkin. **Grown-up helper:** Assist younger children with scissors. Keep paper decorations away from candles and other heat sources.



Coloring Contest

Calling all young artists! Grab your crayons, markers or colored pencils and bring Nature's Ninja Thanksgiving celebration to life. Then email a photo or scan of your finished coloring page to onionista@onions-usa.org. We'll choose our three favorites, and each winner will receive a gift package with a Nature's Ninja doll, a Nature's Ninja plushy and a coloring book! The top winner will also get a free onion bloom maker. Ask a parent or guardian to submit your entry and include your first name and age. We can't wait to see your creativity!



Meet an Onion Grower: The Torrey Family



For the Torrey family of Elba, New York, farming is a tradition that stretches back four centuries — and a business that keeps moving forward.

The family traces its agricultural roots to Connecticut in 1626. John Torrey brought that legacy to Western New York in 1803, and the family established its Elba headquarters in 1948. Today, Torrey Farms cultivates more than 10,000 acres, including fertile muckland that supports a wide variety of vegetables.

Onions hold a special place in that operation. Through Big O Farms, the family grows approximately 2,000 acres of yellow and red onions, supplying customers primarily along the East Coast. The onion business expanded from its first muckland purchases in the early 1990s, followed by a larger expansion in 1999 and additional farm acquisitions over the years.

The family's progress has also required resilience. A Thanksgiving Day fire in 2016 destroyed a major facility and part of the onion crop. Rebuilding began in 2017, creating an opportunity to invest in equipment and technology designed to improve efficiency and onion quality.

Across the farm, the Torreys combine generations of experience with integrated pest management, GPS-guided soil nutrition and careful management of land and water. Their fields also produce sweet corn, carrots, cabbage, squash, pumpkins, potatoes, green beans and cucumbers.

With family members sharing responsibilities across growing, harvesting, sales, staffing and business operations, Torrey Farms remains rooted in a shared purpose: growing quality produce today while preparing the farm for the generations who will work these same fields in the future.

GROWN WITH PRIDE . . .
TORREY FARMS, INC.
ELBA, NY

Torrey beginnings

Long before New York became a state, the Torrey family was building a farming tradition that continues today. Their agricultural roots reach back to Connecticut in 1626, with their Western New York story beginning in 1803, when John Torrey moved to the region.

More than two centuries later, the family remains part of New York agriculture.

From their earliest American fields to today's Western New York mucklands, the Torreys have sustained a family tradition while preparing the next generation to carry it forward.



Maureen Torrey

New York may be famous for its city skyline, but its farms produce an impressive harvest. In 2025, the state had approximately 30,000 farms operating across 6.4 million acres, supplying milk, apples, onions, vegetables, grains and maple syrup.

Dairy anchors that production. New York farmers produced nearly 16.6 billion pounds of milk in 2025, valued at approximately $3.6 billion. Hay and corn silage provide substantial feed supplies for the state's livestock industry.

Onions also contribute to the agricultural mix. New York growers harvested 6,900 acres of onions in 2025, producing approximately 234.6 million pounds, according to USDA.



Orchards and vineyards add another major contribution. New York harvested nearly 1.5 billion pounds of apples in 2025, while utilized grape production reached 191,600 tons. Vegetable growers produced approximately 301 million pounds of cabbage and 220.5 million pounds of sweet corn, alongside snap beans, squash, pumpkins, beets and green peas. Maple producers contributed 829,000 gallons of syrup.

Together, these products represent a substantial agricultural economy. The 2022 Census of Agriculture recorded approximately $8 billion in farm product sales statewide, reflecting New York's broad mix of dairy, fruit, vegetable and field crop production.