How to grow red bulb onions and garlic in Africa

Onions are used as spices worldwide. Knowing the proper agronomy of onions helps optimizing yields.

Staggered production of onions helps have a continuous supply of produce and this also helps reduce post harvest losses caused due to inadequate storage. The major pest of onions are thrips while their major disease is fungal and is called leaf rust. Onions and garlic can be stored for 6 months hence have a prolonged shelf life.

Onion agronomy

Before growing onions, do a market research and most importantly soil analysis. Onions require a good balance of macro and micro nutrients. Magnesium, calcium and boron are major influencers and these influence yield and shelf life. Use soil analysis results to apply fertilizers that supply the deficient nutrients. Waiting for nutrient deficiency symptoms to apply fertilizers may be detrimental to the expected yields.

Irrigate the onions through drip irrigation because over head irrigation may cause lots of fungal diseases while uncontrolled irrigation causes rotting of the bulbs.

Have a spraying programme that you follow rigorously to ensure that you prevent disease all the time and helps maintain safety levels required internationally when using synthetic fungicides or pesticides.

Harvesting and marketing

The expected date of harvesting is 4 months from transplanting and expected yield is 15,000 kg to 18,000 kg per acre of red

bulb onions.

The market for garlic and onions is available both locally and internationally.