How to improve Onion production in Kenya – Part 2

Onions have a short life span. Hence, the seedlings need to be kept up to 6 weeks before transplanting. The transporting of seeding is done when the seeding has a base as thin as pencil and its 15cm tall. For medium size, put 10cm apart and for bigger make bigger spacing.

Plant with DAP or NPK fertilizer to give the seedlings the energy. The fertilizer should be at the bottom of the hole, the seed should not come into contact with fertilizer as it will be burnt.

Seed Fertilization

Fertilization should be stopped when the onions are pushing the soil away and the bulb processes have started. Avoid putting the soil back to the roots , the bulb needs to emerge above the soil.

At five weeks, do the first top dressing, use CAM it helps the leaves so that it can manufacture food. Once the bulb starts forming stop giving more nitrogen.

Pests and diseases

You can control presence of pest and diseases by keeping the onion well irrigated and removing weeds. Onion maggots can be controlled by covering the margin with a fine mesh and mold the soil around the edges. This prevents the onion maggot from laying eggs.

Do a regular check to ensure crops are not affected by diseases and pests. Keep the mulch away because insects like decaying matter.

Onion harvesting

When onions mature, the top become yellow and begin to fall over. Hence, loosen the soil around the bulb to encourage drying. Pull any onion that sends up flowers stalk by hand or when the tops are brown.

When the leaves starts to bend, the onions are ready for harvest. Harvest is to be done before cool weather.

Onions that are ready for consumption should be red with purple red skin, with smooth formed layer. Allow the onions to dry for several weeks before you store them.