

## Recipe: Eggplant Delight

Serving Size: 1/4 recipe; Yield: 4 servings; Calories per Serving 194

### Ingredients:

3 tablespoons vegetable oil  
1 medium eggplant, sliced into 1/2 inch rounds  
1 medium onion, sliced into rings  
1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese  
Salt and pepper to taste

### Instructions:

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion, and saute until browned. Remove the onion to a bowl, and place eggplant slices in the hot skillet. Fry on both sides until browned and tender. Season with salt and pepper. When the eggplant is tender, top slices with onion, and then

cover with cheese. Allow cheese to melt for a few minutes before placing on plates and serving.

**Source:** Adapted from Allrecipes.com

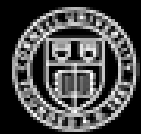


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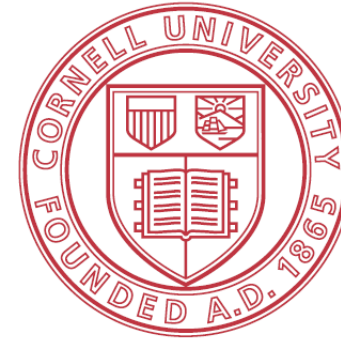
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Text for this publication was written by Master Gardener Volunteer Nora Teter.

2009

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# Vegetable Growing Guide: Eggplant

*Cornell Cooperative Extension Clinton and Essex Counties*

## Eggplant Facts



### Recommended

#### Varieties:

##### Early Varieties:

- Ichiban
- Dusky
- Little Fingers

##### Midseason Varieties:

- Black Beauty
- Classic
- Ghostbuster
- Neon

Eggplant, *Solanum melongena*, has dramatic foliage and fruit, making it a good choice for edible landscaping. In addition to the familiar deep purple, oval, glossy fruits, some varieties produce long, thin fruits or small, ball-shaped fruit, and other colors include white, green, and orange. Plants range in size from 2 to 4 feet in height and 2 to 4 feet in width. Select northern microclimate locations that have the two or more months of night-time temperatures in the 70s necessary for good fruit production. All varieties do well in outdoor containers, especially small-fruited and dwarf varieties.

## How to Plant

Eggplant seeds should germinate in 7 to 10 days in warm soil (80 F to 90 F, if possible since eggplants will not germinate in cool soil), and are viable for 4 years. Start seeds inside about 6 weeks before your last frost date, planting 1/4 inch deep in flats or cell-type containers. Wait until the weather has settled, all chance of frost has passed, and the soil is in the 60s before transplanting, perhaps 2 to 3 weeks after the average last frost date. Cool conditions can weaken plants and frost will kill them. Harden off plants carefully before transplanting by reducing temperature and water. Transplant 18 to 24 inches apart in rows 30 to 36 inches apart. Consider using raised beds or black plastic mulch to warm soil and speed early-season growth. If using organic mulches to help retain moisture, do not apply until the soil has warmed.



## Pests and Diseases

To help reduce disease, do not plant eggplants or other tomato-family crops in the same location more than once every three or four years. One of the most serious diseases of egg plant is verticillium wilt: remove and destroy the entire infested plant and all the soil clinging to the roots. Row covers can be used early in the season to protect plants from flea beetles. Use cardboard collars around transplants if cutworms are a problem. Wash off aphids with a heavy stream of water. Colorado potato beetles affect eggplants: hand-pick beetles, larvae, and eggs.



## Maintenance and Care



Eggplants require high fertility soil, but avoid high nitrogen fertilizers as they encourage leaf growth at the expense of fruit growth. A long warm growing season is required. Plants will tolerate part shade, and moisture requirements are moderate. If the season is cool, fruit set may be inconsistent. Plants with heavy fruit set benefit from staking.

## Harvest and Storage

Eggplant will not survive frost. Pinch off blossoms 2 to 4 weeks before first expected frost so that plants channel energy into ripening existing fruit, not producing new ones. Eggplants are sensitive to chilling, so store them at 45 degrees Fahrenheit or above.

### Sources:

Information for the text was taken from the 2003 Cornell Guide to Growing Fruit at Home which can be found at [www.gardening.cornell.edu/fruit/homefruit.html](http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/fruit/homefruit.html)

Recipe was provided by Eat Smart New York. More information on this program can be obtained by calling your county's Cornell Cooperative Extension Office.