

CHIVES

PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

INTRODUCTION

- Common name: Chives
- Scientific name: *Allium schoenoprasum*
- Species name derives from the Greek words for 'sedge' and 'onion'
- Native to Europe and Asia
- Perennial herbs that resemble tops of tiny onions
- Leaves are dark green, 10-15" long, cylindrical, and hollow
- Small purple flowers are held above foliage on thin stalks
- Leaves are used as a condiment for fish, potatoes, and soups
- Hardy in zones 3-9

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Grows well in full sun
- Prefers slightly acidic media
- Should be kept moist during the growing season

PROPAGATION

- Best propagated by division of existing clumps in spring
- Can be grown from seed; plant seeds directly in the garden as early as the soil can be worked in spring
- Plant seeds ¼" deep and space to 4-6"

as soon as seedlings emerge

- Seeds require up to three weeks to germinate

DISORDERS

- Thrips
 - Minute insects that feed on plant juices
 - Flowers and leaves appear distorted
 - Predatory mites can be used to control infestations
- Downy mildew (*Peronospora destructor*)
 - Light green to yellow spots form on leaves
 - Reduce humidity and remove infected foliage

CONSUMER CARE

- Often used as edging in flower beds
- Flowers can be dried and used in arrangements
- When harvesting, leave a few leaves intact to allow for re-growth
- Plants should be cut to the ground after flowering

CULTIVARS AND SPECIES

- *Allium schoenoprasum*: generally offered as generic chives without specific

cultivar information

- *Allium tuberosum*: garlic chives

References

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chives>
<http://www.gardenguides.com/plants/info/herbs/chives.asp>
http://www.floridata.com/ref/A/alli_sch.cfm

Mention of trade names does not constitute an endorsement by the Maryland Cooperative Extension, University of Maryland, College Park, or University of Maryland, Eastern Shore.

Reviewed by:

Dr. Yin-Tung Wang
Research and Development
Matsui Nursery
Salinas, CA

Dr. Mike Orzolek
Professor of Horticulture
Penn State University

Dr. Frank Flora
National Program Leader
Nutrition, Food Safety, and Quality
USDA-ARS

CHIVES PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

by
Thomas M. Blessington, David L. Clement, and Kevin G. Williams
Central Maryland Research and Education Center
University of Maryland

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, University of Maryland, College Park, and local governments. Cheng-i Wei, Director of Maryland Cooperative Extension, University of Maryland.

The University of Maryland is equal opportunity. The University's policies, programs, and activities are in conformance with pertinent Federal and State laws and regulations on nondiscrimination regarding race, color, religion, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, or disability. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990; or related legal requirements should be directed to the Director of Human Resources Management, Office of the Dean, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Symons Hall, College Park, MD 20742.