



Please search YouTube for “Blue Watermelon Project Chef Alyssa Dixon – I’ittoi Onion Recipe” to find this kit’s video
Recipes provided by Chef Alyssa Dixon a member of the Gila River Indian Community

Alyssa’s I’ittoi Rice, 2 servings

- 1 cup of jasmine rice
- 1 ½ cup of water
- 2 tablespoons of butter
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- 1 teaspoon of chicken bouillon
- 1-2 medium size I’ittoi onions



Recipe Instructions:

1. With the help of a grown-up, mince onion.
2. Rinse rice until water runs clear.
3. Heat up butter and olive oil in a sauté pan. Add in the onion and cook until fragrant.
4. Add cleaned rice to onion and stir together.
5. Add in water and chicken bouillon and bring to boil.
6. Cover the pan, turn the heat down to low and cook until the rice is tender, about 15 mins.
7. If you like, you can top your cooked rice with additional fresh chopped onions.

Planting I’ittoi Onions with Master Gardener Mr. Pikle:

The bulb of the I’ittoi onion is shallot-like and should be planted near the surface of the ground. Plant less than an inch below the soil with the roots downward, leaving the green stem (if there is one) above ground. Plant them about 8-inches apart. I’ittois are *multipliers*, so as the plant grows, new onion bulbs will grow and spread out beyond the original bulb. You can trim and eat the green tops throughout the year, but the bulbs will be ready to harvest in the spring. Use a small shovel to gently dig them out from the soil, if you try to pull them you may break off the green tops from the onion root. You will have more bulbs than you started with, so it is a great idea to set some aside in a cool dry place in a bag for the next monsoon planting season. Happy planting!



Did you know?

I’ittoi Onions are also called “friendship onions”. If you plant one bulb you will end up with many more, making it easy to share with others!

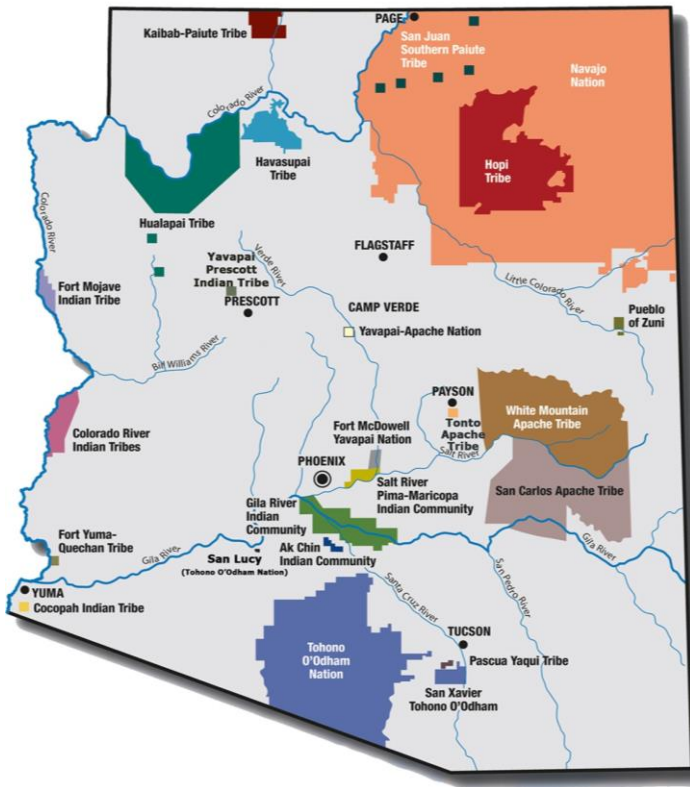
Meet your Farmer: The l’ittoi bulbs were purchased from Janna Anderson of Pinnacle Farms, a small farm in south Phoenix. The farm is dedicated to conserving the Southwest’s diverse plants. Many of the fruits, vegetables, and grains that are grown on the farm are unique and thrive in Arizona’s dry and arid climate. Photo courtesy of KTAR News.



l’ittoi Onions: Thrive in the Hot Desert Thanks to the Monsoon

The History of the l’ittoi Onion

l’ittoi onions, also known as wild onions, are significant to four of Arizona’s native sister tribes Tohono O’odham, Gila River, Ak-Chin, and Salt River Communities. In the 17th century, these onions were first harvested in southern Arizona on l’ittoi Mountain (also known as the Baboquivari Mountain), a place sacred to the O’odham Nation. In the sister tribes, it is believed that l’ittoi onions were one of the first foods given to them, making dishes like l’ittoi rice a staple in these communities. As a result, l’ittoi rice is often one of the first and most common recipes learned. The l’ittoi onion is a beloved crop because of its ability to add a sharp flavor to a variety of dishes, and its capacity to thrive in the desert during the summer months.



The Arizona Climate

The l’ittoi onion grows wild across the low desert landscape of Arizona, especially in Southern Arizona. The bulbs can be planted at the beginning of summer where they remain dormant until the summer monsoon begins. Monsoon season is an important and unique feature of Arizona’s climate and desert landscape as it brings humidity and precious rain to the dry and thirsty desert. The monsoon season, which lasts from about July to September every year, is when their growth begins. Bulbs can be planted in the fall or winter and will grow again in the spring, making this a crop something that can grow all year round. These plants can survive in the desert and use about one third less water compared to other types of onions.

Health & Nutrition Facts

Onions are prebiotics, which means the beneficial bacteria in your gut enjoy eating them! When we have happy and well-fed gut bacteria, we feel better. Onions also add sharp flavor to foods, which reduces the need to add salt. l’ittoi onions can be used as a substitute for onions or shallots in many recipes. Onions, including l’ittoi onions, are a major source of potassium (which is good for our muscles) and vitamin C (which helps us heal faster and keeps us from getting sick).

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We love to hear from you! This kit was made possible due to generous support from:

