

Regardless of what vegetables I intend to plant in my beds, early each spring I plant onion sets in each of our garden beds, placing them every sixteen inches apart. They go in early enough so by the time Sonia and I are ready to plant other seeds or plants, they are peeking above the soil to let me know where I planted them, and because we have left plenty of space between each onion, they do not pose any space problems regardless of what we decide to plant. Furthermore, by the time any vegetable reaches a size that would overshadow the onion, the onions are ready to pick.

While attending an organic gardening class, Diane Drinkard learned that most straw is heavily sprayed with pesticides, making it quite unsuitable for an organic vegetable bed. When I went to our farmer for meat and eggs this last time, I told him what I had discovered and asked him if he sprayed his straw. He told me that big wheat farmers spray their wheat to keep out the onions that would otherwise greatly reduce the price they get for their wheat. He does not spray his wheat because he feeds it to his livestock. So for those of you who use straw in your gardens, there are sources that have pesticide-free straw.