
Garlic And Onion As Cash Crops?

Martin L. Price

We have noticed that the prices of garlic and onions are often high in the tropics. This makes them a good candidate for a cash crop, but also makes one wary because there must be some good reason for their expense. Wally Turnbull at the Baptist Mission in Haiti is working on both crops and helped me understand some of the problems. A major problem with garlic is that the plants remain in the vegetative state and do not dry up, hence they cannot be stored. Onions can be harvested only during the long days of summer and store poorly. Consequently, few locally produced onions are available in December and must be imported. Wally is experimenting with new varieties of both garlic and onions which show promise. He gave me the name of the suppliers and I am writing to obtain seed. I can pass on a small amount to you for trial in your country in return for information on its performance. I will also pass on any results Wally shares with us on his experiments.