

Onion DNA unravelled at last

WUR researchers have managed to map the DNA sequence of the onion genome.

Sequencing the onion genome was far from easy, as it is very large: five times the size of the human genome. So the researchers had to place 100,000 fragments of DNA in the correct order, says plant-breeding researcher Richard Finkers. 'Of these 100,000 pieces of the jigsaw puzzle, 95,000 were blue sky, and only 5000 were different.'

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and mould.
The onion
is one of
the world's
most widely
cultivated
vegetables.
The Dutch eat
an average

of about seven kilos of onions a year. To keep pace with the increase in the global population, the production of onions must increase by 800,000 tonnes per year. As

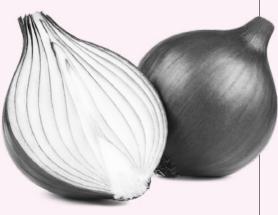


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