

## Onion Hybrid Performance

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**Methods:** The study was conducted at the NDSU Carrington Research Extension Center on a loam soil with a 7.8 pH and 3.2% organic matter. Pelleted and raw seed were planted on May 2, 2003 in 3-inch paired rows on 18-inch centers at 167,000 seeds/A while sets were planted by hand on in 12-inch rows at 130,000 bulbs per acre. The experimental design was a randomized complete block design with four replicates. Best management practices were used for fertility, weed, disease, and insect control. Hybrids were lifted 0 to 14 days after the half-down date. All hybrids were lifted and harvested by September 29. The onions were topped and cured in a forced air drier. Split and diseased bulbs were graded as culls regardless of diameter.

**Results:** Variability within the trial was high due to onion theft prior to harvest. Because of this, some plots were deleted from the data set to try and reduce the variability. Onion yields ranged from 79.3 to 985.0 cwt/A (Table). With the exception of the onions started as sets, less than 25% of the total yield was from onions smaller than 3 inches in diameter. Onion sets performed poorly again this year. Onion yields were 86 and 88% lower when Sabroso and Vaquero hybrids were started as sets vs. seed. The Sabroso and Vaquero sets also had the highest percentage of split bulbs.

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