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**Cowart Farms looks to a promising Vidalia onion season**

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By

Keith Loria

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Vidalia onions are enormously popular among people who enjoy cooking with sweet onions, and the good news for those consumers is that the Vidalia onion season is just around the corner. That means the team at [Cowart Farms](#) is very busy.

“It’s the main crop that we grow,” said Anthony Cowart, owner of Lyons, GA-based Cowart Farms. “We’ve been doing Vidalia onions commercially since back in 1986. My brother Jimmy and I are fifth-generation farmers and we started our operation back then with something around 50 acres and we’ve grown to averaging around 500 every year.”

Cowart Farms supplies chain stores nationally and in Canada through its partnership with Keystone Fruit Marketing, and also does some of its own in-house sales. That partnership started in the late 1990s when Cowart Farms started focusing its efforts on creating the ideal sugar levels for its onions.

“We started attracting attention from marketers, and we established a relationship with Keystone Fruit Marketing and started working with the buyers and chain stores and we created a good relationship,” Cowart said.

Cowart noted that the 2024 Vidalia onion season looks promising.

“We’ve had a lot of rain over the growing season, but at this point it hasn’t seemed to affect anything,” he said. “Maybe we’re a week behind where we usually are, but everything is coming along really well.”

He expects to start harvesting sometime in early April. After about five weeks, the onions start to go into storage, so that people can enjoy the uniqueness of Vidalia onions throughout the year.

Cowart said that Vidalia onions often star in cooked meals, but are also used as a fresh onion in salads and of course on burgers during barbecue season.

So, what makes onions grown in the Vidalia area so special?

“It’s the uniqueness of the soil and the fact that we have a good supply of clean water, it’s that combination,” Cowart said. “The category has grown immensely over the years, and the No.1 sweet onion in the world is the Vidalia.”

He also credits the onion’s sweetness for its popularity.

There’s no other onion that comes close to it, as far as the sweet category,” Cowart said. “It’s a top-of-the-line cooking onion.”

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Another key to the company's success has been its dedication to quality over quantity.

"We never wanted to be a 1,000-acre deal, or get as big we could get," Cowart said. "We just try to provide a good quality product to the consumer, and that has paid off over the years."

Cowart Farms also succeeds by finding new ways to improve its operation.

"This year, we have added on to our packing facility, so that we can have a bigger supply for a longer period in the summer," he said. "We've added the latest up-to-date equipment, we purchased an Omni sorter with the Ellipse software package, which gives us the opportunity for more accurate quality control."

That has everyone at the company looking forward to an excellent Vidalia onion season. "We're definitely hoping and praying for that," Cowart said. "If Mother Nature cooperates with us, we're going to have a good supply."

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## About Keith Loria |

A graduate of the University of Miami, Keith Loria is a D.C.-based award-winning journalist who has been writing for major publications for close to 20 years on topics as diverse as real estate, food and sports. He started his career with the Associated Press and has held high editorial positions at magazines aimed at healthcare, sports and technology. When not busy writing, he can be found enjoying time with his wife, Patricia, and two daughters, Jordan and Cassidy.

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