

1 - INTRODUCTION

Onion (*Allium cepa* L.) is one of the foremost alliaceous vegetable plants, and one of the most important vegetable crops in the world . Egypt is one of the main world producers of onion. It is an ancient and widely grown crop for export and local consumption. It has been used for flavouring, salads, sausages, soups and it also has a medical value .

The area cultivated with onion in Egypt 1998, was 49877 faddans, with total production of 551066 ton when cultivated as single cropped while the area was 40259 faddans, and its productivity was 325783 ton when cultivated as intercropped. In Alexandria the total area which cultivated with onion was 461 faddans and its productivity was 2824 ton in 1998. The average yield per faddan was 6.126 ton /fad. as mentioned by the yearly book of economics and statistic of the Ministry of Agric., in Egypt .

Many of productive soils in the newly-reclaimed areas contain calcium carbonate throughout the profile. Calcareous soils usually poor in their organic matter content and some necessary elements may become insoluble and unavailable to plants. Therefore, organic manure and chemical fertilizers are considered of significant importance regarding maximum crop production under calcareous soil conditions .

Town refuse is produced at a rate of about 2 million tons per year from Cairo. The total amount produced from Egypt estimated as 11 million tons annually. About 50 % of this amount is transferred into organic manures as soil amendment to raise the content of organic matter in the soil. It was therefore

thought of using organic manure from town refuse sources or farmyard manure to correct the soil deficiency in organic matter and to open the way for consumption of such wastes to avoid their pollution effects .

Accordingly, this study was initiated to evaluate the efficiency of organic manures and NPK fertilizers on onion plant growth, total bulb yield and its quality under calcareous soil condition of Maryout , Alexandria Governorate .