

Growing Great Garlic

- Garlic Varieties
- Soil Preparation and Planting
- Growing and Harvesting
- Disease
- Curing & Storage
- Eating



Reference Material

- U of M Extension article written mostly by Dr. Carl Rosen -- [Google "U of M Growing Garlic"](#)
- Book – Growing Great Garlic by Ron L. Engeland (1991)
- Book – The Complete Book of Garlic by Ted Jordan Meredith (2008)
- PlumCreekGarlic.com – Look at Resources tab



Garlic Varieties

- Hardneck garlic
 - Develops a flower stalk (scape)
- Softneck garlic
 - Does not develop a flower stalk
 - Not as hardy here in central MN
- Varieties within each type
- Examples we grow
 - Music
 - Chesnok Red
 - Georgian Crystal
 - Siberian
 - German Extra Hardy



Where to Buy 'Seed Stock?

- Locally of course!
 - Plum Creek Garlic
 - MN Grown
 - MN Garlic Festival
 - Hutchinson, MN
 - 2nd Saturday in August
- But watch out for Nematodes
- 'Store' garlic is typically a softneck from either China or California



Soil Preparation & Planting

- Lots of organic matter ideally
- Should drain well ideally
- pH should be slightly acidic (6.5 to 7) ideally
- Plant 2-4 weeks before ground freezes solid 😊
 - Around mid-October here
- Spacing is highly variable
 - Four to eight inches is common
- Depth is also highly variable and depends on mulch
 - Heavy soils – about ½ to 1" below surface
 - Light soils – 'thumb' deep
- Clove should be pointy part up or basal plate (root) down - the way they came out of the ground!



Soil Preparation & Planting -- Continued

- Mulch

- Similar to tulip or other bulbs
- Straw, grass, leaves
- Watch for weeds (and other stuff)
- Remove in spring for earlier warm-up and easier fertilizing
- Leave on for less weeding and to incorporate at end of season for soil building

- Fertilizer

- Garlic is a heavy nitrogen feeder
- U of M recommends $\frac{1}{3}$ in fall and $\frac{2}{3}$ incorporated in spring before Memorial Day





Growing and Harvesting

- Hardnecks have Scapes
 - Usually ready in mid-June
- Weed regularly
- Water only if dry and cut back as you move into July
- Harvest when 3-4 leaves have dried or 3-4 are still green for hardnecks
- Softnecks flop over when ready







Disease

- Bloat Nematode – deadly when brought on farm
- Fusarium – managed via rotation
- Viruses – in all garlic, usually not too serious
- Various 'surface' diseases – both pre and post harvest
- Aster Yellows – hope and prayer



2012 Aster Yellows in upper Midwest



Curing & Storage

- Dig or pull (carefully)
- Bundle and hang (carefully) or put on screens
- Moisture is your enemy
- Air circulation is critical
- Ideal drying takes place in warm, dry conditions
- Cut roots and leaves when dry (2-4 weeks)
- Remove one or two wrappers for good looks
- Long term storage – cool, dry and out of the sun



Eating

- Have fun trying different methods – raw and cooked
 - Cut ¼" off top (not roots) and roast for ½ hour in 350 degree oven with olive oil until soft and then squeeze onto crackers or bread – yum!
 - Put whole cloves in with root vegetables and bake
 - Add to stir fry at the last minute
- Time changes flavor of the bulb
- Cooking time determines 'heat'
- Don't forget the scapes in June!



