

Home Gardening Series

Garlic

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Vegetables

Environment

Light – sunny
Soil – well-drained loam
Fertility – medium-rich
pH – 5.5 to 7.0
Temperature – cool
Moisture – moist

Culture

Planting – cloves in fall
Spacing – 1-6 x 12-24 inches
Hardiness – hardy biennial
Fertilizer – heavy feeder in spring

Garlic – *Allium sativum*

The exact origin of the cultivated garlic as we know it is not known. However, we can find written references to it from the writings of the Greeks, Egyptians, Romans and Chinese. The name garlic comes to us from the Welsh word “garlleg” which is transformed into the English word “garlic.”

Wherever it came from, there can be no doubt that garlic has captured the interest of gardeners and cooks alike. It is easily cultivated and persists in the garden for years.



Garlic, a member of the onion family, may be grown successfully in most Arkansas home gardens. Garlic is started by planting small cloves that are divisions of the large bulb. Each bulb contains a dozen or more cloves; each clove is planted separately. The larger the clove, the larger

the size of the mature bulb at harvest. Do not divide the bulb until you are ready to plant; early separation results in decreased yields. Select “seed bulbs” that are large, smooth, fresh and free of disease.

Cultural Practices

Garlic grows best on friable loam soils that are fertile and high in organic matter. Gardeners who grow good onion crops can grow good garlic. Garlic does well at high fertilizer levels. Apply 1 pound of 10-20-10 fertilizer per 100 square feet three times during the growing season. Bulbs will be small if the soil is excessively dry and irregular in shape if the soil becomes compacted.

Planting Time

Plant cloves in the fall to allow enough time for the plants to mature by the next summer. The latest garlic can be planted in Arkansas is early February to permit full development.

Spacing and Depth of Planting

Fall preparation of the soil is desirable if the soil can be fertilized and planted with minimum tillage in the spring. Plant cloves 3 to 5 inches apart in an upright position (to ensure a straight neck) and cover to a depth of 1/2 to 1 inch. Allow 18 to 30 inches between rows.

Harvesting and Storage

Bulbs may be harvested when the tops start to dry, usually in July. Place bulbs on trays with screens or slatted

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Cultivars

| Crop | Variety | Days to Maturity | Cloves/ 100 Ft of Row | Sources (see "Sources" paragraph below) | Remarks |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| Soft-necked Garlic | Italian Late | 8 months | 2 lbs | 17, 33 | Soft-necked garlic with tight, light-colored wrappers; pleasing garlic aroma; productive and easy to grow. |
| | Silver Rose | 8 months | 2 lbs | 17 | Rose-colored cloves in white wrappers; fast-growing, stores 8 months; beautiful braided. |
| | Mild French Silverskin | 8 months | 2 lbs | 31 | Best in southern climates, especially hot and dry; 14 cloves per bulb; excellent keeper. |
| | Inchelium Red | 8 months | 2 lbs | 4, 31 | 15 per bulb with a wide variation in clove count. Outperforms Italian Purple. |
| Hard-necked Garlic | Korean Red | 8 months | 2 lbs | 17 | Purple-striped bulbs contain 4 to 8 very large, easy to peel, purple cloves. Flavor is very hot! Matures early, adapts to most climates, keeps well. |
| | Spanish Roja | 8 months | 2 lbs | 4, 31, 33 | Robust flavor, 10 cloves per bulb; easy to peel, stores three months; grows well in cold winter climates. |
| | Elephant Garlic | 8 months | 2 lbs | 17, 23, 33 | Mild flavor with no garlic after-taste; huge bulbs can weigh over a pound. |

bottoms and remove the tops when dry. Mature bulbs are best stored under cool, dry conditions. If you grow only a few plants, braid the tops together with twine and hang the bulbs to dry.

Sources

For a list of sources referred to by number, request FSA6106, *Seed Sources: Vegetable and Herb*, for current address, telephone and web site.

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