

TYPES OF GARLIC

- Soft neck garlic does not produce flowers and is the best for braiding and storing.
- Hard-stem or Italian garlic is more pungent than soft neck garlic.
- Elephant garlic produces very large mild cloves.

PLANTING

In the Willamette Valley, October to early November is a great time to plant garlic. Select a sunny site. Garlic grows best in well drained, loamy soil high in organic matter. If your soil is heavy in clay, amend it with compost or well-rotted manure. Do not divide the bulbs into cloves until you are ready to plant. Separate the individual cloves, but do not peel them. Select only the largest healthiest cloves. Plant the garlic cloves about 2 inches deep, 4 inches apart, with the pointed end up. Elephant garlic should be planted about 6" apart. Place the rows 18 to 30 inches apart.

FERTILIZING

At planting time, add bulb fertilizer or bone meal and garden lime to the planting hole. Apply mulch to keep down weeds. In early spring, begin application of a balanced liquid or granular fertilizer according to package directions. Fertilizer applications should end in mid May.

WATERING

To grow evenly shaped garlic, keep the soil uniformly moist. As the rains taper off, water deeply every 7 to 10 days. In mid-June, decrease watering.

HARVESTING

Harvest the bulbs when the tops begin to dry. Dig one to check for plump cloves covered with a thick papery covering. To avoid stem injury, dig the bulbs up, instead of pulling them out of the ground. Gently rub the soil off and do not rinse them in water. Allow the tops to dry. Dry the garlic in a dry shaded area, out of the sun. As soon as the bulbs have dried, snip off the tops and roots 1 inch from the bulb. If you plan to braid the garlic, dig and braid them when the leaves are still a little green. Be sure the garlic cures (dries) fully before it is stored. It will be fully cured in 3-5 weeks. It is best to store mature garlic bulbs in a well ventilated dark area above 50° F. Properly stored, garlic will keep until the next harvest.

PEELING GARLIC

- Slice off both ends of a clove.
- Turn the knife sideways and lay the blade flat on top of the bulb. Point the sharp end facing away from you!
- Lightly press down on the bulb to slightly crush it, and the skin should slide off easily.

DIAL UP THE FLAVOR

The way you prepare the clove of garlic greatly impacts the amount of flavor you get in dishes. Use the following as a general guideline:

- Whole Clove – use for a hint of garlic, good for soups or roasted chicken.
- Cloves Sliced Lengthwise – use in dishes for a mild flavor or for long-cooking dishes like pot roast.
- Minced Cloves – use for medium flavor or for quick cooking dishes like stir-fries. Keep the heat down to avoid burning, which can cause garlic to taste bitter.
- Crushed Cloves – use for the strongest garlic flavor, such as in rubs and oils.

ROASTED GARLIC

- Preheat oven to 400° F.
- Peel away the outer layers of the bulb skin, leaving the skin on the individual cloves intact.
- Cut ¼ to ½ off the top to expose the individual cloves.
- Place garlic heads in a baking pan (muffin pans work especially well).
- Drizzle a couple of teaspoons of oil over the top of the clove, making sure the whole bulb is covered with foil. Bake for 30-35 minutes, or until the bulb is soft when pressed.
- Allow the bulb to cool, and then pull the cloves out using a fork.
- Eat as is, crush and use in recipes, or spread over bread.
- ENJOY!