

GROWING GARLIC

October:

This is the ideal garlic planting window for the Pacific Northwest! Try to read the weather and get seeds in the ground before the heavy rains start.

Early March:

If you missed the October planting window or have garlic sprouting in the pantry this is the second-best time to plant. Plant as soon as ground is workable.

April-May:

As things heat up, so does the weeding. Garlic is very susceptible to weed pressure, so stay on top of it! With a little weekly rain you won't need to irrigate. A light watering goes a long way in a dry spell. To give garlic a boost do a foliar spray of fish emulsion when plants are 24+ inches tall before they put out scapes.

June:

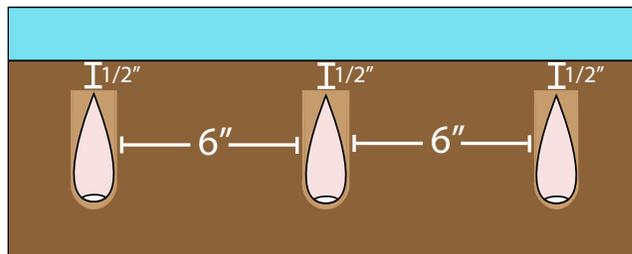
Time to start looking for scapes! Scapes come out of the tops of hardneck garlic and curl into little, green pigtales. It is important to remove scapes so the plants focus their energy into the bulb rather than the flower. After they curl you should be able to easily snap them off at the base; rubbery scapes are unrip. Garlic scapes taste delicious and can be substituted in any cooking where you use garlic.

July:

As garlic starts to ripen, lower leaves start to die from the bottom up. Stop watering after the first leaf dies. Watering further may cause garlic to mold or rot. Once half the leaves are dead it's harvest time! If 3+ leaves have died and hard rain is coming consider an early harvest to avoid mold and rot.

Planting Your Garlic:

Garlic likes soil with good drainage and high organic matter, and is a heavy feeder: it needs lots of nutrients. Your local garden store should have 4-3-2 amendment or similar. Soil dependant, 1-2 cups/10 sqft. should be adequate. Garlic has varying cloves per lb., but 1 lb. of seed per 10 sqft. of planting space is a safe estimate.



Plant cloves in a grid 6" apart root-end down and cover with 1/2" of soil.

Once the planting space is prepared, break garlic bulbs into cloves. Each clove will become its own bulb. Plant garlic cloves in a grid with cloves 6 inches apart to provide the space, sun, and airflow needed to thrive. A bit of variation in spacing won't hurt. Ensure cloves are planted root-side down and completely covered by approximately 1/2" layer of dirt. After planting consider putting down a light straw mulch to prevent weed growth and protect from light frost damage.

Harvesting Your Garlic:

Once half the leaves are dead it's time for garlic harvest! In very sandy soil garlic will pull out easily, but in more clay-heavy soil a spading fork may be required to loosen soil around bulbs before pulling.

Once out of the ground garlic can be tied with twine in bunches of 10-15. Bunches must be hung somewhere with low humidity and good airflow. Most garages, sheds, or covered porches will work well for the garlic curing process.

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GARLIC DISEASE INFO: <http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/FS162E/FS162E.pdf>

