

Growing Great Garlic

Easy to grow, good for your health and even better for your taste buds!
Enjoy the many flavours of home grown garlic. Vive la différence!

PREPARING THE SOIL

October is the best time to plant garlic here on the West Coast. Pick a spot in the garden that will get at least 6 hours of direct sunlight each day. Soil should be light, well-drained, and rich in humus. Garlic doesn't like overly acidic conditions. Mixing dolomite lime into the soil before planting would be advisable if pH is below 5.5. If planting in a pot, pick one with a good sized drain hole. Use **GARDENWORKS™** Planter Box Mix and you're set to go. Adding **GARDENWORKS™** Bone Meal (2-14-0) when planting will encourage healthy bulb growth. Bone meal slowly releases nutrients that will feed the roots of the garlic all winter long.

PLANTING AND GROWING

Separate the cloves of the bulb. Take care not to damage the "skins". Plant each clove about 5cm (2 inches) deep and 10cm (4 inches) from its neighbours. The pointy end goes up, the flat end down. Mulching will keep the weeds down and prevent soil erosion during the rainy months. Extra **GARDENWORKS™** Bone Meal (2-14-8) or **GARDENWORKS™** Bulb Food (3-15-8) in the spring ensures nutrients are available during maximum growth.

Avoid high nitrogen fertilizers which divert growth toward leaves and away from the bulbs. Water moderately during dry spells. Overwatering or poor drainage may result in bulb rot. Cut off young scapes (the stems that form seed heads) as they form to encourage bulb growth. Chopped up and lightly sauted, these add a lovely flavour to steaks and baked potatoes

HARVESTING & STORING

Garlic usually starts nearing maturity in late July. Avoid watering in the final weeks before harvesting. When half to three quarters of the leaves have begun to yellow, the bulbs are ready to be harvested. Lifting plants by hand reduces potential damage to the bulbs. Remove soil carefully, taking care to leave as much of the skin on the bulbs as possible for better long term storage.

Allow the bulbs to cure in a warm, dry spot for a week or two, making sure to leave air space between them. Once dry, clean the bulbs and cut off the dead leaves. The fridge is not where you want to store your harvest! Cloves can become soft and sprout, shortening storage life and affecting flavour. Instead choose a cool, dry spot where the bulbs can get some airflow. Enjoy them for months to come!

