



Gardening Information Leaflet No. 11-A

\$5.00

“DOING IT RIGHT”

GROWING GARLIC ORGANICALLY

THE MINERAL-AUGMENTED WAY “*The Only Way to Grow!*”

Besides being a gourmet treat, garlic (either raw or cooked) is great for you nutritionally and “medically.” Garlic is a natural form of cholesterol control “medication” and renowned through the centuries for its immune defense and health protective properties. Worn around the neck, it keeps vampires away.

Garlic comes in a wide variety of colors, flavors and strengths (very hot to mild) and the flavor often changes with cooking. There are two basic growth forms, i.e. the hardnecked and soft-necked. Softnecked types generally store longer and are best for braiding. Hardnecked types are said to be more flavorful and easier to peel. The back side of this Gardening Information Leaflet lists and describes several varieties from which you can choose to suit your taste and purpose.

Garlic Seed- Garlic is not grown from actual seed, but the vegetative bulbs and cloves grown specifically for the purpose of planting to grow a crop for eating is referred to as seed. Garlic is an allium (or member of the onion family) and comes from the ground intact as a bulb or head. Wrapped within the bulb are a number of cloves. These are the parts separated out for planting and for eating or cooking. Cloves are planted (without peeling) with the blunt (root) end down. Depending on soil fertility, and weather conditions, each clove will grow to produce a bulb like it came from and thus multiplies itself several times and may be even bigger if well fertilized, watered and cared for through harvest.

Planting – The site and soil should be properly prepared and fertilized prior to putting the garlic cloves in the ground. The best time to plant is in October. Late September and November are next best. January through March is okay but will result in smaller bulbs at harvest. Unwrap and separate out the cloves. Dig a row furrow about 4” deep and set the cloves in the bottom at least one hand-width apart in rows 10 to 12 inches apart. Or plant them about 6 inches apart equidistant (or the distance from the tip of the little finger to the thumb tip when widely splayed). With the pointed end up, fill around the clove and cover it over 1 to 2 inches deep (knuckle to finger tip of the middle finger). Pat down and proceed down the row, then water from a sprinkler can. Then apply a 4 inch mulch cover.

Fertilization – Gardening authors and garlic authorities differ on how best to fertilize garlic plantings and are otherwise vague about the nutrient needs of garlic at various stages. All seem to agree there are times and growth stages when fertilizing should not be done or could be harmful, but this could depend on the type of fertilizer used. Pending further investigation, we recommend compost plus a complete organic fertilizer blend (with lime, or oystershell flour) such as our Garden Essentials Mix (B..L.O.O.M. #3) at 10 lbs per 100 sq ft worked into the top 6-8 inches prior to planting. In early February side –dress with bloodmeal at one pound per 100 square feet scratched in along the rows of young shoots. From April through May apply compost tea and foliar sprays of dilute liquid fish and kelp on alternate weeks.

Watering – Once planted, the garlic bed should be thoroughly wetted and not allowed to fully dry out before rainfalls take over the job. About July first all watering should be suspended to allow the bulbs to firm or harden up and minimize the risk of inducing fungal diseases.

Harvesting - During early summer the plants will send up flower stalks and these must be snipped off so as not to drain energy from bulb forming. In July some of the garlic leaves will turn brown. Contrary to advice sometimes given, you should not knock over the leaves but should have at least 3 green leaves left at harvest time. Beginning in early July, dig up a sample plant each week to monitor bulb maturing. You want the bulbs to size up and harden but be dug up before they start splitting open. When the bulbs appear ready, dig them up and gently knock off the bulk of adhering soil, but don't clean up too much. Place the plants in a shaded, dry and airy location for a couple weeks to finish drying and curing. Then, unless you intend to braid the plants, cut off the stems and leaves about an inch above the bulb. Then gently remove roots and remaining soil from the bulb. Place bulbs in netted onion sacks and hang up to air and dry more. Always handle garlic bulbs gently and do not bang around or bruise them.

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