

# The Great Garlic Grow Guide

TIPS & TRICKS FROM A SEASONED GROWER

## VARIETY LIST

FOUR  
HORTICULTURAL  
GARLIC GROUPS

## HOW TO GROW

FIVE STEPS TO  
ENSURE SUCCESS

## STORAGE TIPS

HOW TO MAXIMIZE  
SHELF LIFE

# Garlic

## Traditions

### Start at Home

At the end of every July, we start harvesting garlic at Tourne-Sol farm, where we grow 25 000 bulbs of 7 different varieties.

But we also grow garlic in our home garden.

And every year, the earliest garlic we harvest at home is the garlic my grandma gave me.

She had only been growing the garlic for 10 years or so when she gave it to me.

She wasn't sure where she had bought it (at a nursery or hardware store or garden centre) but she had been planting it and replanting it in her garden.

(In fact, the squirrels were doing a lot of replanting in the garden too and as a consequence there was garlic all over the place in her garden.)





So this garlic is not a family heirloom but it is still a direct link to my grandma.

And it gives me a reason to talk about her with my kids when we harvest this garlic, and when we braid it in the coming weeks, and again when we're peeling it and chopping it up for supper.

And if my kids decide to grow it in their gardens and keep those stories going, it will become part of our history.

With this Garlic Growing Guide, I invite you to start growing garlic in your own garden and to begin traditions that you can share with your family and friends.

Throughout this guide, you will learn the tips, tricks and strategies that I have gleaned over time - both on our farm and at home.

Ready?... Let's dive in.

~Dan Brisebois  
[www.fermetournesol.qc.ca](http://www.fermetournesol.qc.ca)



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# Garlic Varieties

TOURNE-SOL FARM OFFERS  
GARLIC FROM 4 DIFFERENT  
GARLIC HORTICULTURAL  
GROUPS.

FOR EACH GROUP WE OFFER  
1-3 DIFFERENT VARIETIES.

[Order from our online store](#)

1

## **MARbled PURPLE STRIPE GROUP - HARDNECK**

5-7 large cloves/bulb. Hot and pungent.  
Stores until March-April.

- Marbled Purple Stripe - Siberian:  
From Siberia. White wrappers with purple  
blotches. Late maturing.

# Garlic Varieties cont.



2

## PURPLE STRIPE GROUP - *HARDNECK*

7-10 large cloves/bulb.

Sweet rich taste. Stores until March-April.

- Purple Stripe - Chesnok Red: From the Republic of Georgia. Purple stripes on white wrappers.



3

## PORCELAIN GROUP - *HARDNECK*

4-6 huge cloves/bulb. Hot and pungent.

Stores until April-June.

- Porcelain - **German Jimmy**: From Jamie Quinn of La Terre Blue farm. He wasn't sure what varieties made up this batch. He did know German White was one of the varieties he'd liked, hence the name.

- Porcelain - **Music**: The standard Canadian hardneck garlic.

# Garlic Varieties cont.



4

## ROCAMBOLE GROUP - *HARDNECK*

6-10 large easy to peel cloves/bulb.  
Deep full flavour.  
Stores until March-April.

- Rocambole - **Korean Purple**

From South Korea. Very well adapted to Quebec conditions. Violet stripes.

- Rocambole - **Puslinch:**

From Puslinch, Ontario.  
Also called Ontario Giant.  
An early maturing Rocambole.

- Rocambole - **Québec**

Our earliest maturing Rocambole.

# How much to plant

		Number of bulbs you use in a year				
		10	25	50	75	100
Number of cloves per bulb	4	4	8	16	24	32
	5	3	6	12	18	24
	6	2	5	10	15	20
	7	2	5	9	13	17
	8	2	4	8	11	15
	9	2	3	7	10	13

1. Start with the number of bulbs you use per year. One way to do that is to think about how many bulbs you eat per week and multiply this number by 52.
2. Find the number in the **plum** coloured row that corresponds to the number of bulbs you use in a year.
3. Consider the type of garlic you'll be planting. Note its average number of cloves per bulb is found in the 2nd green column
4. Look at where your row and column intersect. This is the number of bulbs you need, to have **enough** bulbs to eat **all year**. It also includes having enough garlic to replant the same amount.

For example if you eat **50** bulbs a year (about 1 bulb a week) and you are planting garlic with **5 cloves per bulb**. You need to plant 12 bulbs. That means you will need space for **60 garlic plants!**

**EXAMPLE**

		Number of bulbs you use in a year				
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## Preparing your beds for garlic planting

### Where will you plant your garlic?

September is a good time to prepare your garlic beds when the weather is generally sunnier and dryer than mid October.

You can clean up the weeds and pull out any spent crops, spread a little compost or well rotted manure, and prepare the soil.

Then, when garlic planting time comes in October, all you have to do is get those cloves in the ground. Well there are a couple of steps to do before then to prepare your cloves for planting.

# What part of the garlic bulb do you plant?



## The individual CLOVES!

Get your friends together and have a **Garlic Cracking Party**.

Put on some tunes and crack the full bulb to release the cloves inside.

## HOW?

Hold the bulb in your hand and use the stem as a lever to crack the bulb open.

Then separate the cloves and inspect that they are not damaged.



# 5 Steps to Growing Great Garlic

1

## 1. MID - LATE OCTOBER – PLANT GARLIC

Take your cracked cloves to your prepared bed.

Make a trough or poke holes to plant 4" deep, every 6" .

Your rows need to be spaced 12 to 18" apart.

Mulch with leaves or straw to prevent cloves from heaving during sudden winter thaws.



2

## 2. EARLY MAY - GARLIC EMERGES

Garlic pokes out of the ground. Consider pulling back the mulch to warm the soil. Replace mulch when plants are 6" tall. Pull weeds that get through the mulch barrier! Water once a week during dry weather. Quit watering by early July as the garlic leaves begin to dry down.

# 3

## 3. LATE JUNE - HARVEST GARLIC SCAPES

Garlic scapes grow at the top of the stems of hardneck garlic. They are false flowers that produce little bulbils if you let them mature. Snap scapes off stems when they are about 6" long.

This will give the garlic bulb more energy to size up.

Garlic scapes have a fresh garlicky taste and can be eaten cooked or raw. Blend scapes with oil to make a great pesto.



Scapes taste just like garlic, although milder, and can be used in just about any recipe that calls for garlic or green onions such as soups, stews, omelets, dips, as long as you consider their flavour will be milder. Their stem can get a little bit 'woody' near the bottom so just cut that part off if you wish.

Flavour-wise, 4 scapes = 1 large clove.

#### 4. LATE JULY - HARVEST GARLIC BULBS

4

Harvest bulbs when 5-6 green leaves remain on the plant. In Quebec that means sometime mid -late July.

Loosen the plant from the soil with a garden fork or shovel, first. Pull the plant out. Shake off excess dirt.

Hang bunches of 10 -15 plants in a dry place for 2-4 weeks.



#### 5. AFTER HARVEST - HANG GARLIC TO CURE

5

**a)** Curing is the process where all the juice moves from the garlic stem and leaves into the bulb. Well cured garlic will store much better than uncured garlic.

Hang your garlic in a garage or on a porch or another dry space that is well ventilated.



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## CURING CONT.

**b)** After one week of curing, the garlic stems are still green.

The bulb necks have not yet been sealed. At this point the garlic tastes great but if you cut the stems off now your garlic might not store more than a few months.

**c)** It takes 3 -6 weeks for your garlic to be completely cured. You'll know it's cured when the insides are completely white.

Next, we trim the roots off the plants, grade our garlic and then begin cleaning.

At this point you should select your best garlic bulbs as next years' planting stock.

You should also decide if you're going to braid any of your garlic. You can leave the stems on your braiding stock. Cut the stems off of the bulbs that won't be braided.



# HOW TO CLEAN & STORE GARLIC

Once your garlic bulbs have cured, they can be brushed lightly to remove most of the dirt, or they can be cleaned more completely by using a dry toothbrush, while peeling off any excess dirty layers, keeping most of the skin intact. This is a good technique for pristine bulbs you plan to gift or put on display in your kitchen. But a rough brushing off of dirt is adequate for practical purposes.

You can store your garlic at room temperature. Just make sure it is in a dryish part of your house that stays at a constant temperature.

A pantry or cupboard should be good. But a kitchen counter often works well if it is not exposed to a lot of steam or other kitchen moisture. They can be loose in a paper bag or basket or tied in a cluster, or braided to hang.





# Storage Times

- Rocamboles store until March - June
- Purple Stripes store until April- June
- Marbled Purple Stripes store until April - July
- Porcelains store until May- July



# PRESERVATION TIPS

In the **Tourne-sol Farm Family**, we have a long history of storing our garlic in dry, constant temperature conditions in our homes.

However, there are several other ways to **preserve your harvest**.

- Store in the **REFRIGERATOR**

The fridge is a great place for whole peeled cloves, sliced or minced garlic. Just make sure to use it within 2-3 days.

- Store in the **FREEZER**

Finely chop, grate or press raw garlic cloves into small cups or ice cube trays, cover with good vegetable oil and freeze.

Please note though, for food safety: according to the Public Health Agency of Canada it's important to freeze this mixture right away to avoid food borne illness.



# PRESERVATION TIPS...

- **DEHYDRATE** your garlic

Fresh, firm garlic cloves without any bruises can be dried either in a dehydrator, or an oven.

To prepare, peel and cut cloves in half lengthwise, then follow instructions on your dehydrator.

To dehydrate garlic in an oven, dry at 140°F for 2 hours, then reduce the heat to 130°F and continue drying until the garlic is crisp, 4-6 hours.

Store in an airtight container at room temperature.

This can then be ground into a powder, but it is recommended to only grind a small amount at a time since it loses its potency in this form after sitting for a couple of months.





# Growing Garlic from Bulbils

Garlic **bulbils** are small bulbs that develop in the garlic scapes left on the plant. Bulbils from different horticultural groups have different sizes. Rocambole, Marbled Purple Stripe, & Purple Stripe bulbils are larger and take 2-3 years to produce full-size bulbs. Porcelain & Silverskin bulbils are smaller and take 4 years to produce full-size bulbs.

## PLANTING BULBILS

Plant *bulbils* in late October or in the spring as soon as the soil thaws.

Space rows 6 " apart. In the row, space large bulbils 4 inches apart and small bulbils 2 inches apart. Spring planted bulbils can also be started indoors 4 weeks before planting to field.

In subsequent years, as bulbs get bigger space cloves farther apart when you replant them.

# Bulbils cont.

## Harvesting Bulbils in their 2nd year

Plants are ready to harvest when the leaves begin to yellow and/or the stems begin to flop over.

This happens 2-3 weeks before harvesting the main garlic crop. Loosen the ground with a shovel or broadfork and pull the plants out gently.

Hang the bulbs to cure for 2 - 4 weeks. The largest bulbils produce small bulbs with differentiated cloves in the second year.

Smaller bulbils produce one-clove bulbs called rounds. They will probably produce small cloves the following year.

To plant second year bulbs: choose your best cloves and rounds to plant in late October.

Separate the cloves from differentiated bulb to plant.

Space rows 12" apart and space cloves 4" apart in the row. In subsequent years, as bulbs get bigger, space the cloves farther apart when you replant them.





For those who love to cook and are looking to grow the world's best garlic,  
this guide is dedicated to you!

Thanks to our friend, Kate McGregor, for sharing photos of her amazing harvest  
last season of over 100 BIG BULBS!

Kate says she applied Dan's grow tips and tricks from  
the workshop she attended called,  
**"6 SECRETS TO GROW BIG GARLIC!"**

The results speak for themselves.

**Find Tourne-sol's Garlic at**  
**[www.fermetournesol.qc.ca](http://www.fermetournesol.qc.ca)**