

THE GARLIC NEWS

Connecting the Canadian Garlic Network!

Issue 21 Fall 2009

New Beginnings

It's time to plant your garlic to initiate the start of new life. A little clove will sprout and push down roots. In the spring, it will push out its tough little spear to reach the light so it can grow a marvellous plant. Finally, it will mature into a bulb, so that the cycle can start once more.

So it is with all life. Nature has a cycle that repeats itself over and over again. Yet, each time, it is a new beginning, not quite exactly the same as the one before, even though it may look very much the same as the one before.

There are infinitesimally small changes as the garlic adapts to a slightly changed environment. That is called evolution. Your garlic will not be quite exactly the same as its parent due to its need to adapt to changing conditions.

In our life, as much as we try to hold on to familiar things, circumstances around us force us to change.

A young mother, overjoyed with nurturing her babies and watching them grow in front of her eyes, is suddenly faced with losing them as they leave the house and get on the school bus. She cries inside, but she must make a new beginning, changing her familiar pattern to a new one, which now involves her precious babies spending less time with her and much of their time with discovering books, new games, new friends and a whole world outside.

Sometimes the changes are well thought out and planned because we have the intelligence to influence our destiny.

When I started my 8th decade of life, that biblical-assigned three score years and ten, after which all else should be gravy, well, the gravy looked pretty lumpy at the time.

Our future looked bleak. Mary Lou had cancer, one of the tough ones. My arthritic knees had me so crippled that I could hardly walk with a cane. We faced a choice. We could quit in despair, giving up all we had worked for in our retirement at our Beaver Pond, or make the best of it. Quit, move to an old folk's home, or make a new beginning. Life is a matter of constant change and making choices on what to do. It's a matter of deciding priorities.

We decided, or more correctly, we were forced, to make a new beginning. Cancer took priority on our time.

Our sugar bush was shut down, we cut back on gardens, no market garden, we hired more help – what else did we save for in our old age? Mary Lou's beautiful terrace gardens took the worst beating, as I could not, even with a weekly helper, possibly keep them up, so they were progressively let go back to nature.

Oh, yes, the good Lord, or perhaps it was the government, smiled and released some dollars to the medical system, allowing me to get new, mechanical knees installed, freeing me of pain so I could pull my weight in our new beginnings. That allowed me to keep up the garlic growing trials, on a much-reduced scale, keep up the publication of the Garlic News, and yes, cook, clean and nurse.

Meanwhile, in the world of garlic, exciting things are happening. Garlic continues at the leading edge of the "Buy Local" trend. Garlic festivals are spreading across Canada. This year saw the greatest demand for locally grown garlic and the highest prices ever. Also, this year saw the greatest shortage of the locally grown product.

At the festivals, the consumers – those folks who buy the garlic – were the most informed, ever. This year, they were asking for garlic by variety or type! They knew that different varieties were needed for different recipes.

The world of garlic is rapidly changing.

For garlic growers producing for the market, it's a time for new beginnings. It's time to look at where you want to be next year, the year after and in 5 years.

Now is the time to decide. Will you expand and grow more quantity, or concentrate on improving quality to meet the new consumer demand? Should you grow more varieties? Which varieties are most in demand?

Is it time to bite the bullet and convert over to organic?

What about more appealing presentation? Packaging garlic doesn't mean plastic wrappers, it means a braid with dried herbs or flowers, or displayed in an organic bag or basket.

Whatever your decisions are, be sure to examine your garlic operation with a view to making a new beginning to meet the changing conditions in the garlic world affecting you. It will change and so should you.

BUY LOCAL, BUY ORGANIC, BUY CANADIAN

IT MAKES HEALTHY BUSINESS SENSE

THE GARLIC NEWS

Connecting
The Canadian Garlic Network
Issue # 21 Fall 2009

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enjoy it more. Articles and contributions are
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*A Happy Thanksgiving to all our members with our
best wishes for a great garlic planting season!*

A Clove Here and There

Black Garlic for planting?

I've been getting calls from growers looking for sources to buy seed for "black garlic". Sorry, folks, you're on the wrong track. You don't grow it, you brew it! All the hype is about fermented garlic used in Asia. Its popularity has spread to gourmet chefs in North America. Apparently, they're now even fermenting garlic in California to meet the demand!

El Nino is coming!

Remember the infamous Ice Storm 98 which caused such devastation throughout the eastern part of the continent? Well, brace yourself. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in the US advised that the weak El Nino of August would get stronger over the winter – mild weather in January means freezing rain, or an ice storm. Watch the long-range forecasts.

Garlic dominates local markets in 2009

Last year, I said, *Garlic is at the leading edge of this "buy local" movement*. This year, garlic raced ahead of all other locally grown vegetables as far as demand was concerned. Customers at festivals and farmers' markets snapped it up in larger quantities than ever and most growers sold out before the end of August this year. By the time September rolled around, seed garlic was a non-existent commodity. No matter how many new market gardeners start growing it, it seems that demand continues to go up faster than the supply. On the up side, it means better prices for growers.

Leek Moth continues its relentless march

The infamous leek moth continues to spread. The latest report from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency showed that it had been located on Prince Edward Island. Could it have crossed by means of the Confederation Bridge?

Organic Certification Backlog?

Well, there seems to be a paper jam in the newly revised organic certification system. When I called to check on the status of the certification for the 2009 crop from the Small-Plot Garlic Variety Trials (the inspector came 6 weeks earlier this year), they were still reviewing the paperwork!

So much for the extra paperwork generated when government bureaucrats get involved in something about which they know little or nothing!

All the garlic is now sold and still no certification. So did I break the law?

Address or Email Changed?

Let us know if you've moved, changed your address, or started using a new Email address. It's time-consuming to track down members when we get a non-delivery notice. Send us an Email or drop us a line.

The Best Garlic in Eastern Ontario! Winners of the 2009 Eastern Ontario Garlic Awards



Carolyn & Greg Smith display the Woodman trophy, beaming happily in front of their garlic stall at the Verona Garlic Festival

CHAMPION GARLIC GROWERS 2009:

Cordonview Farm (Greg & Carolyn Smith), Roblin, Ontario

RESERVE CHAMPION GARLIC GROWER 2009:

Forest Farm (David Hahn), Godfrey, Ontario

RUNNERS-UP: Catherine Cheff, Renfrew, Ontario and Al Romaniuk, Sharbot Lake, Ontario tied for 3rd place.

Individual Class winners:

Class 1 Best Specimen Garlic Bulb:

- 1st: Croydonview Farm, Roblin, Ontario
- 2nd: Al Romaniuk, Sharbot Lake, Ontario
- 3rd: Forest Farm, Godfrey, Ontario

Class 1A Best Display of 12 Garlic Bulbs

- 1st: Forest Farm, Godfrey, Ontario
- 2nd: Croydonview Farm, Roblin, Ontario
- 3rd: Al Romaniuk, Sharbot Lake, Ontario

Class 2 Best Collection of Varieties

- 1st: Croydonview Farm, Roblin, Ontario
- 2nd: Catherine Cheff, Renfrew, Ontario
- 3rd: Forest Farm, Godfrey, Ontario

Class 3 Best Garlic Braid

- 1st: Croydonview Farm, Roblin, Ontario
- 2nd: Forest Farm, Godfrey, Ontario
- 3rd: Catherine Cheff, Renfrew, Ontario

Held at the 3rd Annual Verona Lions Garlic Festival, Verona, Ontario, on September 5, 2009. A heartfelt "thank you" to Local 316 of the **National Farmers' Union** and **Family Farms of Verona, Ontario** for donating the cash awards to the Champions and Reserve!

Congratulations, winners, and all those who entered!!!

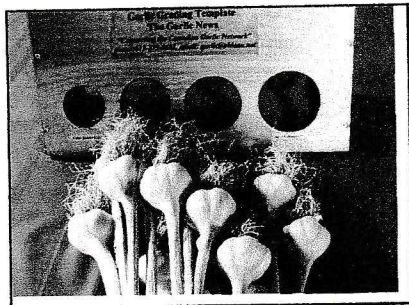
Notes From Our Garlic Patch

A few new trials and experiments

Spring Planting

The trials that I've carried out over the past two decades led me to believe that spring planting won't produce a good crop. Well, **Liz Tobola**, a grower in Alberta said that her **Oma's Gourmet Garlic** did just fine when spring planted and sent me a couple of bulbs to try. I planted them, 15 cloves in all on March 30 (we had a very early spring this year).

They came up on May 4; we removed scapes on August 1 and harvested 15 fine bulbs on September 09.



Here's how the crop sized up:

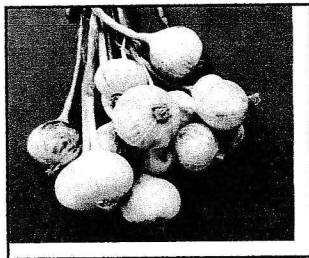
6 Super Jumbo, 5 Extra Jumbo, 2 Jumbo, 1 Large Tube and 1 Medium Tube for a total weight of 1148 grams. *

That's an average size of 76.5 grams, or Extra Jumbo!!!

I'll plant half this fall and half next spring to see how they compare. Thank you Liz. You taught me something.

**GGAO size chart, see Issue 7 of the Garlic News*

Rounds from spring planting



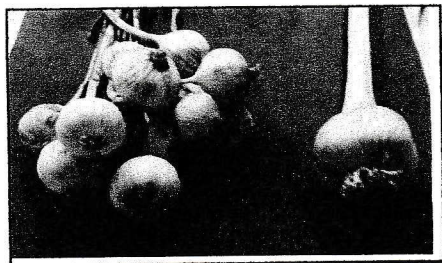
Here's a novel idea for developing a seed supply from undersize bulbs. This spring, I planted some cloves from B-Grade (less than 1 1/2" dia) Artichoke "Formidable" bulbs. On August 03, I harvested 15 very fine rounds, three of them

being over 30 grams each. I'll plant them this fall to see how they compare with those grown from cloves.

From past observations, planting those little cloves in the fall would result in small, divided bulbs. Planting them in the spring, for some unknown reason, results in a round.

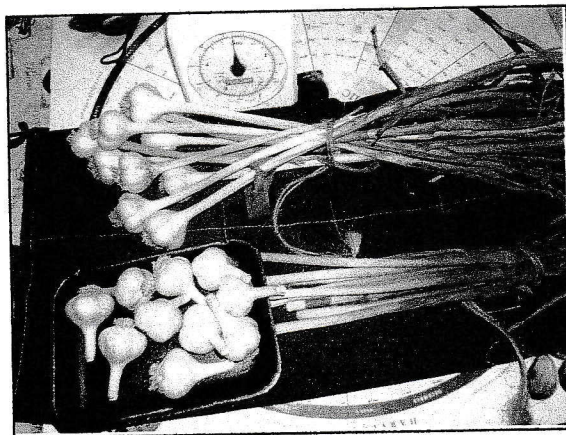
So what should you expect from planting a round?

Here's a Jumbo size Porcelain "Majestic" bulb grown from a round planted last fall (shown next to the rounds).



Curing versus drying of garlic.

Some growers take shortcuts to save work. Not a bad idea but you have to be aware of the down side as well as the advantage of saving effort. On page 16 of this issue you'll find the results of a little trial I did to find out what happens when you cut the stems off right after you harvest the garlic and merely dry the bulb.



*Top: 10 garlic bulbs cured with the stems and leaves left on.
Bottom: 10 bulbs dried separately from stems cut off at harvest.*

Well, not surprisingly, the dried bulbs weighed less than ones of equal size that were "cured" with the stems left on. We'll do more of the same type of next year, just to be sure that it wasn't a fluke.

Should you remove the scapes for larger bulbs?

Some growers claim they don't remove the scapes and it doesn't affect bulb size. Our experience here is that scapes left on Porcelain, Rocambole and Purple Stripe strains cause a loss in bulb size if the scapes are left on. For Turbans and Asiatics, it doesn't seem to matter.



Porcelain garlic.

Left, scapes removed.

Right, scapes left on until harvest

If you'd like to try a little experiment to find out for yourself, next year, do the following comparison: Select 20 plants of equal size and equal stem thickness (measure the stem diameters about 3" above ground). Mark plants with some trail marking tape. When the scapes curl, snap them off 10 of the plants and leave the scapes on the other 10. Harvest both sets at the same time, let them cure and then, weigh and measure the bulbs to see if it made a difference (take the total weight of all 10 in each case). Share your findings with other growers by sending your results to the Garlic News.

We get calls and letters

A chapter in the book of garlic closes – Charlie Robb



Charlie & Sheila show some of their lovely garlic braids

Sheila Robb of Minden, Ontario wrote:

It is with a very sad heart that I pass this on. **Charlie** died last night, August 27th at 7:00 p.m. in Peterborough hospital. He went very peacefully, in his sleep. I am so thankful that I was with him and so was Louise, his sister and Janice my sister. He was not alone. The nursing staff looked after him so wonderfully. They gave us much care and privacy and were very understanding. Now we begin our life without him, although I know he will always be with us in our hearts. When it is time for the "Celebration of Life" we will let everyone know. I can't begin to thank you all for your prayers and kind thoughts throughout these past few months. It has helped tremendously.

As it was Charlie's wish that there is to be no funeral or floral tributes, for those of you who are far away, should you wish to contribute to Charlie's chosen charities, I will pass on to you by e-mail the information you will need.

Bless you Sheila and our hearts are with you in your time of sorrow. Charlie was a wonderful person. The world of garlic will miss him very sorely. He did so much to promote garlic in the Haliburton area. His talks and lectures, his personal encouragement to other growers, Garlic Workshops, the Haliburton Garlic Festival, the Haliburton County Garlic Growers Association – these are just a few of the legacies that Charlie left to the world of garlic. His memory will carry on for a long time. With Charlie's passing, it is with regret that we see the closing of another chapter in the book of garlic. With our sincerest thanks for having met and known Charlie.
Paul & Mary Lou.



Harvest woes: rain, high humidity, and climate change

AnneBruce of Liberland Farm cried!

I had a bad year with all the rain. My garlic has mould and I lost more than half my crop. I couldn't get into the fields in time. Kept waiting for those sunny days that never happened. I am borrowing a bed raiser this year in hopes of getting better drainage. Not beaten yet!

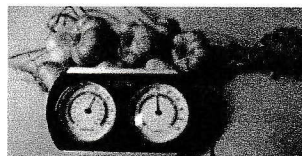
Hi AnneBruce; we had a difficult harvest as well and I was out in the rain quite often, lifting the bulbs. As well as the hiller for making raised beds, look at your harvesting and curing setup for next year.

You can reduce mould or even eliminate it by:

- 1) washing the dirt off your garlic as soon as it comes out of the ground,*
 - 2) stripping outer dead leaves off stem and cutting roots to 1/4 " before hanging to cure; and,*
 - 3) using dehumidifiers or low heat plus fans in your curing room.*
- With damp nights, you cannot leave garlic in an open shed overnight. The high humidity this year was very hard on growers who weren't prepared for harvesting and curing. We're into climate change so it's worth examining how you do the harvest.*

Editor

AnneBruce again. I am now realizing that I made many mistakes. I did not cut my roots back or clean enough of the dirt. My barn probably gets too much humidity. I am in the process of cleaning on my balcony and leaving them out for the day, then, I bring them in at night. With the dew that is coming through at night I question whether I can hold all my garlic in the house. I agree with the climate change. Garlic is my cash crop so it is the one most important to me. Changes are needed in my approach next year. And again, I'm not beaten yet!



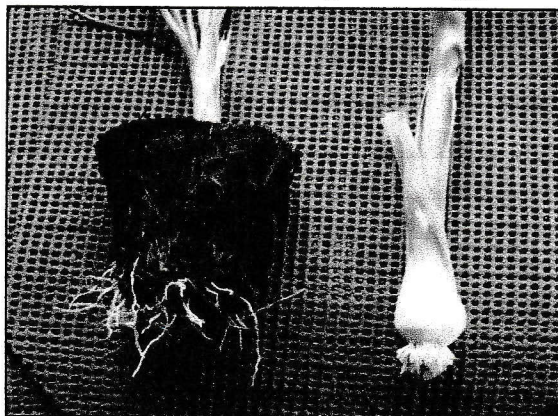
Do you remember this \$10.00 gadget? Having it in your curing area could save your garlic crop

Balmy BC has the largest garlic ever

Lawrie Henrey of Gibsons, BC, wrote: Hi Paul; We were surprised to see this year's garlic on harvest; we had the worst winter weather ever with snow (unusual on the "Sunshine" Coast) 2 foot high resting above the underlying straw insulation and staying for a long time. The bulbs were the **largest we have ever grown** and in perfect condition. Snow certainly lived up to its reputation as a good insulator. **Lawrie**



Joe Bannon's 'Newfie Garlic' grown in egg cartons



In September, they're still the size of green onions

Calls and Letters From Our Readers

Questions about planting the garlic

Alex & Bonnie Oliver of Camrose, Alberta, asked:
Hi Paul, Thanks for the garlic. I'll be planting it in mid-October. Should it be watered in? **Alex Oliver**

Hi Alex. I've never found it necessary to water the garlic. The soil is usually quite damp in October and the November rains give it all it needs. One exception - if your soil is very sandy, a good soaking following planting wouldn't hurt. Editor

Karen Kurdyak of Lennox-Addington County, asked:
I got your name & email from www.seeds.ca. My husband & I recently bought a hobby farm in Lennox-Addington County. We would like to plant garlic this fall and require some seeds. Here are my questions:

- do you have a catalogue/price list you can send me?
- the soil is quite fertile, so I do not think there will be an issue with growing garlic. We have befriended the farmer we bought the farm from and he said he has planted it before. We will be going to the farm mostly on weekends.
- is garlic a low-maintenance type of crop?
- do you have planting instruction?

Hi Karen: To your questions---

- 1) *We're sold out for 2009. I'll put your name on the list for the 2010 Garlic Listing.*
- 2) *Garlic is likely the most labour-intensive vegetable crop you can grow here in Ontario. If you plan on just a few plants for your own use, it's not a problem. However, if you want to grow commercially, suggest that you work out a business plan on how to get into it without causing yourselves grief. As you know, Chinese labour is about \$0.09 per hour, or \$1.00 a day so that gives you a benchmark for your competition from Chinese garlic in our food system. If you have to hire at, planting, weeding or harvesting time, you look at labour rates of a minimum of \$15.00 per hour and likely more.*
- 3) *Growing information: Google "Boundary Garlic" in BC; they have both my growing instructions and their own from the warmer B.C. climate. To get really good information from growers across Canada, consider subscribing to the Garlic News (and buying the back issues as well) to get the benefit from the experience of hundreds of growers. Membership subscription form is attached. Editor.*

A question from the Champions

Carolyn Smith of Croydonview Farm asked:
Would you plant garlic that was split open when harvested? None of the hard neck was a problem just the soft neck and it was mostly the F40. **Carolyn**

Hi Carolyn: There's no problem using garlic with split bulb wrappers, in fact, its an advantage as it saves you work in cracking it. Just be careful to check that none of the cloves are exposed (clove wrappers gone), as the bare flesh would likely be scratched and susceptible to the entry of disease. F40 didn't take to the wet summer very well. It came a bit too early this year. Editor.

Small world

Lucette and Lucien Dugal in Limoges, Ontario, wrote:
Dear Paul, I forgot to thank you very much for the lovely garlic you sent us. And by the way, **Timmerman Farm** is just five minutes from us and all of the Joiners are my cousins! What a coincidence this is!!! Have a great day and give our love to your wife Mary. We dropped by to see **Sue and Douglas Norman** at the Tay Haven, their property near Perth. Lots of lovely souvenirs go through my head.

Lucette, what a small world we live in. It's people like you that keep my belief that garlic growers are the greatest people in the world! When you see your cousins, Sue and Bill Joiner, say "Hi and great garlic to you!" Editor.

Edward Hofer sent an Email with this request:

Hi, I would like to have a picture of your garlic planter.

We use a manual dibble in planting the research trials in order to accurately control the spacing and depth. It is based on the design in the articles in Issue 1 and 2 of the Garlic News, attached for your use. Editor.

Debbie DeCooman of Chesterville, Ontario, asked:

Hi Paul. We have a new area with heavy clay and want to amend. We plan on putting lots of compost to work into the soil. I don't think there would be a problem with nematodes at this point but for the future, what type of marigolds are you planting? In your travels what seems to be the most popular garlic to plant and are garlic sales increasing?

Hi Debbie: 1) Nematodes: Just for a baseline, it's worth getting the soil checked for nematodes anyways. There was a quantum jump in nematode damage this year.

2) I used both French and the tall Crackerjacks but have dropped that approach in favour of mustard as a plough down green manure. This year, I used mustard for "precautionary planting".

3) Garlic sales rose dramatically this year and so did price. Prices at Carp ranged from \$7 -12.00 per lb, Verona \$5.00 from visiting growers to \$10.00 for local growers.

4) Best types? A variety of types, at least one from each of the main groups. Softnecks are gaining in popularity. Consumers are getting very knowledgeable and asking for garlic by cultivar, i.e. "Do you have Sicilian Gold?"

The biggest complaint this year was all they could buy at the Perth Festival was Music and Russian Red. Similarly at Stratford where there were truckloads of Music. One stall had 33 varieties, nicely cleaned and presented in wicker baskets and sold them all before the festival was over. Editor.

The Bulbil Project

Thank you to all who responded to the Bulbil Project. We now have Canadian participants from Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, eastern & southern Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Ulrike, from BC, returned her bulbils, as she was moving. We need growers from Quebec and Newfoundland to take part. I hope to have a grower from the Yukon try it as well. If you are interested, I still have a few bulbil sets left. Contact me at the Garlic News. Editor.

Still more calls and letters

Growing from bulbils

Barb Harding of Rosseau, Ontario, asked: I bought some garlic, Sicilian Gold I believe, from you, or rather from your daughter last fall. It is wonderful so I'm hoping to buy some seed garlic from you again. Could you send me your order form? I thought I was planting enough to save my own seed but everyone wants some so I thought I'd just get more seed this year. Also, this year quite a few of the plants grew a clump of bulbils along the stem around ground level. I've never seen that before. Can I plant these and get a full head of garlic next year? Thanks for your help. Barb.

Hi Barb: Daughter Catherine grows Sicilian Gold. You can call her at 613-432-7019. She's a nurse so you may have to leave a message.

Stem bulbils? They occur, most often on Artichokes or Silver skins, occasionally on Asiatics and Turbans. Yes, definitely plant them. They may take several years to get a decent size bulb, but it's a good way to increase your seed supply. Check the articles in past issues of the Garlic News. Also, Sonia, on the Boundary Garlic website has good information on bulbils.



Andrea Berry of Hope Seeds in New Brunswick, wrote: I've noted quite a difference in performance of the 2nd year bulbils that were planted from the "rounds" vs. "mini bulbils" with our Spanish Roja (this is one of 3 varieties that I've gotten to this stage of the process, others are Great Northern and Music). At the end of the 2nd year, the "rounds" produced MUCH larger, easily marketable sized bulbs, while the "mini bulbils" did just okay. We're measuring to get a more detailed account, but from just a visual check, it seems like I'd recommend planting the "rounds" over "mini bulbils". However – I do like your suggestion for using the "too little to market" bulbs simply for producing bulbils, and perhaps that's a good use of the "mini bulbils" that are produced from 1st year bulbils.

Garlic looks wonderful this season, and we're getting some great results with our own bulbil experiments. Many thanks for all your help and encouragement.

So, yup. Send along your bulbils and we'll be your NB participants. I'll do my best to get those records filled in, and it looks like an excellent project for an apprentice, we've got 2 this year, and they're both keeners!

Hi Andrea: Your observation on Spanish Roja is a good one. Rounds tend to produce larger bulbs than cloves, all else being equal. This is a good project to follow up on in future years. Porcelains, for me, are reluctant in round production, so it takes FIVE years to get a decent bulb. Hint: Plant lots of small cloves in the spring. As they grow, pick the little ones to sell as "garlic greens" at the market. Let the stronger ones develop, some to rounds, a few to small bulbs. You now have rounds to plant in the fall! It works well with artichokes. Need to do more work on the other Varieties.

If I keep this up, you'll have my entire secret "hints" the first year!!!

I've got you down for the Bulbil Project. Will be sending them out soon. Editor.

Carolyn Smith of Croydonview Farm, again:

Paul, I am hoping to be part of your bulbils project. I grew about 800 this year of 3 varieties. I have more strains to plant again in November. I have a problem with some Purple Stripe I bought at a Festival. It was just called Purple Stripe. I did not know enough at the time that this was the variety, no mention of the strain. How do I sell this at the show or enter it into the competition. It looks marbled. It is also part of my bulbils collection.

Do people leave 4 wrappers on the garlic?

A lot of my F40 bolted. I call it my hard neck, soft neck. As you suggested, I am separating the two and will grow them separately. It is interesting that the hard neck version is more symmetrical and round like other hard necks as opposed to the more oval shaped F40. The other interesting note: I have quite a few doubles, where one clove had two inside. When they grew they split, the roots are entwined but there are two garlic's, one a soft neck and the other hard neck. Also, lots of just single hard necks.

I went to the Perth Festival for fun. The only people that were truly professional were Forest Farm. Hats off to them both. I strive to compete with their high quality and standards! Carolyn.

*Hi Carolyn: Wow! Are you ever hooked on garlic! Wonderful! You are down for the Bulbil Project. I'll be sending them out soon. Purple Stripe? Which Festival, and do you recall who sold it? I know a lot of the growers and what they sell. Also, is it a 4-5 clove like Music or a 6-8 clove like a Rocambole? How many bulbils per capsule? Don't sell it for planting. You may give the buyer the same problem. Sell it as a Purple Stripe for table use. Yes, **small eastern growers, like Forest Farm**, are much more professional than many of the big growers from down south. They haven't been spoiled by millions of dollars of government subsidies to grow poor garlic and they've had to compete on quality, not cheap selling price in the marketplace.*

You know my feelings on that topic. Government subsidies to some farmers and not to others, over the years, have been the most destructive force in damaging Canadian agriculture. One group of farmers, selling food below cost, make a "profit" by feeding at the public trough while the majority, without subsidy, lose money due to the unfair price-cutting by their subsidized neighbours.

The lesson from that is that you shouldn't get into a business where you have to depend on the public dole to make a living. At best, it's a short term, fool's paradise.

Better to pump gas or sell donuts at the fast food joint. When the dole stops, as it will, your income stops as well.



Daughter Catherine Cheff of Renfrew, Ontario, said: Harvest was difficult this year. Bulbs were much smaller than expected. There were some "funnies". My Music, about 300, had one scape stem coming from each clove! Mennonite, wonderful garlic, had some mutated with leaves all split. But, we made the best of a bad season, selecting the good garlic for our customers and using up the ones that weren't suitable for market.

In Memoriam
Robert Clarke Alexander
November 9, 1950 - September 3, 2003.

A tribute to Clarke Alexander

*When I came to a garlic called "Baba's Chesnek" while working on garlic orders, I was reminded of the grower who gave it to me at the Picton Garlic Festival 2003, Clarke Alexander. At that festival, Clarke had won a special prize for a bed cleverly made from the stems, scapes and complete garlic plants. He named it "serta-fied" garlic bed. I hadn't had contact from Clarke for a number of years, my email was rejected so I sent him a letter. Imagine the shock when I received a letter from his widow, **Sandi Sokol**, who told me that Clarke had passed away 6 years before! Copied below is some of the correspondence that Sandi has agreed to share with Garlic News members. Editor.*

Dear Paul,

I want to thank you for continuing to keep the newsletters coming. I have wanted to reply before now but it hasn't been easy...

My husband was Clarke Alexander. The garlic you offer in your catalogue is my grandmother's (Baba) softneck garlic. It makes my heart sing to know that her legacy continues...and Clarke's.

Clarke came from a rural background. He was true garlic guy, so passionate about the garlic and learning about all he could to make it good, better, best, the organic way. Out of our large backyard in Bloomfield, a village not far from Picton, Ontario, were seven long raised beds that he tended. He was investigating new organic fertilizers to be used as foliar sprays that increased the size of the entire garden crop, not just the garlic. I have a photo of him standing with tomato plants almost six feet tall. I was his faithful sidekick. Weeding, harvesting, braiding... He had begun to have some lovely results that we were able to sell small bundles here and there. He won best garlic at the 2003 Picton garlic festival as well as for his artful "garlic bed" in 2003. (We loved the play on words).

Sadly, there weren't enough sunny days for us. I lost Clarke in September of 2003. He was in the garden at the time...and only 52 yrs....

Five years later, I am now the garlic gal, planting about 1500 every season. The seven beds have been modified to five to give me more room to manoeuvre between. I continue planting all the varieties that were his and also the four new ones that Clarke never got to see planted. One variety, Legacy, has suffered extinction under my watch. I have Baba's, of course, still my most favourite. Spanish Roja, Red Rezan, German and Russian Red; German White, Music, Carpathian, Serbian...a dozen in all. I am working on acclimatizing Wildfire. We got it from a farm in upstate New York. It's in its sixth year now and I have only had a few medium sized bulbs come good last harvest. Most have been small. The flavour of these is not unlike their name. I hope for a favourable result this July. Still all organic and done by hand! And I do this and the Bloomfield house while working in Toronto... whew!

But, for all the hard work, I love it. I still consider myself a novice. Much of what Clarke had already figured out went with him. I am concerned now, with when to remove the scapes for better longevity (I believe I was removing them too early before) and how to keep the crop from getting mouldy when the Ontario summers can be so humid. The garage doesn't always cut it.

Paul, I notice that the full name of the garlic Clarke gave you is Baba's Chesnek. I am curious as to the significance of Chesnek. Is it after someone you know? My grandmother was Mary Sokolovsky. She came from the Ukraine. Also, for those who want to braid by the pigtail method, this variety lends itself extremely well. Sincerely, **Sandi Sokol**, aka to friends as the "garlic gal".

Sandi, again. I saw your "snail mail" first, Paul. I can't tell you how much your response touched me. That you remembered him like you did, and even the garlic you exchanged! As for the "Serti-fied garlic bed", there's a story behind that one. I had, up until then, submitted the decorative for the fairs but, with my job that year, I didn't have the time and "made him do it". It was his conception and he spent hours on it. I was amazed at his patience and the intricacy of bed slats made from hardened scapes and papery garlic wrappers stuffed with dried roots to create pillows. Garlic bulbs for the cannons, bulbettes for springs. It was something! In fact, I still have it, albeit looking tired and sad, in my basement.

As for "chesnek", I had to laugh. I am second generation and speak but a handful of Ukrainian words. Mostly for dinner food, it would seem! Before receiving your reply, I asked my father - who still has some knowledge of the language - and he knew instantly that the word meant garlic. Now I know another Ukie word!

Your tips on what to do with the garlic came at an opportune time. I let the scapes go much longer than in past years and let different varieties mature at different times. I had been led to believe snapping them the earlier the better would make a bigger bulb. I managed to get most of them just before the curl straightened. I set out to harvest the second weekend of July, dealing with our erratic weather. And attended to most of them as you suggested - rinsing with a hose and trimming the roots. I then bundled them up in small bundles and hung them from the nails Clarke had installed in the garage beams. A neighbour helped devise a device for me to assist looping the ties over the nails. One braided bundle of my largest Baba's start to show mould on the leaves so, at first sight, I removed the bundle, cut the leaves away and composted them and took the bulbs back to the city with me to put in front of my dehumidifier. I am happy to say, those ones are all fine and well! I'd checked on the bundles a couple of times after hanging and they seemed fine, at the time. I will be going down for the week, next week, and am hopeful that this year will prove a much better result. As to your request. I think it a wonderful idea and honour for Clarke. You may print my email. Thank you for your thoughtfulness in asking permission. **Sandi**

Verona Garlic Festival doubles attendance

John McDougall, chief organizer of the 3rd annual Verona Lions Club Garlic Festival was very happy with this year's event. Attendance was nearly double that of last year and visitors snapped up both the fresh, locally grown garlic offered by market stalls and the gourmet garlic meal prepared by the Lions. The number of local garlic growers offering the best garlic in eastern Ontario was also up from the previous year.

This small community of Verona, located 15 minutes north of Kingston, is rapidly becoming a centre of festivals and locally grown food. Kim & Dave Perry, beef producers and active members of the National Farmers Union, recently set up a retail business in the village, calling it "Local Family Farms". As well as their own beef, they source products within about 100 km. of their shop and carry a fine selection of fresh fruit, vegetables and bakery products. They have a direct relationship with growers, and



many of the foods sold are seasonal. So, in October you won't find fresh strawberries, but you may find local frozen strawberries. Kim Perry was the driving force behind starting the local farmers' market, a successful organization that soon spawned the Garlic Festival.

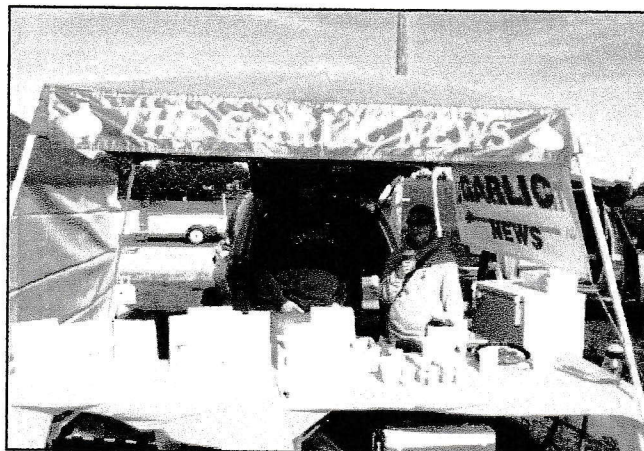
The growing reputation of this new festival brought a guest grower from Prince Edward Island. Joe Bannon of Murray Harbour entertained festivalgoers with tales of his Newfie garlic grown in egg cartons. Joe plans on using his first hand experience at Verona to start a Garlic Festival on PEI.

The Lions also hosted the Eastern Ontario Garlic Awards (see story on page 3), another affirmation of their support for local food production.

This is a festival to watch as it is based on a strong foundation of local producers and a determination to bring the "buy local" message into a daily reality.

Stratford Garlic Festival enjoys fine weather

The 3rd annual Stratford Garlic Festival, organized by the Kiwanis Club of Stratford, finally had the gods of the sun smile on them, enjoying a sunny autumn day for the event. Crowds were up from the previous two years, both of which had been plagued with rain and high winds. Lots of garlic and food vendors, a pleasant setting and plenty of sunshine combined to make a fine Saturday outing.



Granddaughter Ashley, this time with her husband Matt, again helped me with The Garlic News information stall. Not having any product to sell, we spent the day providing visitors with information on growing garlic and directing them to the appropriate vendor stall. Notably, this year, there were many more sophisticated buyers, asking for garlic by variety. At long last, the gospel of garlic is having an impact!

Chocolate covered garlic cloves to challenge the palate



Planning a Garlic Festival for 2010?

You want to do it right the first time because it's hard to change bad habits once they are embedded. See article on page 6 of the Garlic News, Issue 7, Spring 2006, or contact the editor.

THE GARLIC DIRECTORY

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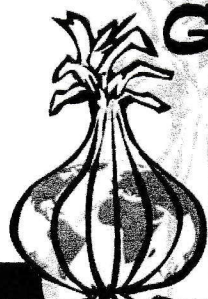
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Organic Garlic For Sale: Majestic, Music, Georgia Fire, Georgia Crystal, Magical, German Red, Russian Red, French Rocambole, F4 Italian Red, certified organic by Pro-Cert Canada. **David Hahn, Forest Farm, Godfrey,** ON. 613-273-5545, dhahn@rideau.net.

Organic Garlic for sale: OCIA certified. \$7/lb. Shipping anywhere in Canada. **Al Boyko, Coyote Ridge Farm,** Canora, SK. Ph. 306-563-5341. sasklawitch@hotmail.com.

Present your organic garlic in style in an organic cotton garlic bag. Contact Liz Murphy at: Enviro-Threads, 30 Simcoe St. S., Lindsay, ON. K9V 2G4. Ph. 705-328-2644. Email: enviro-threads@sympatico.ca See article on organic garlic bags, The Garlic News #10.

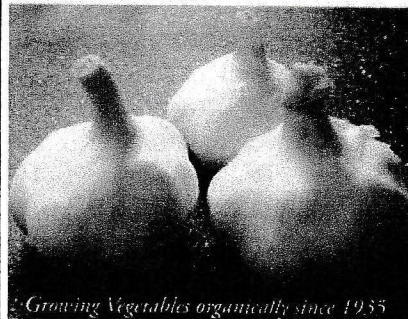
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The best garlic recipes & ideas



Freezing Garlic

Here, in eastern Ontario, we have two garlic festivals, both battling for market advantage by running a week or two too early for local growers to properly cure and prepare their garlic crop for the market. The result? Customers buy this inadequately cured garlic, it spoils and rots and they have to resort to buying Chinese garlic at the supermarket. I've received many calls as to whether or not the fresh garlic could be frozen to prevent decay.

Yes, you can freeze garlic.

No, frozen garlic is not as good as the cured bulbs. It loses flavour in the freezing process.

Yes, the local garlic you freeze is still better than the imported product, so, if you bought garlic that you suspect will not keep over the fall and winter, then, freeze it.

Below are three methods for freezing garlic.

Method 1: Pureed garlic in olive oil

Clean loose dirt from the garlic and remove the wrappers from the bulb. Crack into cloves. Remove clove wrappers. Place the freshly skinned garlic cloves into the food processor. Soak in vinegar for 1 hour, drain, rinse and dry. You can use as many cloves as you want, but it is usually best to work with and freeze no more than two to three bulbs of garlic at a time. Cover the garlic with olive oil using one portion of garlic to two portions of olive oil. Process this for several seconds until all of the garlic is thoroughly blended into the oil. Scrape the garlic and oil into a freezer container or ice cube trays. Label and date the container and place it into the freezer. Use by popping a cube out of the tray or spooning out of the frozen container.

Method 2: Whole bulbs

Whole bulbs of garlic can also be frozen in sealed Ziploc containers. Be prepared for the frozen garlic to lose some of its original flavour. When you take them out, do not refreeze after they have been thawed.

Method 3: Whole cloves frozen in olive oil

Freezing the garlic in olive oil allows for better retention of flavour than other methods that do not include the oil. Clean cloves as in Method 1 but do not puree. Soak in vinegar for 1 hour, drain, rinse and dry. Place in freezer containers, cover with olive oil and freeze right away. Garlic will keep in the freezer up to 12 months. When you need garlic, simply pry the needed cloves from the container and use right away as fresh garlic. Return unused portion to freezer immediately.

Warning: Never allow the garlic/oil mixture to sit out at room temperature. This combination can potentially grow the bacteria that create botulism and are very harmful for human consumption and sometimes even fatal.

Garlic Oven Fries

These are delicious any time but a gourmet delight when made with potatoes freshly dug from the garden.

Ingredients:

4 medium potatoes, sliced into ¼" slices
1-1/2 tbsp olive oil
2 - 4 cloves of garlic, minced or put through a garlic press
½ tsp sea salt
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper

Method:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place potato slices in a large bowl and toss with olive oil, minced garlic, sea salt and cayenne pepper. Lay in a single layer on a baking sheet and bake for 30 minutes, flipping halfway through. Serve hot. Yield: 4 Servings

When Eggplant is in Season

If you are looking for a classic appetizer, try the Baba Ganouj (pronounced ba-ba ga-noosh). It is a wonderful Middle Eastern spread served on small triangles of pita bread or freshly baked brown bread.

Baba Ganouj

Ingredients:

1 medium-size eggplant
2 or more garlic cloves, minced
1 1/2 cups minced fresh parsley
6 tablespoons tahini
4 tbsp lemon juice
salt and pepper
Optional ingredients:
½ cup yogurt,
¼ cup finely diced onion
1 cup finely diced tomato.

Method:

Pierce the eggplant all over with a fork. Place the eggplant under a broiler and broil it, turning frequently, until the skin is blackened and charred all over. This takes 15-20 minutes. Set the eggplant aside until it's cool enough to handle, then peel off the charred skin. Chop the eggplant finely, or process the pulp in a food processor. Add the remaining ingredients and blend until smooth. Serve with pieces of pita bread. Yield: 6 servings



Freezing Scapes

As a rule of thumb, it takes about 30 scapes, chopped in a blender in olive oil, to make up a 250 gram freezer container of scape paste.

Ben Franklin said:

*In wine there is wisdom,
In beer there is freedom,
In water there is bacteria.*

More garlic recipes, tips & ideas

Frances's Zucchini Bread

This is another fine recipe from Frances Legault of Penobsquis, New Brunswick.

Ingredients:

3 eggs	½ cups vegetable oil
½ cup applesauce	2 cups white or brown sugar
2 cups grated zucchini	2 tsp vanilla
2 large roasted garlic bulbs	
3 cups flour	3 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp soda	¼ tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt	½ cup chopped almonds
½ tsp nutmeg	

For Crunchy Crust (put this on top of batter)

2 tbsp Butter	1 cup brown sugar
1 cup flour	2 tsp cinnamon
½ cup almonds	

Method:

Preheat oven to 325 F. Grease and flour two 8x4 loaf pans. In a large bowl beat eggs until frothy and light. Mix in oil, garlic and sugar. I used my mixer for eggs first, then with the oil, sugar and garlic. Stir in zucchini and vanilla. Combine flour, cinnamon, soda, baking powder, salt, nutmeg and nuts. Stir into egg mixture. Divide batter into prepared pans.

Add the Crunchy Crust mixture to top of batter

Bake for 60 to 70 minutes or until done



Garlic Feta Spread



From Old Krock's recipe collection.

This simple exquisite mixture is one of the most versatile creations ever. Serve it on crackers, celery, sandwiches, and toast - just about anything. The addition of dill is a great taste companion and for

special occasions add smoked salmon to the creation.

Ingredients:

2 cloves garlic
200 grams firm feta cheese
1/4 c. mayonnaise
freshly ground black pepper to taste

Method:

Mince garlic in food processor. Add feta cheese and process until cheese is a fine powder. Add mayonnaise and pepper. Blend well. The recipe can be altered to suit your taste buds by increasing or decreasing the amount of garlic. Serve with freshly baked bread. Warning - it is addictive!

Garlic Roast Beef With Chive Yorkshire Puddings

Ingredients:

5 lb top sirloin of beef
4 oz strip of beef fat
3 large cloves fresh garlic
1 tsp fine-grain sea salt
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
2 tbsp Dijon mustard
Chive Yorkshire Puddings (recipe below)

Method:

Preheat oven to 450°F

Place beef fat in a heavy-bottomed roasting pan and roast 15 minutes. Meanwhile, cut each garlic clove lengthwise into 10 thin slivers and set aside. Remove fat strip from pan and reserve. Pour off 1 tbsp pan drippings and reserve for Yorkshire puddings. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F.

Rub roast all over with salt and pepper.

With a small sharp knife, cut 30 slits 1 inch apart in top of roast and insert a garlic sliver in each.

Rub beef all over with mustard.

Place beef in roasting pan and lay reserved fat strip on top (secure with toothpicks, if necessary). Roast 20 minutes per pound for rare, 25 minutes per pound for medium or 30 minutes per pound for well done.

Meat is done when a thermometer inserted in thickest part reads 140°F/60°C for rare to 170°F/80°C for well done.

Meanwhile, prepare Yorkshire puddings (see below).*

** Fifteen minutes before roast is done, increase oven temperature to 375°F (190°C). Place puddings in oven and bake 30 minutes or until they have puffed up nicely and turned golden brown.

When roast is done, remove fat from top and discard. Place on a carving board, cover loosely with a tent of aluminium foil to keep warm and let stand 15 minutes.

When puddings are done, carefully remove from moulds and place 1 pudding on each dinner plate.

Carve beef and place on plates. If desired, drizzle beef and puddings with pan jus after skimming off all excess fat.

Serve with your favourite steamed vegetables and prepared horseradish. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

Chive Yorkshire Puddings

1 tbsp pan drippings from roasted beef-fat strip
2 eggs, room temperature
2 cups 2% milk
2 cups bread flour
1 tsp finely chopped fresh chives
Salt and freshly ground pepper

Using pan drippings, lightly grease 8 moulds in a standard 12-cup muffin tin. In a medium bowl, lightly beat eggs. Stir in milk, flour, chives and salt and pepper to taste. Then, bake the pudding as per instructions above **.



The bulb and stem nematode in garlic

Over the spring and summer, I received an abnormally large number of calls regarding the problem of the bulb and stem nematode. Simply, growers wanted to know how to be sure they were buying seed garlic free of nematodes. That's a rather thorny problem since you just can't indirectly accuse another grower of having infested garlic by telling others not to buy from him or her. As usual, I went to Jennifer Allen for advice. Here's her reply. Editor.

"Hi Paul:

Below is some information you can use in your newsletter or circulate to growers who contact you for information. This season garlic growers in different parts of the province have been dealing with an aggressive and extremely damaging pest - the bulb and stem nematode. Over the past few years, I have found that in garlic, the severity of damage wasn't usually obvious until harvest; however, this season the above ground symptoms of bulb and stem nematode were quite pronounced. This lends to the question - why was 2009 such a bad year? Firstly, I think the weather conditions in the spring favoured nematode development. Secondly, it's possible that growers who suffered losses this year had the nematode previously at low levels and with the right weather conditions and possible contamination of seed stock, reached the point where economic damage occurred. As a grower, there are a few things that you can do to help prevent their introduction into your fields or, if present already, suggestions on how to manage and minimize economic losses.

(1) Test your soil and seed stock before you plant. The Pest Diagnostic Clinic - University of Guelph is equipped for nematode analysis. Simply take your samples, box them up and send them to the lab for analysis. If you want additional information on how to sample soil visit www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/06-099.htm

(2) if you are purchasing new seed stock, have a discussion with your supplier. A frank discussion now will save you the headaches and agony of losing your crop later.

(3) If either your soil or seed stock tests positive, then you will need to think about crop rotation, bio fumigation (e.g. green manures), hot water treatments at time of planting, and purchasing new stock or finding new land.

At this time due diligence is required to minimize the spread and losses associated with this pest. For more information on the pest or information on the hot water treatment I mention, feel free to contact me. Cheers, Jen"

Mustard as a green manure crop

In 2005, we inadvertently introduced the bulb & stem nematode into a portion of our trials plot. A trial in 2006 using successive plantings of common yellow mustard appeared to eradicate this pest. Soil and plant tests in 2007, 2008 and 2009 did not indicate a measurable presence of this nematode. We continue with precautionary planting of mustard on a regular basis to keep the soil clean. So far, this appears to be a good approach. Editor

2009, the year of the bulb and stem nematode in garlic

By Jennifer Allen, Vegetable Crop Specialist, OMAFRA Guelph

This season (summer 2009), garlic growers are dealing with an aggressive, extremely damaging pest - the bulb and stem nematode. The microscopic worm-like nematode enters plant material through the roots or through wounds on the bulb. Once inside, it happily feeds on plant tissue and injects a toxin into the plant resulting in distorted growth. Often, in garlic, the severity of damage isn't obvious until harvest; however, this season, the above ground symptoms of bulb and stem nematode have been quite pronounced. Early above ground symptoms include a yellowing of the oldest leaves, which spreads to newer leaves as the season progresses. Plants exhibiting these symptoms start to wilt and can be easily pulled out of the soil. Inspection of the basal plate reveals missing roots, and dry rot of the base of the bulb.

Although bulb and stem nematode has a wide host range, known to feed on other alliums, peas, pumpkin, beets, rhubarb and a host of weed species (e.g. common chickweed, prostrate knotweed, wild buckwheat etc.), the biggest economic impact appears to be on garlic. The reason for this is how garlic is produced. Garlic is grown from cloves saved as seed stock. And, although seed stock may appear clean and healthy to the naked eye, bulbs grown in fields with bulb and stem nematode are at risk of carrying the nematode into future plantings.

If you grow garlic, you need to prevent the introduction of this pest into your fields or, if present already, you need to manage populations to minimize economic losses. Sounds easy, but it requires a lot of hard work. Firstly, you need to test your soil and planting stock before planting. If you are purchasing seed stock, have a discussion with your supplier. A frank discussion now will save you the headaches and agony of losing your crop later.

If either your soil or seed stock tests positive, then you will need to think about crop rotation (e.g. non-hosts for bulb and stem nematode), bio fumigation (e.g. green manures), hot water treatments at time of planting, and purchasing new stock or finding new land. Although there are no quick fixes for this pest, there is some hope. Currently, researchers at the University of Guelph are working on a clean seed project, the goal of which is to produce virus-free, nematode-free seed stock.

Until that time, due diligence is required to minimize the spread and losses associated with this pest.

Jennifer Allen is the Vegetable Crop Specialist in the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Growers in other provinces should contact their provincial agricultural department for locations of test laboratories nearest them.

Worried about nematodes in your planting stock?

See page 9, Issue 5 of the Garlic News for Michael Celetti's article that includes the hot water bath treatment.

More calls & letters

We had some letters that weren't printed in previous issues for lack of space. They are published here because we believe you will find them of interest. Editor.

Karen Caruana of Marmora, Ontario, sent this picture of her able assistant Thomas harvesting scapes.



She also wrote: Thanks so much for publishing "Any Home Gardener Can Grow Garlic". I harvested my garlic too late last summer (lack of time and lack of experience) and ended up having to make a lot of roasted garlic, which I then pureed with olive oil and salt and froze - a yummy condiment, but not as flavourful as having my own raw garlic all winter! Now I'll be watching the greens a lot more closely. Along with the garlic and vegetables that I grow for our own use, I grow herbs, which I use to make our herbal teas and culinary blends. Needless to say, I am out in the fields daily with my three year old Thomas in tow. He takes part in all activities, from planting to weeding to harvesting. So of course he knows all about harvesting scapes. On a recent visit to my mother's he noticed immediately that she had not removed the scapes from her dozen or so garlic plants (she still prefers garlic powder over raw garlic, but I'm working on her!), so he promptly went over to them and proceeded to remove them - with his teeth! This is how he helped me harvest our scapes, as I won't let him use shears yet. I'm sure he'll grow up preferring raw garlic to garlic powder!

Egyptian Garlic?

Joelle C. Virgilio, CEO, of The Dominic Center, Inc. asked: I am looking for some rare bulbs for planting this year. A dear family member of mine is a garlic enthusiast and one of the best growers of all things that I know. He has helped me to become hooked on the wonderful pleasures of growing garlic. I know that he has been looking for Egyptian garlic but I can't seem to find it anywhere.... does it exist? Any info would be greatly appreciated.

Hello Joelle: Despite the fact that the Great Pyramids of Giza were built by slave labour kept strong by a daily ration of garlic and onions, I am not aware of any garlic variety that can be specifically attributed to being Egyptian. What a wonderful question. I will pose it to the readership of The Garlic News in the next issue to see if anyone may have an answer. For rare types, may I suggest that you try Majestic, a strain that occurred by an accident of nature, a mutation that happened in 1998.

Hey readers, anyone have Egyptian garlic? Editor.

Italian Garlic

Pauline Myre of Chelsea, Quebec, asked:

Hi Paul! I was wondering if you knew Italian garlic. We have a very nice crop this year. I was told it was Rocambole but it looks more like a Porcelain. I did some research on line and really get conflicting info about it. Is there such a thing as Porcelain Italian garlic? Hope your harvest is going well, we picked everything and it looks really good. We tried your washing method and it worked great. Lots of work but it will be so much easier to make up our bunches. It's drying well right now. Cheers, Pauline and Andrew

Hi Pauline: Names!! A horrid experience. There is no registry of names in Canada, so people just assign names hither and thither. I grow a Porcelain called "Italian Topset". Yours could be the same. You can tell if it's Porcelain two ways;

1) The plant height. Porcelains are almost twice as tall as Rocamboles.

2) The number of cloves in a bulb. Porcelains in this area have between 3-5 cloves, Rocamboles have 6-8.

On line research for garlic is a bit hopeless unless you know which sites are reliable and bookmark them so you can go directly to them. With some 35 million sites when you Google under "garlic", it's an impossible task. I waste 6-8 hours per week googling, trying to spot something new.

More confusion. The Artichoke group, softnecks, are often referred to as "Italian Reds".

And, there are more confusing names to make it a challenge. Good luck with your harvest. Keep an eye out for mould on the garlic. With damp nights, mould can start on your partially cured garlic and ruin it in a couple of days. Use fans, a closed in area and even heat if needed. Paul.

Sun or shade?

Paul Calder of Kemptville, Ontario, asked:

Quick question ... I have a choice of a raised bed that gets a lot of sunlight and another that has partial shade later in the afternoon. I assume the sunny one is best??

Paul: Full sun is always best. However, next year, when you have to move your garlic, you'll either have to do another raised bed in the sun or accept a smaller crop in part shade. In any case, you're best to move the garlic every year. Editor

Report P/05/2009 Beaver Pond Estates Small-Plot Garlic Variety Trials

A Comparison of Curing versus Drying of Garlic – Weight Loss Record

Purpose of test: To determine the loss of garlic bulb size and weight when dried rather than cured.

Garlic Used in test: Porcelain "Majestic", size Giant*, 20 bulbs of approximately equal size and weight.

Two sets of newly harvested garlic (10 plants in each set) of approximately equal sizes and weights were selected, one set for curing with the tops and leaves left on and the second set for drying, the stems being cut off 1" above the bulbs. Scapes had previously been removed. Both were placed on racks to cure or dry in a closed room with temperature averaging 25 deg. C and relative humidity averaging 55 %. Low velocity fans were used to speed up the curing/drying process. They were weighed on a postal scale when possible, daily. Average bulb diameter was measured at the start of the test and again on Day 10. The test was carried out over a period of 28 days July 22 to August 18, 2009.

Observations (see chart of recorded weights below):

- 1) The bulbs in the curing set weighed 40 grams more than the ones in the drying set on Day 28.
- 2) The tops in the curing set weighed 40 grams less than the ones in the drying set on Day 28.
- 3) Total weight of tops and bulbs of both sets were the same by the end of the trial.
- 4) On Day 10 of the trial, measurements of diameter indicated that the curing bulbs had increased in size while the drying bulbs shrunk a bit. At the end, bulb wrappers on the curing set were tight while those on the drying set felt loose, as if the bulb had shrunk inside them.

Conclusions:

The cured bulbs were 18 % heavier than the dried bulbs after 3 weeks, 13 % heavier after 4 weeks. Bulbs seem to retain more weight and even grow in size when being cured while those with the tops removed retain less weight and even shrink a bit. This would appear consistent with growing theory, in that bulbs continue to draw nutrients from the leaves and stems of the plant during maturation. Thus, it is better to cure garlic bulbs rather than drying them.

Caution: This test was of limited scope. Further comparison is needed using more varieties and larger samples in order to draw reliable conclusions. The test will be continued following harvest 2010.

*Garlic Growers Association of Ontario (GGAO) grading system; Giant weighs 43.5 grs, measures 1 7/8" or 47 mm in diameter

"Curing" Set					"Drying" Set				
10 Bulbs, Stems & Leaves left on, weighed together for 21 days, then cut off and weighed separately for 7 days.					10 Bulbs, Stems removed at start & weighed separately for 28 days.				
Day	Date	Stem Wt	Bulb Wt	Total Wt	Avg Dia.	Stem Wt	Bulb Wt	Total Wt	Avg Dia
1	July 22			1025 gr	43.4 mm	600 gr	425 gr	1025 gr	42.7 mm
2	23			870 gr		500	410	910	
3	24			810		425	395	820	
5	26			690		300	365	665	
6	27			615		260	350	610	
7	28			570		220	340	560	
9	30			540		190	330	520	
10	31			510	43.7 mm	180	325	505	42.5 mm
11	Aug 01			500		175	325	500	
12	02			490		165	325	490	
13	03			460		165	325	490	
15	05			430		110	300	410	
16	06			425		120	310	440	
17	07			420		125	305	430	
18	08			410		110	300	410	
19	09			410 gr		110 gr	300 gr	410	
Stems cut off from bulbs, 1" above									
22	12	65 gr	360 gr	425 gr		105 gr	305 gr	410	
23	13	60	360	420		100	310	410	
24	14	60	350	410		100	310	410	
25	15	55	350	405		95	310	405	
27	17	50	340	390		85	305	390	
28	18	50	350	400		90	310	400	
Bulbs wrappers smooth & tight					Bulbs wrappers loose & wrinkled				

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REPORT P/02/2009, BEAVER POND ESTATES SMALL-PLOT GARLIC VARIETY TRIALS				
GARLIC MATURITY CHART: 2009 HARVEST *				
21 day harvest period July 12 to August 03, 2009				
Very Early	Early	Mid Season	Late	Very Late
July 12-15	July 16-19	July 20-25	July 26-29	July 30 – Aug 03
Artichoke, Asiatic & Turban (12)				
Xian, Argentine #4 Rodrigo Pyong Vang	Japanese Sakura ½	Japanese Sakura ½ Endurance from bulbils Endurance Kettle River Giant Baba's Chesnek Korean Purple Wettergren Festival Transylvanian		Argentine Red Stripe
Silverskins (2)				
		Early Silverskin		F40 Silverskin
Rocamboles (11)				
		French F7 Spanish Roja Spicy Korean Red	Yugoslavian Carpathian Glengyle Russ Red German White Reliable German Red Hungarian	
Purple Stripes (6)				
		Siberian	Purple Glazer Duganskij Northern Siberian	Robust Czech Broadleaf
Porcelains (10)				
	Rosewood	Majestic Mammoth Magnificent Music (H)	Pretoro Mennonite Romanian Red Musical	Nellie's Chiloe
July 12-15	July 16-19	July 20-25	July 26-29	July 30 – Aug 03
<p>A bad year.</p> <p>Harvest 2009 was very difficult due to excessive rain, lack of sunshine and very wet soil. The maturity dates are somewhat misleading this year as bulbs, in many cases, bulbs had to be lifted prematurely to avoid them rotting in the wet soil.</p> <p>Spring was very early this year with first emergence on March 16. This was followed by a cold, wet spring and summer. While plants appeared to grow well during April and May, growth slowed down in June, resulting in shorter plants with fewer leaves and slimmer stems. Scaping was fairly well on schedule starting on June 25th with the final scapes being pulled July 14. Turban Artichokes, some Rocamboles and Czech Broadleaf suffered serious winterkill. This was likely the result of not using a winter mulch of straw. As well, bulbs in all cultivars were smaller than expected.</p> <p>July rains and soaking wet soil made harvesting very difficult.</p> <p>The usual tip yellowing was there as well as yellow leaves, usually indicative of either fusarium or Bulb & Stem Nematode. However, there was no plant mortality. Soil and plant samples sent to both Guelph and Agri-Food Canada found no evidence of either the disease or the nematode.</p> <p>The first arrival of the Leek Moth at the Trials Plot was discovered June 25 on 12 plants. 10 were located and destroyed. A few were found later and eliminated so spread should be minimal in 2010</p> <p>Harvest started on July 12 with Turban Artichokes but rains delayed maturity for over a week. Some Porcelains, like Majestic, had to be lifted prematurely. Very Late cultivars were also lifted early to avoid rot.</p> <p><i>* This report covers 41 main crop types only; new trials, seed savers and mutant trials are covered in a separate report</i></p>				