

# THE GARLIC NEWS

Connecting the Canadian Garlic Network!

Issue 35 Spring 2013

## Black Garlic

I get the occasional request from a grower looking for Black Garlic to plant, asking along these lines; "Do you know where I can buy black garlic seeds? Or bulbs? I've googled and googled without success."

*Sorry, Black Garlic is not a cultivar that you plant.*

It's garlic that has been heat fermented to produce a unique garlic product. Black garlic has a long history in the cuisine of Korea, Thailand, and Japan. It is prized as a food rich in antioxidants and added to energy drinks, and in Thailand is claimed to increase the consumer's longevity. One interesting use is in the making of black garlic chocolate for Valentine's Day.

Black Garlic made its debut in the USA in 2005 when entrepreneur **Scott Kim** started to import garlic from Jeju Island, Korea, one of the original sources of Asian Black Garlic, to process into black garlic in the USA. Kim ferments them for a month at high temperature and sells them on the Internet. Black Garlic's fame grew among foodies. It entered the mainstream in 2008 when a restaurant in San Francisco began promoting black garlic in recipes.

As foodies leapt on to this new food flavour, the craze spread across Canada as well. The popularity of Black Garlic caught on.

**Michael Callaghan**, one of our UK members, sent me some Jeju Black Garlic and I did my first taste testing in 2009 (see Garlic News Issue 22, Recipe page).

Last year, **Al Picketts of Eureka Garlic, PEI**, set up a black garlic fermentor and experimented with making Black Garlic with various garlic varieties and Elephant garlic as well. Al is not only a reputable garlic grower but a serious inventor as well. When he sets his mind to something, he does it well. See Garlic News Recipe page in Issue 32 and also Al's description of how he went about making it in his Ramblings article in the same issue.

Chef Robert Erickson serves Asian specialties in the **Black Garlic Bistro** in Sun Peaks, BC, advertising a unique healthy dining experience. Just recently, an Ottawa chef announced that he would be producing black garlic for the foodies in the nation's capital.

Natural medicine practitioners and herbalists praise the health benefits of black garlic. There are numerous claims although I have not been able to find supporting research. The fermentation process used in creating black garlic creates a kind of super-garlic. Fresh garlic contains anti-microbial, antibiotic and anti-fungal agents in its active ingredient, allicin. In black garlic, the absorption of allicin is improved, helping to boost protection against infections. Garlic is also high in antioxidants. Black garlic has been found to have twice the antioxidant properties of conventional garlic. Antioxidants protect the cells from disease and are thought to slow down the aging process.

Black garlic is more potent.

Fermentation that produces black garlic reduces the pungent odor and strong flavor, making it more palatable and appealing. Black garlic has none of the strong odour of fresh garlic and can be consumed in large quantities without causing bad breath.

Taste wise, black garlic offers a slightly sweet, liquorice twist and a chewy texture.

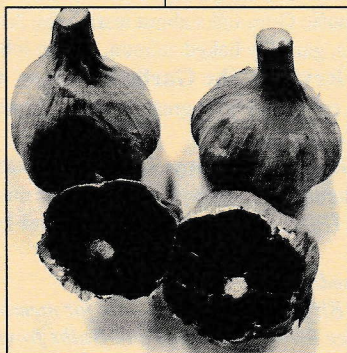
Some describe it as sweet and syrupy with

a hint of balsamic vinegar. Its garlic flavour and aroma are present but much diminished.

While foodies searching for exciting new tastes in food rave over it, most dedicated garlic lovers, gourmets and gourmands looking for strong garlic flavour would reject it out of hand, staying with the delicious flavour and pungent odour of fresh garlic.

Can you make your own? Yes, of course, but, beware; it's not that simple. Unless you wish to design and build a special heat fermentor, such as Al Picketts did, you are likely committed to using your oven at its lowest temperature or a dehydrator modified to hold the garlic. The garlic would stay in the oven for about 40 days, something my long-suffering bride Mary Lou wouldn't tolerate! There is also the high cost of electricity over that long time so an extremely large batch would be required to make it pay off.

You'd be better off to buy a few bulbs to try, or better still, order them from Al Picketts, and support a great guy in the Canadian world of garlic. See page 15 for his ad. *Editor.*



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IT MAKES HEALTHY BUSINESS SENSE



# The Garlic News

Connecting

The Canadian Garlic Network

Issue 35 Spring 2013

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*Back issues to complete your set are available.*

**Advertising inquiries welcome.**

## ABOUT THE GARLIC NEWS

The *Garlic News* is a non-profit membership newsletter produced in print copy. Started in 2004, it carries on from where its predecessors, the *Garlic Newsletter* and *The Voice of Garlic* left off. It is distributed by mail to members. The *Garlic News* uses a newspaper column layout and larger print size for easier reading. The wider margins and 8 1/2 x 11-size paper enable growers to save copies in a standard 3-hole binder. Back issues are available both in single copy and 1-year sets.

## EDITORIAL POLICY

The purpose of the *Garlic News* is to enable farmers and gardeners to grow better garlic and enjoy it more. Articles and contributions are welcome and will be published subject to space and suitability. Letters and articles may be edited for length and content. The Editor reserves the right to refuse advertising, subscriptions or material submitted for publication where, in his sole discretion, such inclusion would detract from the worth of the publication. Articles should be no longer than 400 words. B&W pictures preferred. Contents copyright © 2012-13 Paul Pospisil. No part of this publication may be reproduced or duplicated without written permission.

**Deadline for Summer 2013 Issue is June 4.**

## In This Issue

### Black Garlic

Fermented Black Garlic, an Asian food, has swept through the world of foodies looking for new taste experiences.

### Notes from our garlic patch

Member generosity, sprouting garlic, a Garlic called Majestic, Freddie Feldspar sleeps through Groundhog Day, the Garlic Guru turns 75 and a novel garlic peeler.

### A clove here and there

Useful websites for finding articles in back issues of the *Garlic News*, trivia, and some insight on why farmers are voluntarily withdrawing from organic certification.

### Liz Tobola: Tying 25 Garlic on a String

Liz Tobola describes the technique for making a string of 25 or more garlic bulbs with illustrations of the knots used.

### Al's Ramblings: Mulch

Al rambles on, giving his sound advice on why to mulch the garlic patch.

### A Garlic Called Majestic

The 2002 story of the origins of the superior cultivar, Majestic, and how it developed in the trials plots at Beaver Pond Estates is repeated here for our newer members.

### HCGGA page. Just South of Algonquin Park: "Making Connections"

Deb Barnhart talks about adapting to the changing agriculture being brought about by climate change. Sheila Robb, president of the HCGGA gives notice of the 6<sup>th</sup> annual HCGGA GarFest, this year on August 24.

### The Garlic Directory

Current advertisers with Canadian garlic and garlic products for sale in 2013.

### The Best Garlic Recipes and Ideas

The Garlic Guru talks about testing the Ali Express Garlic Peeler and some fine recipes, garlicky baked salmon, frozen lobster and more black garlic recipe ideas.

### Book Review: The Garlic Farmers' Cookbook

A new cookbook with great and even humorous recipes from members of the Garlic Seed Foundation.

### The Garlic Directory: Garlic Products at Wholesale from Eureka

Al Picketts has a business to help other market gardeners with their business.

### More Calls and Letters (continued from page 5)

### Enclosed:

*Early Bird Renewal Form only for memberships expiring in 2013.*

*Advance listing of Bulbils and Bulbs from the Small-Plot Garlic Variety Trials*

## MEMBERSHIPS EXPIRING WITH ISSUE 36: RENEW EARLY

*For some of our members, subscriptions expire with the Summer Issue. It's hard to keep up with paperwork during the busy harvest season. Don't delay. Renew now so your Garlic News will continue to arrive with no interruption.*

**YOUR EARLY BIRD RENEWAL FORM IS ENCLOSED**

## 2013 Eastern Ontario Garlic Field Day at the Small-Plot Garlic Variety Trials Site

**Date: Sunday, 23 June 2013 from 09:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

**Location: Beaver Pond Estates, 3656 Bolingbroke Road,  
Maberly, Ontario**

*Attendance: By invitation. Growers within reasonable driving distance, i.e., eastern Ontario and western Quebec receive invitations. If you don't receive one and would like to attend, please contact the editor. We'll be pleased to send you one.*

*"Why try to explain miracles to your kids when you can just have them plant a garden." Perth & District Horticultural Society*



## Notes from our garlic patch

### Early Bird Members Appreciated

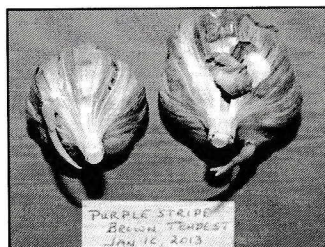
Thank you to the many members who renewed early. We love the garden in the summer and being able to do some of the paperwork now on those bleak winter days means more time in the summer sunshine rather than indoors at the desk. A special thanks to the following for adding a extra \$\$\$ towards costs of the Garlic News in their renewal:

Lynn Archbold	Peter Collis
Wayne Davey	Barbara Fitzpatrick
Gregory & Christine Green	Don & Shirley Kent
Garry Leskiw	Ted Lister
Ian Walker	

### Sprouting garlic

I often get asked what it means for garlic to 'break dormancy'. Simply, it means sprouting. Sometimes, garlic will sprout after being exposed to cold. Mostly, it will start to sprout whenever nature tells it to do so.

Oh, yes, there are more scientific explanations, but for me, a simple gardener, I rely on Mother Nature. She's a pretty wise lady. These garlic bulbs, a Marbled Purple Stripe called Brown Tempest, from our own supply, started to sprout in early January. Perhaps a warning that spring would be early?



### We're Scaling Back!

The Small-Plot Garlic Variety Trials, now well into their 3<sup>rd</sup> decade, have become increasingly difficult to manage as the number of cultivars has annually increased and question-specific trials and the Bulbil Project both take up more and more time and garden space (nothing to do with our advancing age, of course!). We have had to reduce the number of cultivars in our annual seed listing as well as the volume of each available to buyers.

Starting this year, 2013, our seed listing will concentrate more and more on bulbils of a greater range of cultivars and fewer seed-size bulbs.

This should prove to be a long-term advantage to home and market gardeners; an opportunity to increase diversity, lower prices for adding new varieties, and more effort devoted to growing cleaner planting garlic by the bulbil method.

### A Garlic called Majestic

Sylvie Maurice of St-Julien, QC, wrote: Thank you for telling me about the origin of 'Majestic'. I had no idea where it was developed. Most of my cultivars come from Eureka, Boundary, and the Garlic Project of Seeds of Diversity.

*Editor: I sent Sylvie the story of Majestic. For those members that are unaware of its origins, the story is reprinted on page 8.*

### Snow gone with midwinter thaw

We had almost two feet of beautiful snow over the Christmas season, providing a generous blanket to protect the garlic. Then, on January 30 came a short heat wave, 10-degree temperatures, high winds, and steady rain. The snow disappeared, first in the woods, then in the garden, and garlic beds were exposed. Thank goodness for the straw mulch. Hopefully, it protected the garlic from the cold spell that followed. Well, we shouldn't complain, as we didn't get the tornadoes that struck our friends in the U.S. or the minus 40 degrees on the prairies!

### Groundhog Day Reports: Feldspar Freddie Has Spoken

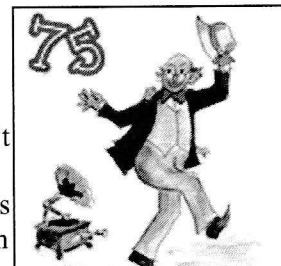


This year, Freddy said: "Leave me alone". "Go south". So, that's what we did. On February 2, Groundhog Day, we boarded a plane bound for the Dominican Republic to spend most of the month enjoying sunshine and warm weather. When we get back, we'll deal with those piles of snow, and wait for Freddy to wake up. If we're lucky, maybe Mother Nature would have melted it for us! Thank you for your wise advice, Freddy!

### The Garlic Guru Turns 75

Celebrated my 75<sup>th</sup> birthday in February. Hard to believe where those years have gone! Well, I don't feel like 75, whatever 75 is supposed to feel like. The mind tells you that you're young. It's that darn body that brings you down to earth.

However, with all this modern medicine, like false teeth, plastic eyes, mechanical knees and the other artificial body parts they can install and drugs instead of food to keep you alive, you can virtually keep going forever. The one I'm scared of the most is when some fool doctor replaces your brain with a computer – when it crashes, you'll be dead! *It's not the years in your life, but the life in your years, that counts the most!*



**The search for a kitchen garlic peeler.** There are plenty of commercial size garlic peelers handling bushel quantities of garlic on the market, lots of those little rubber tubes that will do one clove, but nothing for the home cook that wants to pickle a dozen jars of garlic.

After endless searching, I finally located one from China on the Internet, a sort of modified food processor with a rubberized post instead of chopping blades. It took 5 weeks to arrive, then, I discovered that it was 220 volt and needed a special step-up transformer, not available in Canada. Finally, the transformer arrived and I was able to try it out. Not perfect, but it did make the job easier, saving fingers from hours and hours of peeling. See the Recipe pages for description and pictures of testing this latest gadget.



## A clove here and there

### Want to find something in the Garlic News?

Just go to **Rasa Creek Farms'** new website:  
[www.rasacreekfarm.com/resources/the-garlic-news](http://www.rasacreekfarm.com/resources/the-garlic-news)  
The site has lots of garlic info, and, thanks to **Jim Capellini**,  
an easy to use link to the **Contents Pages from the Garlic News**. So, if you're searching for an article, just scroll  
through the contents pages and find it quickly.  
*ps. Rasa Creek also has both bulbs and bulbils for sale.*

### Another great garlic site

**Eric Mattila of Aurora, Ontario** has also posted the **Garlic News** information and lots of garlic information on this  
website: <http://www.garlicnews.ca/>  
*ps. Eric offers bulbils from Dan's Russian in the 2013 issue of Seeds of Diversity Canada Member Seed Directory.*

### And of course, the Garlic News is also here:

**Boundary Garlic.** Sonia and Henry have kindly carried the  
**Garlic News** Membership Application Form for many years  
on their website, [www.garlicfarm.ca](http://www.garlicfarm.ca), along with garlic  
growing instructions, both their own as well as mine from  
the Small-Plot Garlic Variety Trials.

For another site, Check **Dan Jason's** heritage seeds at  
[www.saltspringseeds.com](http://www.saltspringseeds.com).

*I appreciate all these kind folks who are willing to share in  
promoting garlic. Thank you. Editor.*

### A small world of echoes

**Wanda Storto of Iroquois, Ontario** called regarding the  
"Echoes from the past---" letter (page 20, Issue 34). Wanda  
also came from Saskatchewan. She said that *her* nephew,  
Leslie Koslovski, had bought a farm near Preeceville from  
*my* nephew, Terry Ingbrigtson, and he also knew my sister. I  
called my sister Florence and she confirmed it. I guess Terry  
decided to sell his land and continue working the offshore  
drilling rig off Newfoundland, oil providing a more secure  
income than farming. Thank you, Wanda! *Editor.*  
*p.s. By the way, my nephew Terry lives in B.C. so he has a  
long commute to work! Crazy Saskatchewanians, ey!*

### The Garden Web

Should onions be mulched?

The bulbs need air and sunlight. Mulching next to the plant  
is not recommended. In most cases onions do not handle  
mulching very well, onions like to have their tops exposed to  
the air. Mulching also increases the risk of the bulbs rotting.

*"The only advice I can give to aspiring writers is don't do it unless  
you're willing to give your whole life to it. Red wine and garlic  
also helps." - Jim Harrison*

## So what does Organic Certification protect?

*From the January 2013 Pro Cert Organic Newsletter:*

### Pesticides Ubiquitous in Environment

It "rains pesticides" during the early part of the growing  
season in every part of the world and on every exposed  
surface! Rainwater samples taken during the early spring  
season routinely contain measurable amounts of the  
herbicides, fungicides and insecticides applied by  
conventional farmers. These pesticides volatilize into the  
lower atmosphere during and after application and are  
absorbed by raindrops as they fall to earth. This  
contaminated water falls on organic as well as conventional  
crops and on all other earth surfaces. Therefore, all plants -  
conventional, organic, and wild contain trace levels of  
manmade pesticides. The residue concentration will be  
directly proportionate to proximity to conventional crop  
producing areas. This is a documented, proven phenomenon!

### No "Pesticide/GMO Free" Claims

Organic standards do not allow a "Pesticide Free" food claim  
because of the ubiquitous contamination problem. Similarly,  
organic standards do not allow a "GMO Free" food claim  
because of GMO contamination from conventional  
agriculture.

*Editor: Scary! And all this time, I've had to provide supplier  
statements for off-farm inputs, like straw for mulch, giving the  
assurance that it was GMO-free and hadn't been sprayed with  
pesticides during the 60 days before harvest. So who, other than  
the agro-food importers, is protected by the Organic Regulations?*

### Farmers' reasons for deregistering from organic farming

*Source: Organic Agriculture (2012) 2: 103-116*

"Every year since 2002, 150 to 200 farmers in Norway have  
deregistered from certified organic production. The aim of  
this study was to get behind these figures and improve our  
understanding of the reasoning leading to decisions to opt  
out - - - besides the conspicuous reasons to opt out of  
certified organic farming, such as regulations getting stricter  
over time and low income, personal reasons such as  
disappointment - - - economic support and premium prices,  
are not sufficient to motivate farmers for sustained organic  
management. Support and encouragement, for example from  
people in the local community, politicians and other  
spokespersons, would likely contribute to increase farmers'  
motivation."

*Editor: It's happening here in Canada, too. Check the CFIA  
website, <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/organic-products/eng>  
and go to "Suspended and Cancelled Organic Certifications". In  
January 2013 alone, dozens of Canadian farmers voluntarily  
withdrew from organic certification.*



## We get calls and letters

### New Year's Garlic Giggles

Thank you Paul for all the work that you and your lovely bride put into the News. I do love to sit with my copy, quietly read it and have the odd giggle at some of the letters and comments. Cheers in 2013. **Lynn Archbold, Guelph, Ontario.**

*Editor: Well, giggle away, Lynn, but some of this stuff about vampires is pretty serious business. When the werewolves come howling at your door, you'll be glad that you have lots of garlic hanging around! A great 2013 to you, too, and thank you once more for your generous donation with your Early Bird Renewal.*

### A friendly New Years wish

**Bunny LeMessurier**, a garlic friend from the **Silver Spring Farm** volunteers, phoned with wishes for the New Year and inquire about Mary Lou's health. Bunny was just reading the Winter Issue. She finds all the garlic varieties a bit confusing but enjoys reading the nice letters.

*Editor: And the best of 2013 to you and Bob as well, Bunny!*

### Began the New Year reading the Garlic News

Began the New Year right by reading the latest Garlic News. It sure made for a pleasant day. All the contributions to the News were informative and interesting. I especially liked **Debbie Barnhart's** account of overcoming the many obstacles to get her garlic in the ground. Sometimes a logistics nightmare. **Karen Poce's** contribution was well written and enjoyable. I'm looking forward to seeing if you can get the garlic samples she sent to replicate the unusual behaviour – two scapes from one plant and extra leaves. I planted a thousand last fall. That seemed like a large number to me but its insignificant when compared to some growers planting 40,000-50,000. I hope the large growers enjoy their plantings as much as I do mine.

We have about 8" snow cover and it will be around for a while because temperature is going to plunge. It's nice knowing that the garlic is insulated. Thank you, Paul, for all your help. **Clarence Cross, Erie, Pennsylvania.**

*Editor: Thank you for the kind words. I, too, enjoy and learn a lot from the letters and articles, as it's just not possible to know all there is about this fascinating vegetable. I am especially appreciative of Debbie's regular report on the Haliburton County Garlic Growers, the organization that her father, Charlie Robb, fostered. See my response to Debbie, below.*

### Outstanding article on the HCGGA

*Deb. What an outstanding write-up, from a very outstanding lady! I read and re-read your article several times to try and really understand. I hope that I captured at least a little bit of the feeling behind it all. My only lack is not having met some of the characters in your saga - the Basset hounds, the teenager, and, of course, the headlights that enabled your planting. Deb, you are a real credit to your Dad and he is certainly looking down with pride at his daughter.*

*Thank you, Deb, for sharing your feelings so eloquently. Paul*

### From the Toronto Garlic Festival

Hello Paul. Toronto Garlic Festival wishes you a Happy, Healthy New Year and wants to thank you for your support of Festival, especially your early support. We'll be back for round three fall 2013 with more fresh Ontario garlic, delicious garlic cuisine, and informative presentations (like: Garlic As An Aphrodisiac; Garlic's Use in WWII; Can Pets Eat Garlic?). Regards, **Peter McClusky.**

### From Dauphin, Manitoba, storage life and pink garlic

I missed the Fall Issue. Please send me Issue 33. Thank you. Great stuff. I am still getting bigger each year, slowly. Taking your advice, Paul! In 2012, I heard the garlic crop was poor. Manitoba growers held on to their crop for seed. The growers in France let their scapes get a little longer to increase the storage life so I tried this idea by letting the scapes get longer than I'd like in my 2012 crop. Harvest was two weeks earlier this year. I found the skins really tight and it was hard to split the cloves without tearing the skin. This spring, 2013, I'll ask my customers how long their bulbs lasted. Bulbs were smaller than in 2011. Is there seed for "pink garlic" available?

Thanks to you, Paul & Mary Lou for the garlic newsletter and the great garlic people that send in their letters.

**Garry Leskiw, Second Look Gardens.**

*Editor: Pink garlic, Rose de Lautrec is available. See the Golden Acres ad on page 10. Sheri and Julie grow some. I also hope to have some on my list for 2013.*

*Leaving scapes on longer? Yes, this does increase storage life of the garlic. However, it's a trade off. The scapes become woody when left on. I prefer to get those fresh, delicious scapes to eat, rather than longer storage life. I, too, thank the great garlic people like you, who are willing to share their garlic experience.*

Thank you for providing such an excellent resource!  
**Cynthia Hyland, Perth, Ontario.**

Thank you very much. I'm enjoying the newsletter.  
**Virginia Ambrose, Hudson, New York.**

**What do farmers' do in the winter? Anne Reaney of Prescott, Ontario**, wrote: We enjoy reading all the news feel it is a very worthwhile paper. I especially liked page one of Issue 34 ----and here I thought we could just relax and veg out over the winter! Now, you make me feel really lazy (lol). Keep up the good work!

### Courteous resignation

**Robin Gwyn of Somerset, NS**, sent a "no thanks" on the renewal, saying: We never got going into garlic – I'll say it was my poor timing-growing older with lots of new ideas. I'm just recovering from my first hip replacement. Thank you for your help, thank you for the News.

*(Letters continued on page 15)*





## Tales of the Stinking Rose from the Wild Rose Country

### Tying 25+ in a string

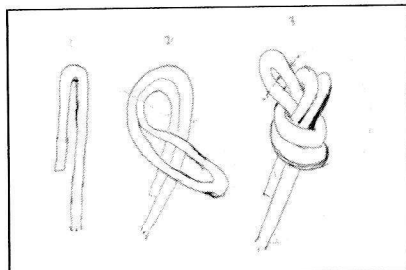
By: Liz Tobola

**Wayne Walma** asked Liz: So will there be an article in an upcoming Garlic News about how you were taught to hang 25 garlic on a string? I would be interested in learning how to do that. I am new to the Garlic News, just got the #33 issue and am hungry to learn more about handling garlic. Thanks for your present article, sounds like you have fun in pursuit of your goal. Wayne

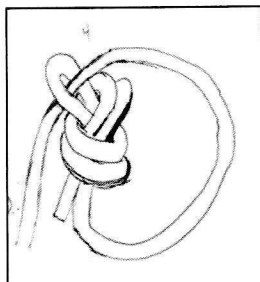
*Hi Wayne: If you're interested to learn to tie more on a string I imagine others are as well. So, I will make an effort to include a lesson in a future column in time for most of you who harvest in July. I am a Springtime planter; my harvest is just about done now, October 1. It will take me a bit to put it in writing; I'll want to get it just right. Might even be a thing for spring issue if I haven't got anything else in mind. Hope you can wait! Regards, Liz*

This task was a lot more daunting than I first imagined. First I bought a book on Knots, complete with some rope. Do I take pictures? That won't show up in print so well. OK, try some sketching. Well it's been a while (sketching) but this is what you're getting. At least I had the rope to use for the sketches... binder twine would have been hard to see without the reading glasses. I used pencils and pens as props for the garlic stock. Oh yeah, the book on Knots. If you were a sailor it would be useful.

Step 1: measure out twine from shoulder to the end of your hand 2 times and cut off that length.



Steps 2-4 sketches 1, 2&3:  
take your twine and make a little loop on the end.

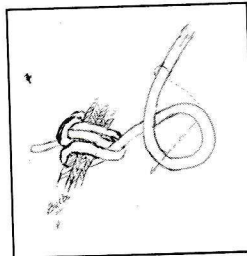
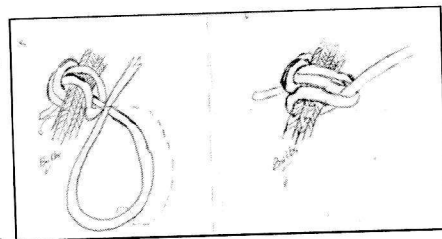


Step 5 sketch 4: now make a big loop from that. You can feed the long end through or just loop the long piece in and roll the knot.

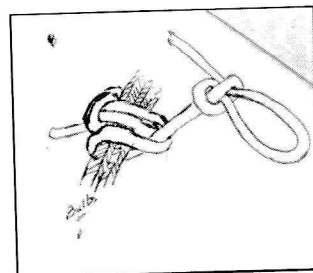
Step 6: place larger bulbs (4, 5 or 6 depends on stock size) in your big loop (you'll want weight to help snug things up).

Step 7 sketch 5: snug that group up and make a big loop for the half hitch (Henry's term).

Step 8 sketch 6: place the half hitch around the group and snug it up. (Sketches 5 & 6 on right)

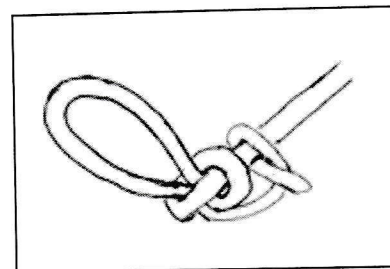
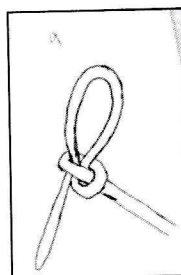


Step 9 sketch 7: start the next loop for your slipknot (Liz's term). Leave a couple inches space from the first group.



Step 10 sketch 8: grab the long end, loop it through big enough and place some more garlic in it (less garlic this time, maybe 1 or 2 less, depending on size).

Step 11: repeat Step 9 & 10 above many times (quantity of garlic in each slip knot to be determined by you).



Step 12 sketch 9 & 10: when you come close to the end of your string you'll make another slip knot and then slip the tail of the twine off and cinch it so the slip knot doesn't slip.  
Step 13: hang it up!

Word of caution; string of garlic can be heavy! I've had strings well over 10 lbs.

Thanks again to **Henry Caron, Boundary Garlic Farm** for teaching me this great space saver!



*Liz with some of her Oma's Gourmet Garlic*



## Al's Ramblings: Mulch

By: Al Picketts

Spring is just around the corner. You can't really see it from here because of the snow banks but it is there.

The little green garlic leaves will be poking up soon enough. This brings a decision for the garlic grower: to remove or not to remove the mulch.

This is how I understand the situation. You put a layer of mulch (straw, leaves, sea weed, spruce bows, etc.) on the garlic in the fall. Some put it on after the ground is frozen, some right after the garlic is planted and some don't get around to mulching at all. The garlic will grow anyway. If the cloves are planted deep enough they should not be pushed out of the ground by the freeze-thaw cycle through the winter. I plant 4 inches deep and mulch with wheat or barley straw right after the garlic is planted. I have never had a problem with heaving or winterkill from too much cold. I also don't freeze my ears while I'm applying the straw and have never seen a green shoot come up in the fall.

Why mulch anyway? Here are my reasons:

The mulch insulates the ground. By this I don't mean that it keeps the garlic warm. Quite the opposite. The insulating effect allows the ground to freeze but on the warm spells in the winter it prevents the ground from thawing. The garlic stays at a more constant temperature throughout the winter. As spring approaches with the days getting longer and warmer, the garlic is kept cold by the mulch. Some growers think it is a good idea to remove the mulch to let the ground warm up sooner to get the garlic growing sooner. I don't.

On PEI spring doesn't come all at once. Spring may be here for a few days and then it is displaced by winter again and back and forth goes this seasonal tug-of-war.

If the mulch is removed, the garlic will come up sooner and then "BLAM". The little tender leaves get frozen. Oh sure, the garlic will live through this onslaught but valuable energy is wasted in growing more leaves to replace the damaged ones. By leaving the mulch in place, the ground stays cold and the garlic stays quiet. By the time the ground does warm up and the garlic grows, spring is now officially here.

That's one reason for keeping mulch in place. Another, and maybe the most important, reason is for moisture retention. If the soil is bare, there is no protection to prevent soil moisture from being whisked away by the sun and wind. The mulch will help keep the soil cool and moist and the garlic will appreciate it.

And let's not forget about the weeds. Garlic hates weeds. Weeds hate mulch. Weeds have difficulty getting through the mulch and either die from lack of light or just don't germinate. If I find a weedy area in my garlic patch I know instinctively that the mulch is either missing or is so sparse that it can't choke out the weeds. I'll pull the weeds and then put more mulch on this area to prevent re-growth.

I never remove the mulch even after the garlic is harvested. I'll wait until the following spring to cut the straw into the soil with the discs. This adds organic matter to the soil enriching it for whatever crop I choose to plant.

This spring I'll be working up the soil in my garden as soon as it is fit to cultivate and then I'll cover the entire area in straw. By moving the straw a little to plant the seeds, I'll have plants come up to be protected by the straw against drought and weeds. I'm planning to make tunnels with plastic water pipe and floating row cover to protect the carrots from the carrot maggot fly and I may even make shelters for the tomatoes to slow down the blight. The tomatoes and squash and cucumbers will have a nice clean bed of straw on which to lay their heavy heads and I'll have clean fruit to harvest.

## The Farmer's Creed

Author unknown. It originally appeared in a New Holland paper.

*I believe that a man's greatest possession is his dignity, and that no calling bestows this more abundantly than farming.*

*I believe that hard work and honest sweat are the building blocks of character.*

*I believe that farming, despite its disappointments and hardships, is the most honest and honourable way a man can spend his days on this earth.*

*I believe that farming nurtures the close family ties that make life rich in ways money cannot buy.*

*I believe that farming provides education for life and that no other occupation teaches so much about birth, growth, and maturity in so many ways.*

*I believe that many of the best things in life are indeed free; the splendour of sunrise, the rapture of wide, open spaces, the exhilarating sight of your own land greening each spring.*

*I believe that the true happiness comes from watching your crops ripen in the fields, your children grow tall in the sun, your whole family feel the pride that springs from their shared experience.*

*I believe that by my toil I am giving more to the world than I am taking from it, an honour that does not come to all men*

*I believe that my life will be measured ultimately by what I have done for my fellowman, and by this standard, I fear no judgment.*

*I believe that when a man grows old and sums up his days, he should be able to stand tall and feel pride in the life he has lived.*

*I believe in farming, because it makes all this possible.*



## A Garlic Called Majestic

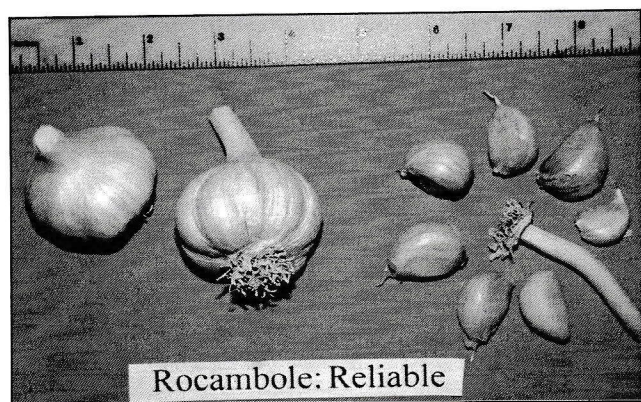
### - A new garlic strain from Beaver Pond Estates

*Paul Pospisil, Master Gardener Emeritus  
First published June 2002*

Once in a long while, a small miracle of nature happens, the creation of a new plant variety by mutation. Since garlic is asexual, that is, it reproduces vegetatively by the natural process of cloning; it cannot be hybridized by cross-pollination to create new strains, as is the case in most other plants. The belief among many researchers is that the many strains of garlic under cultivation must have occurred over the centuries by mutation.

In the normal care of the garlic variety trials plots at Beaver Pond Estates, the garlic was regularly inspected throughout the growing season. Over the years, we had observed many examples of adaptation and occasionally, false mutations were observed. Then, what appeared to be a true mutation occurred. For the next five years, we carefully nurtured along this little gem of nature. The story of "Majestic" began to unfold in our garlic research plot.

How it started: During harvest 1998, a single plant in a row of our Control Standard, Rocambole "Reliable", stood out tall like a Porcelain but with the leaf and scape structure of a Rocambole. The harvested bulb was huge, of Colossal grade size and had nine cloves like a Rocambole. In this region, Porcelains typically produce 3-5 cloves per bulb, Porcelains 6-9. The cloves had a Porcelain appearance and colouring but little similarity to those of Rocambole "Reliable".

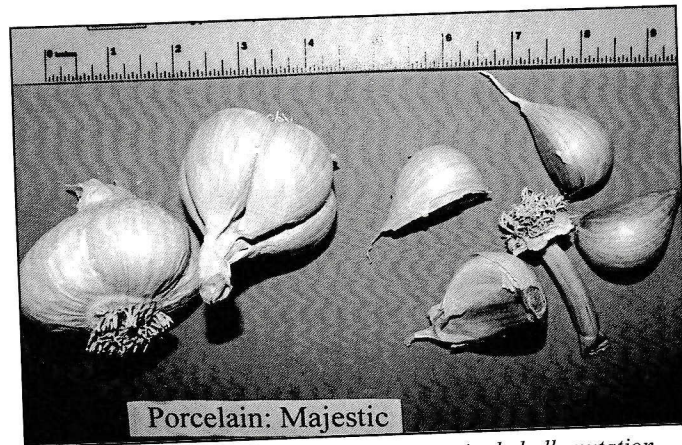


*The cultivar Reliable, Control Standard for Rocambole comparison*

The nine cloves, identified as NKG198, were separately planted in fall of 1998.

During harvest 1999, the nine cloves produced nine huge bulbs in the Super Jumbo to Colossal size range from plants that had now taken on Porcelain characteristics. The bulbs yielded an average of 4.3 cloves, the nine bulbs producing 39 Porcelain-type cloves.

The garlic appeared to have completed its mutation from a Rocambole to a Porcelain in two growing seasons.



*The cultivar Majestic, developed from a single bulb mutation that occurred in a planting of the Rocambole, Reliable.*

From the fall 1999, planting, the 39 NKG198 cloves resulted in 39 huge bulbs harvested in summer 2000. The bulbs were the largest of any of the 10 Porcelain strains grown in the 1999-2000 cycle.

In fall 2000, 23 of the *smallest*, seed size bulbs were selected from the 39 harvested bulbs for planting. The 23 bulbs contained 96 cloves, an average of 4.2 per bulb.

The resulting harvest in 2001 was nothing less than amazing. Despite summer drought conditions, all bulbs exceeded size Jumbo, averaging 60.9 grams and were much larger than any of the other Porcelains in the trials.

The cloves from most of the bulbs were replanted in fall 2001 to increase the quantity. A limited quantity of Majestic planting stock from the 2002 harvest was released to growers for fall 2002 planting and a further release will be made following the 2003 harvest. Growers involved have been asked to provide reports on how this strain performs in their growing conditions.

The mutant, NKG198, was assigned the cultivar name, "Majestic", affectionately referred to as "Paul's Pride". "Majestic" is larger, more robust and healthier looking than any other Porcelain in the trials and produce the largest bulbs. Developed over five growing cycles, this new strain promises to be one of the best Porcelains available. (In our own annual yield comparisons over the next decade, Majestic regularly performed at or near the top of the Porcelain cultivars).

*Samples of both Rocambole Reliable and Porcelain Majestic from the 2002 harvest were shipped to Dr. Philipp Simon in Wisconsin for laboratory finger printing in an effort to confirm the genetic relationship. Unfortunately, Dr. Simon's lab facilities were incapable of comparisons below 250 AFLP bands per million so the results of his examination could neither confirm nor deny a mutant. Growers may be interested in Dr. Simon's paper, "The origins and distribution of garlic: How many garlics are there?" It can be found at:  
<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Research/docs.htm?docid=5232>*





## Just South of Algonquin Park "Making Connections"

### 2013 – The Year of Making Connections

Now don't mistake making connections for networking. Making connections is the actual work and process of networking and is vital in a time of rapid change. As garlic growers, we are one of the many links in a local food chain, upon which food security grows; and we are currently on the cusp of being impacted by climate change.

This is not a good or bad thing; **it just is**. This is our new reality as outlined in the recent workshops at the 2013 Fruit and Vegetable Convention. Dr. Gordon McBean of the (U of Western & co-Nobel Peace prize winner in 2007 on climate change) was the keynote speaker for the **Climate Change and Its Impact on Horticulture in Ontario** workshop. Temperatures have been steadily increasing over the last decade, bringing warmer weather in both winter and summer, more precipitation (often erratic and with little warning) with some areas left in drought conditions, while others are heading for higher ground due to massive flooding. There is little we can do to change or reverse this process. What we can and need to do is "**adapt**" and "**reduce the risks**" of future disasters. Dr. McBean recommends that we need to increase innovation to assist in adapting agriculture and community life to these changes. Make connections.

The good news is that we are going to have a longer growing season – the challenges that brings will be adding or changing the varieties of garlic to meet the needs of the climate moving in and to remain financially viable. Address additional and new issues of soil & water – quality and amount; insect, disease and weed proliferation; and crop maturing, harvesting, and storage, to name a few. Make connections.

This is **not**, I repeat **not**, a prediction of doom and gloom. What it is all about is connecting and reconnecting to awareness, rising to meet the challenges and reaching out and working shoulder to shoulder with our neighbours and communities. We can no longer delude ourselves that we can do it or should be doing this by ourselves – our food security is at stake! Become a part of the connection.

If you are reading this article, you are already a part of a very real and valuable connection, **The Garlic News!** You have a wealth of information, current and historical, connections all over Canada and the hearts of some of the best people I have met and those I have yet to meet. Share this wealth.

The information provided on garlic, pertains to any crop (when you make the connection to good growing practices, irrigation, pest control – again to name a few) and it needs to be shared, taught, and implemented. Now is not the time to be shy – get connected! Watch this column in the next issue, we are passionate about connecting, and we love to share, just south of Algonquin Park!

*Submitted by Debbie Barnhart (aka Garlicgirl of the HCGGA)*

### Message from the President

Being a small organization brings its own challenges and we have certainly experienced them in the latter part of 2012. About half our members have been struggling with health issues and some are still dealing with them as well as dealing with life in general. When you only have a certain number of people to maintain and manage one does not have extra bodies to help out. So there you have a dilemma. I myself was one of those members dealing with a serious health issue, so anything else tends to take a back seat. More pressure is put on others who are dealing with their own issues. As a result, our association was floundering for a while.

We have grown so fast in just five years, accomplishing many things; an annual Garlic Fest, some well needed teaching workshops, individual skills development, our own website and logo, our own identity. I guess it was inevitable that something would occur to slow us down or maybe stop us in our tracks...and that is what happened.

It is said that everything happens for a reason and it seems true for us. It has given us time to reflect on our own organization as well as our own lives, see where our strengths and weaknesses lay and what we can do about it. I myself have been fortunate to survive my own crisis and yes, the time I have spent recuperating has been invaluable.

I am pleased to report that we are now back on track, have had our annual meeting (belatedly), adopted our own constitution, elected a Board, and renewed criteria for membership and fees. It is now time to plan our event(s) for this year; one definitely will be Year 6 for our Garlic Fest; to be held on Saturday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, location yet to be confirmed. We look forward to our growing connections.

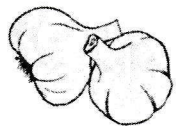
*Submitted by Sheila Robb, President, HCGGA*

**To contact the Haliburton County Garlic Growers Association, Visit website: [www.haliburtongarlic.ca](http://www.haliburtongarlic.ca) or phone Sheila Robb, president, 705-489-4201, Email [robbsheila@gmail.com](mailto:robbsheila@gmail.com)**



# THE GARLIC DIRECTORY

Listings of garlic for sale, garlic wanted and anything that garlic growers might want.



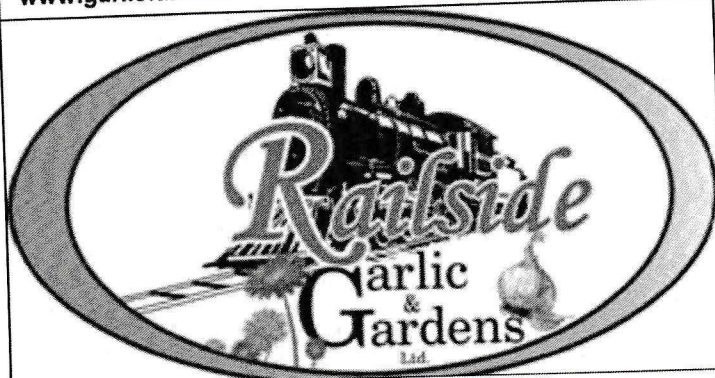
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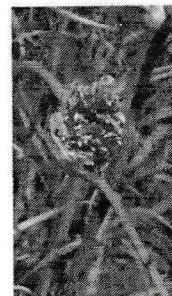
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*Plant Bulbils in the Spring!*



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Contact the editor for other rates. [garlic@rideau.net](mailto:garlic@rideau.net)



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Directory Listings, Garlic or Garlic Products for sale, Want Ads, Boxed Ads, Grower Information

**The Garlic Garden.** Fresh garlic and garlic products. Darrel & Anna Schaab, Box 1727, Yorkton, SK, S3N 3L3. Ph. 306-786-3377, Email [thegarlicgarden@imagewireless.ca](mailto:thegarlicgarden@imagewireless.ca).

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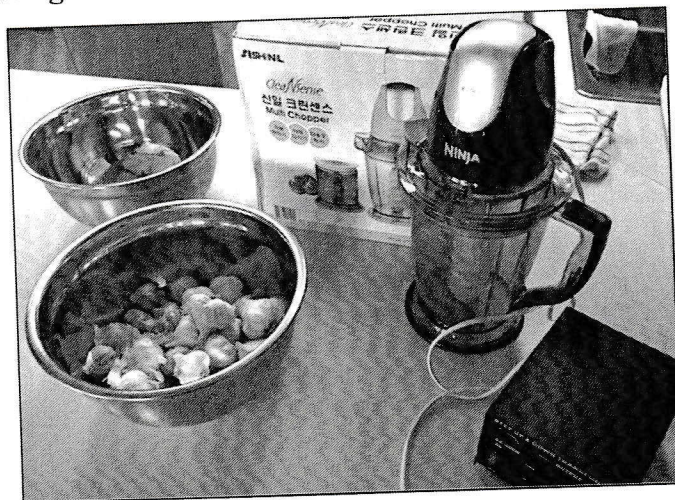
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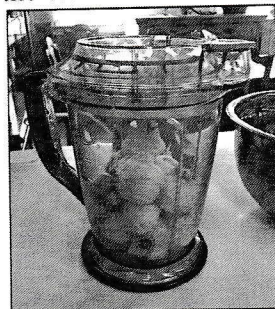


## Testing the Ali Express Garlic Peeler

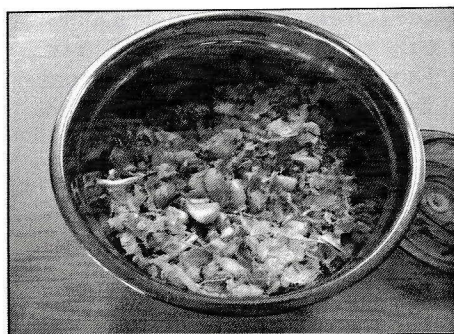


I located this electric garlic peeler on the Internet. It took 5 weeks to arrive, then, I discovered that it was 220 volt and needed a special step-up transformer, not available in Canada. Finally, the transformer arrived and I was able to try it out. The processor body has a rubberized post instead of chopping blades, to grip the garlic cloves and spin them around. No instructions came with it. Being a Chinese imitation or 'knock-off' of the brand-name Ninja food processor, it is rather poorly made and you have to manipulate it to make the electric motor start.

I started with cracking the bulbs into cloves, then discovered that you could use whole bulbs up to about 2" size and it would break them up and peel the cloves. The container was best filled to about 2/3, leaving enough space for the cloves to spin. It took around 3-4 minutes to get a most of the cloves peeled.



The result was a mess of peeled and unpeeled cloves, bulb and clove wrappers and stems. I went out on the patio and winnowed away most of the wrappers, hand-picking and

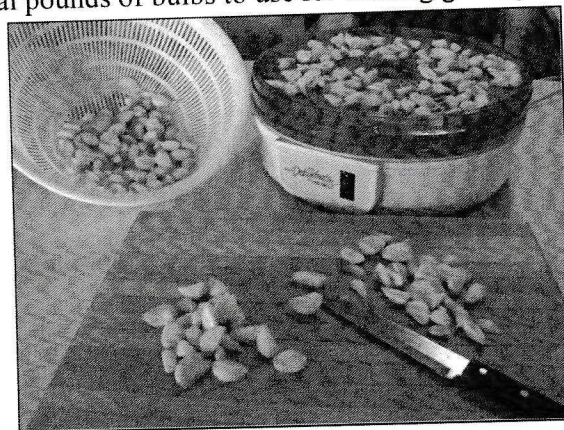


discarding the stems. This left a mix of peeled and unpeeled cloves, fairly free of waste.

These were separated and the unpeeled cloves were run through the peeler again. This was repeated several times until it was evident that some cloves had such a tough wrappers that they just wouldn't peel by this process. It was evident that some garlic types peeled easier than others, Silverskins and some Artichokes having the toughest wrappers.

After several runs, about 90% of the cloves were peeled. The remaining 10% had to be peeled by hand. The final step was rinsing the cloves under the tap as they were sticky and had wrapper residue sticking to them.

We spent a couple of hours playing with it and cleaned several pounds of bulbs to use for making garlic powder.



*Slicing cloves for drying in the kitchen dehydrator.*

Next summer, when we have a better supply of fresh garlic, I'll try it to see which garlic are easy to peel and the ones that are most stubborn.

The machine is of the ideal size for home kitchen use and if it were better made, I would recommend it. Not perfect, but it did make the job easier. However, it is a classic example of some of the low quality junk made in China. It works, but I wouldn't rush to buy one because it's very poorly made and nowhere could I find one equivalent to the better quality Ninja model food processors being sold.

Mary Lou was pleased as it saved her fingers from hours and hours of peeling, a tedious job at best.

*Source: Internet, AliExpress.com (alibaba corporation)*

*Price: U.S.\$149.61 + shipping & taxes*

*Transformer: Simran 500 watt 110/220 volt*

*Price: \$59.61 from USA via Amazon books*

### How to peel garlic in the microwave

Spotted one of those You Tube videos on the Internet that claims you can peel garlic cloves by throwing them in the microwave and running on High for 20 seconds. Yup, works, but you wind up with partially cooked garlic, not raw cloves.

### Why do TV chefs chop garlic?

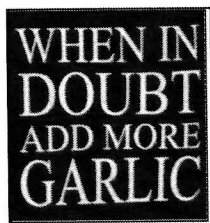
Nothing to do with cooking. TV chefs prefer to use a huge knife because it's flashier. All that rapping and chopping makes for better television.



## More garlic recipes and ideas

### Garlicky Baked Salmon

We eat a lot of fish and seafood since cutting back on red meats. Salmon is one of the best. This recipe is quick to prepare, about 10 minutes, and cooks in about 1/2 hour and gives you just enough garlicky flavour.



#### *Ingredients:*

4 salmon fillets, about 4 to 6 ounces each  
4 small cloves garlic, minced or crushed  
4 tbsp olive oil  
2 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice  
1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley  
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste  
lemon wedges, optional

#### *Method:*

Preheat oven to 375°. Crush garlic cloves in press and let sit. Chop fresh parsley. Squeeze lemon juice. Lightly grease a 9 x 13-inch baking pan or line with non-stick foil. Combine the garlic, parsley, and olive oil. Arrange the salmon in the baking pan and spread garlic mixture evenly over the salmon fillets. Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper. Bake for about 20 minutes, or until the fillets flake easily with a fork and are no longer pink inside. Don't overbake salmon or it will taste dry. Drizzle with the lemon juice and serve with lemon wedges, if desired. Serve this delicious baked salmon with baked potatoes or rice, spinach and carrots for a great dinner. Note: Serves 4. Use only 2 fillets if cooking for two.



### How To Thaw Frozen Lobster Tails

We don't live in Nova Scotia so much of the time, you can get only frozen lobster in the supermarket, not fresh. So, to cook and enjoy lobster, thaw it first: Let the frozen lobster thaw in the refrigerator 24 hours before cooking. Cooking un-thawed tails will result in tough meat. Lobster will thaw faster if placed in a plastic bag and immersed in water while in the refrigerator. If you're really in a rush to thaw the frozen lobster tails, you can use a microwave with a defrost setting to thaw the tails, but, be very careful not to cook it!!

When defrosted, insert point of kitchen shears between the meat and the hard shell and cut the shell down the centre of the back, leaving tail fan intact. Loosen the meat from the shell by lifting the uncooked tail through the slit to rest on the top of the soft under shell.

After thawing, the lobster tails can be boiled, steamed, sautéed, baked, broiled, or grilled.

Serve lobster with hot garlic butter for dipping.

## More Black Garlic Recipe Ideas

### Black Garlic Vinaigrette

Black garlic is fresh garlic that has been fermented. The process turns the cloves a rich black color with an intense, slightly sweet, smoky flavor. The pungent flavours of fresh garlic are gone, but the garlicky essence remains. Black garlic is rapidly gaining in popularity among Canadian foodies so you might as well try it out.

#### *Ingredients:*

4 cloves **black garlic**, minced  
1/2-cup rice wine vinegar  
1/4-cup olive oil  
2 tsp Dijon-style mustard  
1/8 tsp sugar  
Dash of freshly ground black pepper  
2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley

#### *Method:*

Place all ingredients except olive oil and whisk together. Slowly whisk in olive oil, pouring in a slowly. Pour into refrigerator container with a lid. It should last 2 weeks in frig. Shake well before using on salads to mix ingredients.



### Black Garlic Bruschetta

#### *Ingredients:*

1-2 ripe, red tomatoes  
1 red onion, diced  
3-4 cloves **black garlic** diced  
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
1 tbsp chopped fresh basil  
salt & pepper to taste  
Loaf or baguette French bread

#### *Method:*

Cut and dice all ingredients except olive oil and mix together in a bowl. Slice bread on an angle, toast, drizzle olive oil and add mix on top. Serve as an appetizer or with pasta dinner.



### Black Garlic Herb Butter

#### *Ingredients:*

150 grs. softened unsalted butter  
5 cloves of **black garlic**, peeled and pounded  
20 grs. or 2 tbsp chopped fresh chives, parsley and tarragon  
Zest of a lemon  
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

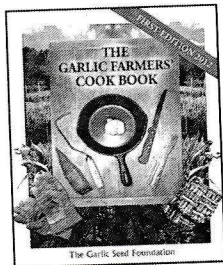
#### *Method:*

Blend all ingredients together either using a food processor or a small blender. Roll into a sausage in clear plastic wrap and keep in the fridge or freezer until required. Serve on crusty toasted French baguette.





## Book Review: The Garlic Farmers' Cookbook



First Edition 2012  
Published By: The Garlic Seed Foundation  
Rose Valley Farm  
Rose, NY 14542-0149  
Prepared, written & compiled by:  
Khurshed Bhungara  
Price: US \$18.00, including shipping  
[www.garlicseedfoundation.info](http://www.garlicseedfoundation.info)

*A Day without Garlic is a Day without Sunshine*

Those are the words found below the title of this cookbook.

Yesterday, my day started with sunshine, even though the sky was overcast and gloomy. Why? As I came back from the mailbox, I carried an envelope with a copy of this latest cookbook, sent by my garlic friend, David Stern. I hastily opened it, scanned the contents and said to Mary Lou, "This is not like any garlic cookbook that I've seen. It's original. It's entertaining." And, as you may know, our Beaver Pond Estates kitchen library contains scores of garlic cookbooks, sadly, most of which merely copy the same recipes.

This cookbook is quite different. Readers of The Garlic Press, the newsletter of the Garlic Seed Foundation (GSF), have contributed the recipes. They reflect the diversity of heritage and culture. Ethnic favourites are found throughout the book. Recognizing the busy life of the farmer, many of the recipes rely on the use of prepared foods as a time-saver and are simple and easy to prepare.

The book starts with a contents page, followed by an introduction by David Stern, Director and founder of the GSF, telling the tale of the long road to publication. The recipes are separated by groups into Appetizers; Dips, Dressings & Sauces; Beverages; Soups; Breads, Cakes, Cookies & Desserts; Chow Time; Entrees & Sides; Oils, Vinegars & Pickles; and Titbits and Fun. Throughout the book can be found interesting facts, historic notes, garlic quotes, pictures and all sorts of garlic titbits. Some recipes are hilarious and fun to read, if not to try.

There's even a section of prison recipes under the title "Chow Time"!

Members of the Garlic Seed Foundation have seen most of the recipes in previous issues of "The Garlic Press". For our Canadian readers, you'll find many new and exciting ones in this cookbook.

The introductory price of \$18.00, including shipping, is a bargain. I encourage members to contact David at the Garlic Seed Foundation and order your copy, now. At the same time, you might consider joining that fine organization, if for no other reason than to receive *The Garlic Press*. You'll find that it is quite different from the Garlic News in the type of articles.

A sample of the recipes in the Garlic Farmers' Cookbook appears on the right.

## Sample Recipes from The Garlic Farmers' Cookbook

### Sing Sing Spaghetti

3 quarts water  
1 tsp salt  
1/2 lb. spaghetti  
1-6oz. can tomato sauce  
5 cloves garlic, chopped

Add salt to water and bring to a boil. Place spaghetti in water and cook as described on package. Smash garlic with can of tomato sauce. Open can of tomato sauce, save lid. Use lid to chop garlic. Pour sauce with garlic into bowl and heat. Drain spaghetti water into toilet. Add spaghetti to bowl with sauce. Mix.

Makes one or two servings, depending on how hungry you are.

### Dinosaur Bone Gravy Garlic Soup

1 dinosaur bone  
brown gravy  
salt and pepper to taste  
3800 garlic bulbs  
2 rabbits

Break bone into 2' pieces (this will take about 4 months). Simmer in water for 5 months over kerosene at 525 degrees. Add salt, pepper and garlic and cover with brown gravy.

This will serve 3800 people. If more are expected, add 2 rabbits. Do this if only absolutely necessary, as most people do not like to find hare in their soup.

### And, on the serious side

#### Winter Squash and Tomato

1-pint tomato sauce  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 large winter squash, like acorn, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks  
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Combine tomato sauce, garlic, and olive oil and cook until thick. Microwave squash until tender, about 10-15 minutes. Layer squash on bottom of square casserole dish, top with tomato sauce, sprinkle with cheese and bake in preheated oven about 25 minutes, or until cheese browns lightly. Makes 4 servings.

#### Fish Lake Fire Water

7-8 large cloves garlic, shredded  
1 bottle vodka

Put shredded garlic in bottle of vodka. Let age for 6 months. Makes 1 bottle of garlic-flavoured vodka. Use sparingly for medicinal purposes, or just for pleasure.



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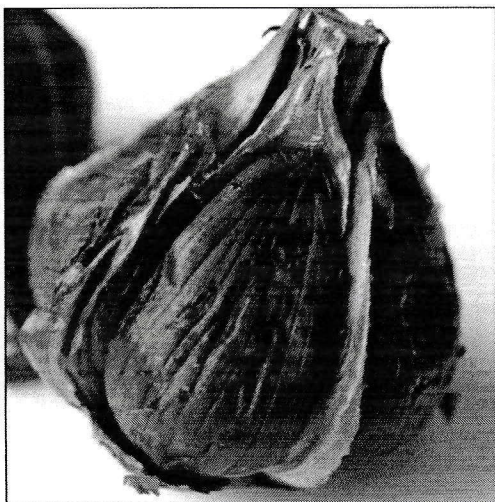
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## Still more calls and letters

### Changing Climate Cause of Worst Crop

**Clark Wiseman of Dutch Settlement, NS,** wrote: My garlic crop was possibly the worst ever in 2012. A very dry July led to reduced bulb size, and the wet August led to curing issues. I shouldn't complain too much, because most of my customers got their supply, and the flavour was as good as ever. I had to plant the new crop wearing rubber boots. It appears that climate change is having an impact. I blame heavy consumption of raw garlic for preventing me getting the cold and flu raging around Nova Scotia. My doctor agrees with this idea. He eats my garlic, too.

*Editor: We also had a dry June and July, a drought actually, so the crop suffered. Waxy Breakdown, a condition caused by hot conditions at harvest, affected the Rocamboles. Other varieties had smaller bulbs. I beat the early fall rains this year. Had a feeling and planted two weeks earlier than usual. Lucky for us as there wasn't a dry period after that in which to plant.*

### Mustard Source and a Garlic Dibble

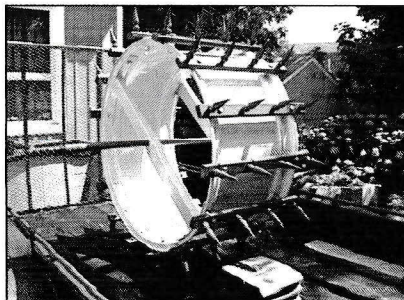
**Paul Fleming of Lindsay, Ontario,** asked: We purchased buckwheat seed at our local Agrico dealer, but have been unable to find a source for mustard seed. Would you know where mustard could be purchased? Also what type of legume do you use as cover crop?

*Editor: The one supplier for Oriental Mustard that I've located is: Roy Bailey, Bailey Seeds, Mildred, Saskatchewan.*

*Tel: (306) 935-4702*

*Unfortunately, he grows only conventional, not organic. I don't use a legume. I've found that buckwheat has more advantages. I grow mustard and buckwheat together; they are compatible and ready at the same time. You can plant and till down 3 or 4 crops of mustard and buckwheat in a summer so they are more practical. Red Clover is your best nitrogen source but must be left it for a year to get the benefit.*

**Paul Fleming, again** Also attached pictures of a garlic dibble we built for use on the front of the tractor. There are sleeves that fit over the pallet fork tines and the 48" rim rolls on bearings attached to the sleeves. We used the dibble this past fall for planting and it helped speed up the process considerably. I built it to save time, but might entertain building another if someone was serious...the hard part was finding a rim large enough. I found ours at the local scrap yard and believe it is off a John Deere Combine.



## Breaking Dormancy

In December, **Carolyn Smith of Roblin, Ontario,** wrote: All the garlic that I planted one week ago is up. I thought that it had to see a period of cold temperatures in order to break dormancy. I have stuck a thermometer in the basement where I store my garlic and it is 16 degrees C. The Music cloves are up 4 inches. I don't find green shoots inside the Music or the Silver Skin. I have to go Xmas shopping but I would rather stay home and fool with garlic.

*Editor: Hi Carolyn. Your experiment triggered my interest in the topic of garlic dormancy again and I spent many hours searching, only to find that there are no simple answers. Garlic is a mysterious plant and there are still many more unknowns about it. Here are some "knowns":*

*Garlic, properly stored, has a natural dormancy of 4 -12 months, depending on the cultivar. This can vary a great deal depending on curing, storage temperature, and humidity. Turbans store the shortest; Silver skins the longest, with the others in between. Dormancy can be "broken" by any number of methods such as moisture, alternating warm and cold temperatures, chilling prior to planting, and even the use of gibberillic acid (this one is favoured by most scientists).*

*It would appear that a minimum of 8 weeks dormancy is usual before the garlic will sprout by natural methods of planting. I suspect that this period can be shortened by moisture and chilling of the seed cloves.*

*I don't know that I could take on the complexity of that research to get all the answers, as it would involve scores of cultivars grown under many different preparations. So, experiments like yours help to answer at least some of the questions.*

### Hey our garlic is up!

**Ken Toews, a local Maberly grower,** called December 5, two types of Turban, one long row 100 feet and another half row are up as well as something called Transylvanian Artichoke, there are two or three other types with no signs, but I would not worry. I would say based upon the 150+feet of planting we have over 120 feet up. I really hope that we are good didn't lose anything....maybe we planted too soon?

*Editor: Yes, you were about a month early planting and this year, with a strange fall, alternating cold and warm, garlic emerged before freeze up. You are not alone. Mine and other growers found similar problems. The solution? Spread the straw mulch a little thicker than usual so that the green shoots aren't fully exposed to winter's blast. They will freeze at the tips a bit but should be OK once spring comes. Next spring, start the foliar fertilization as soon as the snow is gone and the garlic starts to grow.*

**Elly Finlayson-Blanchard of Railway Creek Farm,** asked: I was wondering how and where one would find a garlic peeler. Are they designed only for soft neck garlic?

*Editor: There are lots of commercial garlic peelers available for handling large volumes. Expensive, basically starting at \$1000 and up. Just google and you'll find a big choice. Now, small kitchen garlic peelers are a different problem, just not available, it seems.*



## Still more calls and letters

**Urban Leek Moth. Eric Mattila of Aurora, Ontario,** reported: I smugly thought I was immune, living in an urban area with nobody growing garlic near me that I knew of. However, I was not immune and I got an infestation of leek moths last year. I wouldn't have known what they were had it not been for your newsletter. The larvae seemed to be only in the scapes. I disposed of them in my green bin rather than my compost. I'm going to watch closely and see if I've got the problem this year. I didn't see any sign of them after I removed the infected scapes.

*Editor: Hello, Eric. Leek Moth, ey? Well, nobody is immune. Wildlife is taking over the cities; beaver, deer, raccoons, even moose, so the leek moth is merely joining the line-up for free and abundant food in city gardens. For next spring, start checking temperatures after mid March. If you get a short stretch of 9-10 deg C, they'll be flying (and mating and laying eggs and so on). The trick is to catch as many as possible as early as possible to reduce the multiplication that happens. They will no doubt be back because some always over winter and survive.*

### Leek moth problem not as bad

Hi Paul. Just a short note to accompany my renewal. I carefully store all back issues of Garlic News in a binder along with articles on the infamous leek moth, nematodes, etc. I treasure all issues, as they are a great resource for anyone interested in cultivating the beloved plant. Don't seem to have the problem I used to have with the leek moth. I only sprayed once this past season with BTK, the previous year was twice and prior to that I sprayed every two weeks. Due to the limited space, only about 200 cloves of 12 varieties are planted in raised beds at. The 8-inch spacing has improved the yield, makes weeding easier and lets me see if there are any problems. My only problem is that I am limited to crop rotation once every 3 years as I only have three raised beds. The fall planting was late and got in the ground during the week of the full moon. In addition a pinch of a root stimulant was added to each planting hole. I'll be anxious to see the results. **Peter Collis, Stittsville, Ontario.**

### Bulbil Project

**Bob Wildfong Executive Director, Seeds of Diversity Canada,** wrote: Wishing you a Happy New Year, and hoping that we can get lots of people excited and participating in the Bulbil Project. It was wonderful to talk with you (at the Seeds Conference) in Montreal, and I'm looking forward to our next chat.

*Editor: And a happy, garlicky 2013 to you, too, Bob. We have the best snow cover in over a decade. Nearly 2' fell over three big snowfalls before the New Year. The Bulbil Project continues to attract new gardeners so we're making headway.*

### Li'l Auntie

**Ted Lister of Trout Lake,** advised: Planted 1600 Li'l Auntie this year. Hope all is well in Maberly. Cheers, Ted.

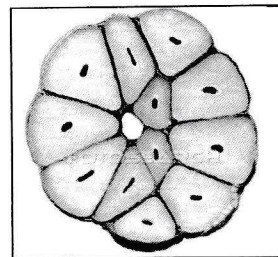
**Garlic Backs?? Clarence Cross of Erie, Pennsylvania,** asked: Was rereading Ted Meredith's excellent book on Garlic and came across a couple sentences that I need your light shed on. They are found at the end of the first paragraph on page 122. It reads "*Apart from planting upright, most growers do not otherwise concern themselves with orientation of the clove along its axis. Interestingly, however, one study showed that if cloves were oriented, such that their backs were along the row, 82% of the leaves were oriented along the row, facilitating cultivation between the rows.*" Do you know what he means by back of a garlic clove? Additionally why would cultivation between rows be necessary because of an abundance of garlic leaves? Thanks, **Clarence.**

*Editor: Hi Clarence; Yes, true. When we were first doing our row spacing trial, we experimented with aligning the cloves in a trench. It works! If all cloves are oriented the same, the fans forming the leaves of each plant align parallel to each other. The 'back' of the clove is the rounded part (the outside) opposite the V of the clove (inside). Look at it from the top down. See the picture below:*

*The 82% no doubt is caused by the fact that some cloves are not pie shaped and so will not align the same as the pie-shaped ones.*

*An abundance of weeds grow between the rows. The narrow leaves of the garlic plant do not shade them out. Mechanical cultivation is needed*

*between rows when you don't use mulch. Now that we use a dibble to make holes for planting, clove alignment is no longer possible as you just drop them into the holes.*



### Planting in garbage can, freezer, tire, and bath tub

On March 4, **Ted Maczka, the Fish Lake Garlic Man** sent an email saying; "Today I planted F36 red mutant, 4 cloves in a garbage can, 2 in a freezer compartment. The bulb had extra large clove and closer to the skinny 0.125" dia. stem. Also planted some F40 in a tire with the metal rim. Planted mostly F3 in the bath tub."

### A Garlic Festival in Saskatchewan?

**Anna Schaab, Yorkton, Sask,** asked: We are throwing around the idea for a garlic festival. You had a write up in the Garlic News that if people were interested in a festival to ask for help! I'm asking.

*Editor: Festival planning? YES! YES! YES! By all means, start one. I've attached three items\*\*\*. With a very short fuse before a possible 2013 event, you need to keep it simple and small. Something like a Garlic Day at the Saskatoon Farmers Market, or, if you're looking to real growth in future, a festival in Yorkton. I would favour the second one because in the long run, it will be more successful than a city event as you will be able to draw on visitors from Winnipeg, Brandon as well as Saskatoon and Regina.*

*\*\*\*For readers, these are pages from past issues – if you are thinking about a festival, ask and you too will receive.*



## Still more calls and letters

**Hello from the cold prairies! Anna Schaab, Yorkton, Sask,** reported:

The 2012 Saskatchewan garlic harvest was not without some stresses. The mild winter combined with a skimpy snow coverage made us wonder what the spring and summer would bring. The garlic emerged by the end of March, making it the earliest appearance we have ever seen, about 2 1/2 weeks early.

Another wet year this year combined with high water table from the two previous wet years meant that the soil was saturated nearly to the surface. The only positive thing was that we didn't need to water. In June the garlic started to look not as perky or robust, some yellowing of leaves and lifeless looking plants, so we sent it away for testing of nematodes, fusarium and psyttoplasm tests. People around the province observed similar characteristics.

With the snapping of scapes the end of June, test results for all garlic samples came out negative for all diseases. Harvest began the end of July, about 2 weeks early. As we cured the garlic and prepared for markets, we arrived at some garlic conclusions: approximately 50% of the crop were beautiful large heads, 25% were smaller but still nicely formed and about 25% were small (puny) and not filled out. The smaller heads that did not bulk up had beautiful large bulbils. This brought us to the conclusion that the energy went into making new seed, as the plant somehow knew it was in stress and had to re-produce somehow.

All in all, the 2012 crop was okay. We didn't have to build the ark as you suggested Paul! And of course - - when you farm in Saskatchewan - - next year will be better!

*Editor: I certainly hope that "next year" will be better for all you stubble-jumpers out there in the cold prairies!*

## Green Manures & Foliar Spray

**Liz Tobola of Aldersyde, Alberta, asked:**

Besides buckwheat what are you using for your green manure crops? Also, please confirm your foliar spray ingredients. I believe you told me fish emulsion and kelp.

*Editor: Hi Liz. Green Manures: I use mustard, either alone or in combination with buckwheat, 3-4 plantings the summer before the garlic goes in. I had hoped to use alfalfa as well but it doesn't coordinate with the mustard very well.*

*Foliar Spray: I've tried several fish and fish/kelp combinations and the best one seems to be "Drammatic K" from William Dam Seeds. NPK is 2-5-0.2, trace elements not listed. Its organic, OMRI listed, water soluble for sprayer use and costs \$30.95 per gal, less in larger quantity. I apply it as a foliar spray to the garlic (and other vegetables) every 2 weeks from April to mid June.*

## Solo Garlic

Regarding Chinese Rounds (page 19 Garlic News Issue 34), **Sylvie Maurice** wrote: This huge round is called Solo Garlic, really, a round of elephant garlic, that is, a leek.

**Field preparation and a rock picker. Joanne Venart of Gagetown Garlic** sent this report:

It was -25 C outside this morning when I got up and so I hastily made my first stop to stoke up our wood furnace! We have had plenty of snow here in the past 2 weeks, good for the garlic tucked in under its bed of straw and now a 3' blanket of snow. This fall we doubled our size and planted 12,000 of music and 1,000 of seven assorted varieties from Al Picketts. We are looking forward to the new varieties coming up! One is just gorgeous, with its snow-white cloves that have rose pink tinged bottoms! The big news from us is that Paul has got hold of a **rock picker** for our "new" ground. The year before last we ploughed up a 5-acre field, and you certainly don't want to hand pick a 5-acre field I can tell you that!

We limed it and put several loads of poo on it (a friend has a chicken broiler barn and we compost his manure in bulk). The field was planted to oats last summer and from it we used the straw to cover our garlic this past fall. This spring we will rock pick it, manure it and plant it again in oats - - with a 1/2 acre section set aside for our garlic for this fall planting. In the set aside section we hope to be able to put in two crops of buckwheat and a crop of oilseed radish before fall planting time. Wish us luck!

Meanwhile in the Maritimes here, it's good snowshoeing weather & the days are getting longer... or so my chickens are telling me, as one of them is insisting of being broody!

## Garlic spacing, yield and bulb size

**Daniel Hoffmann of The Cutting Veg,** asked: I was wondering your thoughts on the importance of spacing when planting one's garlic. In specific, based on your experience and experiments, how much do you think how close together one plants her/his cloves, impacts the size of the eventual bulbs? Of course, soil quality would be an important part of the equation too. Our method is to put four rows in a four-foot wide bed, planted a fist (or about 4 inches) apart within each row. Do you think if I went to wider spacing in future, I would notice a big increase in the size of the bulbs?

*Editor: If you are short on land, it becomes necessary to space more closely. If you have lots of land, with wider spacing you'll get larger bulbs but a lower yield per acre. John Zandstra, Ridgetown College, tried to quantify this in trials done on Music garlic for the GGAO in 2003. His trials were conventional, using generous quantities of nitrogen at planting time and chemical weed control. Closer spacing made for greater overall yield per acre but smaller bulbs. Wider spacing gave the largest bulbs but smaller overall yields.*

*For my own trials (I don't push for large bulb size but aim for a planting size at harvest, i.e., 2" bulbs) and use row spacing of 8-10" and in-row clove spacing of 4 1/2" for Porcelains & Siberians and 3 1/2" for the shorter types. This has worked well, for me. The short answer to your question is: Yes, you would get bigger bulbs with wider spacing but your yield per acre would decrease significantly. However, if you assigned, more land to keep 60,000 plants, your \$\$ value of the crop would go up considerably.*