



THE GARLIC NEWS

Connecting the Canadian Garlic Network!

Issue 33 Fall 2012

Twenty Years of Organic Garlic Growing Trials

Slow beginnings

In November 1992, I decided to learn to grow garlic properly after having tried for several years using the available garlic from California and trying to follow the wrong growing information provided by nurseries.

I planted three types:

- an Italian Artichoke that I later called "Endurance".
- a supermarket Rocambole that I named "Reliable".
- Elephant garlic from the Dominion store.

In the ensuing four years, I added cultivars gleaned from rural gardeners on back roads and others from the food chains. With these cultivars, I developed an organic trial methodology and conducted experiments on cultural approaches such as best spacing, planting depth, planting dates, scaping techniques, harvesting and curing methods, use of raised beds and the first of many "question-specific" trials. Organic methods were followed in all instances.

These early trials resulted in the publication and distribution of thousands of copies of my pamphlet, "*Any Home Gardener Can Grow Great Garlic*".

As well, I had commenced a series of talks on "*Growing Great Garlic*" to farm groups, Horticultural Societies, garden clubs and courses on garlic at Algonquin College based on experience from the trials.

Expanding the trials

In 1996, the trials were expanded to conduct *performance comparison* of as many garlic cultivars as possible so as to provide potential growers with a diversified choice. I called this 2nd phase the Small-Plot Garlic Variety Trials.

This was in part driven by the realization that there were not enough garlic growers in the vast area of Eastern Ontario farmland to put on my planned-for Garlic Festival in Perth (after over a year of search, I did locate seven small growers in the area between Peterborough and Gatineau in west Quebec, the festival was a great success, and the rest is history of the growth of the garlic industry).

In 1997, I added 22 more cultivars to the trials and each year, located and started 10-20 more until, by 2011, I had tested nearly 200 different types.

Each new cultivar is grown out for three successive growing seasons to enable it to adapt to local growing conditions. Following this trial, the ones considered most successful for market gardening are released to growers in small quantity to enable them to multiply a supply of planting stock. These, we refer to as "Main Crop".

The unsuitable ones are kept and grown annually only to maintain the genetic stock (some of these are made available as 'collector' garlic); and, the 'possibles' are continued in the trials to see if they would adapt in the longer term. Not all cultivars survive the relatively harsh climate in the region and merely disappear over the winter.

Adaptation, mutation & strange behaviour

Observation of the growing trials revealed a great deal about the character of garlic. First, most garlic types require a number of growing seasons in order to adapt. As well, southern-grown garlic tends to reduce in the number of cloves per bulb when grown in a more northerly region and even a move of a few hundred miles results in a dramatic metamorphosis.

Occasionally, a quirk of nature results in a mutation, creating a completely different plant from a single clove from a bulb of the mother garlic, while the other plants from the same bulb remain unchanged. It was in this way that our Porcelain, "Majestic", was born. It resulted from a clove of the Rocambole "Reliable".

Two completely different cultivars from same mother plant! As well, we have several softneck Artichokes that developed scapes on some plants and

not on the rest. The progeny from these continue to reproduce as hard necks while the mother plants retain their softneck character. Are these also mutations? After six or seven years of running true, one would believe so.

Improving the planting stock

A regular part of the trials is to annually grow some of the cultivars by the Bulbil Method. This long, slow and tedious process that takes several years is carried out in order to rejuvenate the garlic and produce as disease-free planting stock as is possible under current cultural methods.

Annual Performance Comparison

Annually, we publish a performance comparison of the main crop cultivars from the current harvest. These reports are intended to enable growers to make more informed choices on the best of the best cultivars from the trials.

After over 20 years of conducting these trials, we find that they continue as an excellent means of learning more about this fascinating plant, about which so little is known, despite being cultivated for thousands of years. We are pleased to share this information with you. Editor.

The Small-Plot Garlic Variety Trials at Beaver Pond Estates

BUY LOCAL, BUY ORGANIC, BUY CANADIAN

IT MAKES HEALTHY BUSINESS SENSE

The Garlic News
Connecting
The Canadian Garlic Network
Issue 33 Fall 2012

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Back issues to complete your set are available.
Advertising: see rates in Directory pages.

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 are enable growers to save copies in a standard 3-hole binder. Back issues are available both in single copy and 1-year bound sets.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The purpose of the *Garlic News* is to enable garlic lovers, 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.

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Deadline for Winter 2012-13 Issue is Dec 3.

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What does a garlic festival do for you?

The garlic festival is the best means of educating the public about garlic – what it is, the tastes and varieties, how to cook with it, how to grow it, how to use it, - and, you, the grower, are the teacher.

A knowledgeable customer will buy your garlic.

A garlic festival is the most effective market for you, the grower. In one day or weekend, you can sell more garlic than in weeks of work trying to sell it by other means.

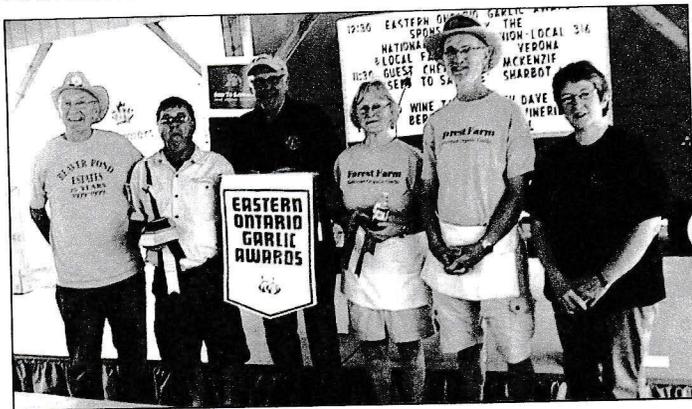
Thinking of starting a Garlic Festival next year?

We can help in several ways. Our notes on starting a garlic festival are based on the hard knocks of doing it, several times. Look at our experience and that of others so you don't repeat mistakes. You can't start too early. We also offer free publicity for your festival in its first year.

Contact the editor at garlic@rideau.net or call 613-273-5683.

Notes from our garlic patch

2012 Eastern Ontario Garlic Awards Winners



L to R: Paul Pospisil, Garlic Awards Director; Kevin Craigen, 2012 Reserve Champion; John McDougall, Verona Lion's Garlic Festival Chair; Marion Watkins & David Hahn, Forest Farm, 2012 Garlic Champions; Dianne Dowling, NFU and prize donor.

Champion Garlic Growers 2012

Forest Farm, Godfrey, Ontario (David Hahn & Marion Watkins)

Reserve Champion Garlic Grower 2012

Kevin Craigen, Napanee, Ontario

Runners up, tied for 3rd place standing

Dave Cornell, Ashton Station, Ontario

Wayne Davey, New Liskeard, Ontario

The Awards were held at the 6th Annual Verona Lions Garlic Festival, Verona, Ontario, on September 1, 2012. Judging of exhibits was done by **Wilma Kenny**, OHA judge.

Paul Pospisil, founder of the Garlic Awards, donated the ribbons and certificates and presented the Woodman and Woodman 2 trophies to the Champion and Reserve Champion. **Dianne Dowling**, President of Local 316 of the National Farmers Union (NFU) was on hand to present the \$100.00 prize to the Champions, David Hahn & Marion Watkins. Dianne also made the presentation of the \$50.00 prize on behalf of **Kim Perry** of Local Family Farms to the Reserve Champion.

Started in 1997 at the 1st garlic festival held in Perth, Ontario, the Eastern Ontario Garlic Awards are the official competition for the best garlic produced in the region. The competition is open to all exhibitors, both home gardeners and commercial growers.

The aim of the competition is to encourage growers to strive for excellence in the quality of garlic grown in the Eastern Ontario region as well as recognizing such excellence by public awards. The competition is conducted in the same impartial manner as all farm foods exhibited at country fairs.

Exhibitors in past years have learned the meaning of "quality" from the scores assigned by the judge on their garlic entries. In this way, the Garlic Awards have contributed to raising the bar on the quality of garlic grown in the Eastern Ontario region, giving it the excellent reputation that it justly deserves.

The Verona Lions will host the 2013 competition again at their festival to be held on Saturday September 7, 2013. Prepare now!

Festival Organizers Note: Planning a garlic competition? Contact me and I will send you the complete competition package including the Horticultural Judging Standard for garlic. Editor.

Garlic News starts its 9th year. Thank you!

This is the start of the 9th year for the Garlic News. Publication is possible because our members write articles, send pictures, and share garlic experiences. A special "thank you" to our garlic friends who sent extra \$ with your renewal to help offset the higher costs and those who renewed at the new rate. Mary Lou and I will keep it going as long as you want it and our health permits. The Garlic News is alive and well!

Narrow-minded, maybe even bull-headed

I was accused of being narrow-minded and opinionated. What a wonderful compliment! Could you just imagine living in a world where everyone was so politically correct that they wouldn't even state what they believed? Horrors!

Worst drought in years but a great garlic crop

The garlic emerged early, two weeks early, in mid March. Then came a hard frost. For the first time in my experience, some of the plants, especially the Turbans and Asiatics, were touched by the frost, and their leaves turned silver. Wonder of wonders. Several weeks later, they completely recovered with no sign of permanent damage.

Then came the drought. No April showers. No thunderstorms in May and June. Our pond dried up so we couldn't water the garden. Using our deep well was out of the question. So, the garden suffered.

The leek moth, that had also emerged early, seemed to die off as the season progressed. Not sure if it was our diligence in locating and destroying those first couple of dozen or so that hatched in the first generation, or, the presence of higher than normal numbers of earwigs in the garlic patch, or the effects of the weather. When scaping time came around, there were very few to be found, and only single numbers in the pheromone traps.

A premature harvest caught us by surprise. We started the softnecks on June 28 and the last of the hardnecks were pulled on July 15, when we would normally be just getting in the swing of things.

What a year! But, it's the crop that counts. Softnecks thrived on the hot, dry weather. The Turbans provided us with lots of Super Colossal bulbs. Argentine #4 came out clearly as the garlic of the year.

Artichokes were much bigger than normal, the Porcelains were well above average, Purple Stripes were just so-so, but the big disappointment was in the Rocamboles. Many of the old favourites like French, Russian Red, German White and Hungarian were total crop failures. They didn't size up but also experienced a strange phenomenon; bulb wrappers below ground were broken down even though the leaves above were still green. Strange!

Overall, despite the loss of the Rocamboles, the garlic crop was one of the best in 20 years.

Perhaps garlic thrives on hot, dry weather!

A clove here and there

Blessed Garlic



Sue Toll of Mission, BC, sent this striking photo

Leek Moth Update 1 August 2012

The OMAFRA information update noted that approval for registration of Entrust 80W, the organic version of spinosad for suppression of the leek moth on garlic on garlic, was still being awaited. Good things take longer, one supposes.

Another gift from the government to the chosen few?

The SPUD Unit planted over 12,000 virus-tested, nematode-free garlic plantlets in the screenhouse in New Liskeard in May and will have over 12,000 "clean seed" single-clove bulbs of Music garlic available this fall. This clean seed will be distributed first to paid up members of the GGAO at a cost of \$0.80 per bulb in lots of 100 on a first-come basis. The largest seed will go to the first orders.

Trivia: Five facts about garlic

- 1) It has been used for culinary and medicinal purposes for more than 6,000 years.
- 2) China is the biggest grower of garlic, producing more than 13 billion tons in 2010. The U.S. produced nearly 170,000 tons. Yet, Gilroy, California calls itself the "garlic capital of the world."
- 3) Garlic causes bad breath and smelly sweat because allyl methyl sulfide is absorbed into the blood. It travels from there to the lungs and then to the mouth. Rubbing it on the soles of your feet can cause bad breath, too. Studies have shown sipping milk while eating garlic can reduce the stink.
- 4) In mythology, it is said that garlic sprung from where Satan placed his left foot while being driven from paradise. Onion grew where his right foot was placed.
- 5) The popular elephant garlic is actually not a garlic. It is a leek.

"Dogs love their friends and bite their enemies, quite unlike people, who are incapable of pure love and always have to mix love and hate in their objective relations." -- Sigmund Freud

Spotted on the web

The Internet is the source of both good information and useless trivia. Here are a few items we selected for your entertainment:

Spain: cheapest garlic in the world

According to the president of Mesa Nacional del Ajo, Julio Bacete, the current low prices of Spanish garlic are even less than the Chinese price which is 2 Euro, while Spanish garlic costs 1.80 Euro. He cannot explain why at the moment they sell the cheapest garlic in the world.

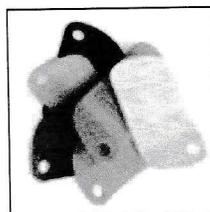
Garlic May Prevent the Common Cold

The U.S. *National Library of Medicine* released a review in March 2012 of all available clinical trials involving garlic's effectiveness for the common cold. **Garlic has been scientifically proven to possess anti-microbial properties** Garlic kills bacteria, viruses, protozoa, and fungus.

Organic News from the EU

Want to keep abreast of garlic news from Europe? A free on-line organic magazine is published in Slovakia in English and available at: www.organicnews.eu

More useless gadgets



The Garlic Card, a little plastic gadget with claims that you can "grate garlic without destroying your fingers". Costs only \$7.99. And look at the choice of colours! Worth every penny you waste on it.

Gilroy attendance Down 9,000 From Last Year

The 34th annual Gilroy Garlic Festival drew approximately 100,204 people over the course of the three-day event, down from last year's attendance of 109,067.

\$18,000 embezzled from Gilroy Garlic Festival

It was reported to police that more than \$18,000 was stolen from a festival cash drawer during the weekend of the festival – from someone behind the ticket counter.

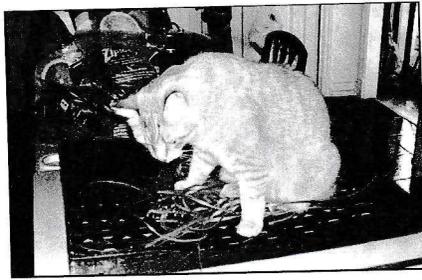
Garlic industry getting crushed

Australian garlic growers are hoping consumers will pay more for locally grown garlic. The industry collapsed in the early 1990s with cheap Chinese imports. From its peak of 700 growers, there are only 30 now.

EU sniffing around in garlic bill battle

The European Commission announced it will take Britain to court over an unpaid garlic bill for £15 million. It claimed HM Revenue and Customs failed to collect the correct tariffs on tons of garlic from China – money that should have gone into EU coffers.

Scaping Cat



Frances Legault's Scaping Cat

Strange Behaviour from Planting Bulbils

Marlene Cross asked: I have a question about the bulbil records we are keeping - we have quite a few cases where the first-year bulbil did not make a scape, but is obviously several cloves. Didn't know that could happen! Do you want those results recorded too?

Editor: That's a strange behaviour. Generally, when a hard neck bulbil produces a scape, it indicates a divided bulb below ground. No scape indicates a round. If you have behaviour that differs from that norm, please record it.

Should I dig up the bulbils?

Annelies Davis of Hamilton, Ontario, asked: My Majestic bulbils from last year grew looking like blades of grass up until I had harvested the creoles then the tops just died away. I did not dig up the ground to see if there are rounds since they are in pots and I did not want to disturb them. Is this normal growth for the first year of this bulbil variety or should I dig them up to see if the whole plant died? It has been a very dry year here in Hamilton and I did keep them watered so they would not dry out and shrivel up.

Editor: Hi Annelies. I always harvest mine and replant. That's the only sure way to know what's happened. If you leave them, they will grow if they survived but obviously wont if they died. I've attached bulbil-growing instruction for more information.

Harvesting the planted bulbils

Deborah Rompen asked; I was reading up on how to grow garlic from bulbils and remember that I wouldn't get usable garlic until the second year at the earliest. Someone gave some to me, so...in the garden they went last October. Regrettably I don't know what type they are. I planted six bulbils and have six healthy plants. I plan to harvest around the end of June and hopefully will have some nice "planters" (rounds?) ready for fall. I presume when harvesting the "rounds" - I do the same as if I were going to eat them... lift, dry, crack and re-plant around October?

Editor: Yes, you are correct about harvesting them and replanting. Depending on the cultivar, it can take anywhere between 2 to 5 years to develop a full size bulb by this method. See the attached article that I wrote for COG. I've attached a bulbil planting instruction to assist you.

Bug Juice from scapes?

Kim Hay of Yarker, Ontario asked: If I were to take the tops of the scapes, and any of that hard ends, boil, or first blend them up, could I boil them up to make a garlic bug juice that might work on potato bugs, or any other bug (cucumber beetle, lily beetle etc)? Would this work?

*Editor: Yes, you can use any part of the garlic plant for preparing an organic spray. **But boiling? Never!** It destroys the powerful action of the garlic.*

Here's a simple recipe from Wiki (just use the scapes in place of the cloves). Paul

Garlic spray

Blend 100 grams of grated and crushed garlic cloves, 0.5 litres of water and 10 grams of soap. Use potash based soft soap that is used for washing dishes and not the modern washing powders that contain caustic soda that will harm plants. Mix well. Strain the mixture through a fine cloth. Dilute the solution in 5 litres of water.

How to use: Mix the solution well before applying to the affected plants. Use as a spray or sprinkle using twigs or grass tied together to form a whisk. For best effect, use immediately. Garlic is effective against a wide range of diseases and insects at different stages in their life cycle (egg, larvae, adult). This includes ants, aphids, army worms, caterpillars, Colorado beetle, diamondback moth, pulse beetle, whitefly, wireworm, false codling moth, imported cabbage worm, khapra beetle, mites, moles, Mexican bean beetle, peach borers and termites as well as fungi and bacteria.

Pyrethrum to kill the Bulb & Stem Nematode?

Frank Finneran of Pawtucket, RI, asked: What do you think of using a 2 percent solution of Pyrethrum as a wash when the garlic is picked and then as a pre soak before planting? I think I am going to try the pre soak on this year's garlic at planting time. I don't think it will do any harm to the garlic. Let me know what you think.

Editor: Haven't heard of it tried before but it just might do the trick. It's deadly on insects, safe for humans and animals so it's worth a try. For treating the cloves, wet them in water overnight first to activate any nematodes, then, give them a couple of hours or in the pyrethrum solution. Worth a try and I don't think you can do any harm.

Editor, again: I posed the question to Michael Celetti, Plant Pathologist at OMAFRA and received this reply:

"I do not think pyrethroids have any activity on nematodes. It would be illegal to put an unregistered pesticide such as a pyrethroid on garlic so I would caution and discourage anyone from trying. As I mention many times in my presentations, hot water treatment will work but it is very tricky. The temperatures must be exact. Any deviation will either result in less control or cooked garlic. That is why I am not keen on recommending it".

Gardening requires a lot of water, most of it in the form of perspiration.

(Letters continued on page 15)

The Garlic News Issue 33 Fall 2012



Tales of the Stinking Rose from the Wild Rose Country

In pursuit of identifying OMA's Gourmet Garlic -
- and, learning some ins and outs.

By: Liz Tobola

On my garlic journey, I first created family vacations surrounding garlic festivals.

A trip to BC and Washington started off with the Caribou festival in 100 Mile House, BC. My son took second place in the garlic clove eating contest (6 large cloves) and proceeded to sweeten our space for the next week with his winnings.

Holy moly! It's quite incredible and I am not joking as to the stench a body can do when in the close encounters of a confined space after over abundance of such a fine product. After literally stinking up my friends 3 level condo the first night (Ann, I am still so sorry), we spent the next few nights camping and swimming to purify our space!

We continued our trip west to Vancouver Island visiting family and friends. Then proceed south and back east through Washington to the Tonasket Garlic Festival. There were many types of garlic at both festivals...but I could find none that at were as big and beautiful as my OMA's!

The next year, 2007, we journeyed to Gilroy, California for the biggest festival in the world. What an event! There were many things to see and do, some totally irrelevant to garlic. But hey, we were in California.

The best part...I bought a garlic hat, plunked it on my head and the kids scattered. Now I was free to do whatever I wanted with no consideration for them. I learned to braid garlic...to this day I have not braided another. Viewing the information centre, I spoke briefly with an attendant. I was a little taken aback when he told me I couldn't grow garlic way up North.

"Pardon me sir, I cannot grow California, Chinese, or Philippine garlic as well, but in turn they cannot grow REAL garlic as well as we can way up North! "

I left it at that.

2008 and 2009 I ventured on another path.

Sonia and Henry of Boundary Garlic Farms accepted free labour in exchange for knowledge. The first year I helped with harvest. Wow, what a beautiful place they have and so many types of garlic. Henry taught me how to hang garlic...oh there is a way cool way to do this; you can get 25 (give or take) on a string! And Sonia taught me so many things about the organic ways.

The following year I helped cleaning up the garlic for sale. I learned that I am much too picky on that aspect. But, then again, I cater to chefs (and now to retail as well) and there are different considerations.

I do need one more tour of duty to Boundary Garlic Farms for planting.

Unfortunately it usually coincides with my harvest...but perhaps this year may work out...or next.

Any questions please feel free to contact me, **Liz Tobola**, direct at OMAsGarlic@platinum.ca

And, continuing the "pursuit" to the east – a visit to Beaver Pond Estates

By: the editor

I was enthralled when Liz said they would drop in for a visit during their eastern trip to a family wedding in Hamilton, only 6 hours away! They arrived, Liz, hubby and two of the nicest teenagers that I've met in a long time. On August 13, we spent the day exchanging garlic-growing experiences. The time flew by so quickly that we even failed to take pictures! However, I will leave it to Liz to talk about the visit in a future Chapter on the Pursuit of the identity of OMA's Gourmet Garlic.

Liz left me with a gift of a lovely garlic mill that she bought at Montana Gourmet Garlic during the eastbound leg of their journey. I have since been in contact with Christin Rzasa, co-owner of Montana Gourmet, to express my appreciation of a fine product that promotes garlic so well.

A picture of the garlic mill appears below. Thank you, Liz, not only for the lovely gift, but most of all, for the opportunity to meet you and your family.

Montana Gourmet Garlic

As a garlic aficionado, it's a pleasure to find a product that reflects the quality of this gourmet vegetable. This garlic mill from Montana Gourmet Garlic does just that.



Find them on the Internet at www.montanagourmetgarlic.com

Garlic Pick of the Year: Argentine #4, a Turban

We picked Argentine #4 as the most successful cultivar that harvested from the Small-Plot Garlic Variety trials this crop year. Although other cultivars, even another Turban, Luciano's Sicilian, may have produced larger bulbs, Argentine #4 had demonstrated, from a first year failure, not only adaptability to northern conditions, but performed outstandingly well in drought conditions.



We first planted it in fall 2005. The following year's harvest result was so poor that we considered discarding it, but keeping with our 3-year rule, we continued replanting it. In 2008, the crop yielded

one Colossal, one Super Jumbo, 3 Extra Jumbo and 4 Jumbo bulbs from the nine cloves planted. It had adapted!

We increased the quantity both by the bulbil technique and clove planting and offered the first ones to growers in 2009.

It is weak bolting. That is to say, some plants have scapes while others remain as soft necks. The bulbil capsules vary in size and in the number of bulbils per capsule. Bulbil trials have not



been repeated often enough to say definitively how long it will take to grow a full-size bulb.

Argentine #4 often emerges before freeze up after planting but doesn't appear to be adversely affected by autumn frosts or over wintering. It shows characteristics typical of the Turban Group; early harvest, making it a great choice for market sales and pickling; strange behaviours such as the weak stem bending at soil level and the plant falling over as harvest approaches; sudden maturity (counting leaves to determine harvest doesn't quite work. Leaving it even a day too long results in bulbs wrappers broken down, even though there may be 5 or 6 green leaves remaining); short storage life; and, bright bulb wrappers.

It has tendency to produce large rounds, rather than divided bulbs on a small percentage of plants. Rounds, range in size from Small to Large Tube, weigh up to 30 grams, make excellent planting stock, produce huge bulbs the following year. From the Fall 2011 planting, the rounds produced bulbs with over 1/2 being in the size range Extra Jumbo to Super Colossal and an average weight of 66.4 grams. That



compares with an average weight of 44.2 grams for the Argentine #4 harvest overall.

Horticultural Group: Turban

"This group is still mostly a mystery", stated **Ron Engeland** in the 1995 supplement to the book, "Growing Great Garlic." "Turban garlics usually attain good size even when plants appear smallish." Engeland identified them as a genetic soft neck Artichoke Variety, calling them a "Turban Artichoke". Later research placed the Turbans in a distinctly separate Horticultural Group simply named "Turban".

Ted Jordan Meredith, in his "Complete Book of Garlic" said that the Turbans have been underrepresented in genetic studies and that this group is in need of further genetic study.

I have collected a number of Turbans for growing in our Small-Plot Garlic Variety Trials. Some came to me by happenstance, such as Luciano's Sicilian, a cultivar that Luciano Pradal brought back from a visit to Sicily. Others have been found by growing "supermarket" garlic, first in an isolated pot to check for disease, and then moved to the trial plots to compare performance. Thus, I came by "Argentine #4", the fourth in a series of supermarket garlic from Argentina that I tested. Another, "Chinook" was the result of George Ward's experiment with growing Chinese supermarket garlic. He took the bulbils from some of the plants, planted them, and then declared that he'd created a new variety (note that some Chinese garlics are Turbans). TT5V was a weakly bolting soft neck sport that Gilles Nadon of Richard's landing had occur from his Porcelain, TT5. Even Ted Maczka's favourite Porcelain F3 has produced a Turban-like sport or mutant.

Others, such as Xian and Red Janice came from other growers in Canada. All in all, they are a fascinating group.

The Turbans thrive in our northern climate. Early emergence, early harvest, huge, colourful bulbs, a weakly bolting habit, limited storage life, and curious behaviour characterize them.

The bolting version of the Turbans produces a turban-shaped bulbil capsule, readily identifying them.

Their behaviour is unlike most other types and they are full of surprises! They produce scapes on about 1/2 the plants, the remainder retaining a soft neck behaviour. Removing scapes is optional as leaving the scape does not appear to result in a smaller harvest.

As harvest approaches, the weak stems bend at ground level and the plants fall over. When the first indications of leaf dieback appear, you must harvest them right away as the Turbans are unforgiving. Even a day too late and the bulbs have exposed cloves. A small portion of the plants, usually around 5-10 %, produces huge rounds rather than divided bulbs. Planting these rounds results in colossal-sized bulbs the following year.

This year we experienced drought conditions and were unable to irrigate. The Turbans produced the best harvest of any Horticultural Group. Does this mean they are drought-resistant? Only further growing experience with these strange garlics will answer that question.

If you haven't tried growing a Turban cultivar, then you're missing out on garlic with a unique behaviour.

Garlic Festival News

Perth and Carp Festivals – the warfare continues

Reports on these two warring groups once again gave a mix of opinions as the Perth and Carp garlic festivals continued their annual battle for the same customers on the same weekend, this year on August 11-12. Is this to be like the War of the Roses, continuing on for 30 years?

As one grower succinctly put it, *“we’re destroying our local market, one customer at a time.”*

The Perth Courier reported on the Perth event: “About 75 per cent of the garlic festival vendors are from western Ontario. They have had a bumper crop of garlic this year in western Ontario because they have some of the best weather and ideal soil conditions.”

Jeff Greenberg, a first-time local vendor at the Perth event, was optimistic about selling at Perth, believing that the small number of local growers could work together by jointly promoting their local product in order to take back the market from the outsiders who have dominated sales with their cheaper prices for many years.

David Hahn, Eastern Ontario Champion garlic grower, and a regular at the Perth event, reported that sales were good but lower and he didn’t sell out as in previous years.

Ted Maczka, the well-known **Fish Lake Garlic Man**, who again set up his information booth at Perth, had a less optimistic view after spending two days on his feet. He said, “there were only about 2000 people, not very big, people don’t have the money and didn’t spend so much. He ventured from his stall to talk with Mark Wales, president of the western Ontario based GGAO.

The Carp event, as usual did better than Perth but even there, sales appeared to be down over previous years. **Dave Cornell of Ashton**, a veteran grower at the Carp Farmers Market Garlic Festival, said his sales were down by about \$2000.00 this year, blaming his losses on vendor price cutting, under priced braids and dirty garlic just pulled from the ground and hung up for sale.

Garlic is Great Festival, Newmarket, Ontario

Deanna Smith, festival coordinator, wrote. “Thanks, Paul, it was another “Great” year for your event. We greatly appreciate you helping to promote the event and other garlic information”.

Annual Canadian Garlic Festival

Sandra Sharko, president of the **Ukrainian Seniors Centre** of Sudbury and one of the original founders of the Sudbury event, reported to the Sudbury Star: “Going back 21 years ago, initially it was just for seniors to do something. We all like garlic. Slavic people do enjoy garlic

in their foods. So we thought, OK, it was a sort of gimmick. At first, the festival wasn't a festival at all. It was a potluck. It grew into what you see today. It just snowballed. Around 3,000 people usually make it to the festival.

The 5th Annual HCGGA Garlic Fest was Hot Stuff!

(See report on the HCGGA page in this issue, page 9)

The 6th Annual Verona Lions Garlic Festival continued with its steady annual growth, this year, expanding to 60 vendors and attracting between 4000 and 4500 visitors. The feature stage presentation was sausage making by Mike McKenzie from Seed to Sausage. Made with fresh garlic, when BBQ'd, the sausage was like nothing you can buy in the supermarket! As crowds continued to look, shop and learn about garlic in this one-day event, the Lion’s Club organizers were ecstatic, selling out on their famous McLion breakfast sandwiches and having to disappoint some lunch hour customers when the huge hip of garlicky beef was quickly consumed.

John McDougall, Chair of the Festival 2012 Committee, wrote: “Thank you so much again for your wonderful support for our Verona Lions Garlic Festival. We would never have been able to manage to build and develop over the years without your guidance and advice both for the Festival operation and its promotion. Our community is so blessed to have your expertise and willingness to share your knowledge and enormous experience.

The Eastern Ontario Garlic Awards sets the bar for quality garlic and gives the community a sense of what superb garlic is grown right here in our own communities.

We had a wonderful crowd this year. Much of our success is your ability to contact and attract garlic growers through The Garlic News. Without the farmers, our Festival would have little value.

Thanks again, from an appreciative Lions Club and Garlic Festival Committee. Yours most sincerely, John.

2012 Festivals yet to come

Andrew Garlic Festival, Sat. October 13, 2012
Andrew Community Centre, Andrew, Alberta
Ph. Carri Hrehorets, 780-699-4880
Website: <http://www.andrewagsociety.com>

2nd Annual Toronto Garlic Festival, October 14-15, 2012
Evergreen Brick Works, Toronto, Ontario
Contact: Peter McClusky, Ph. 416-888-7829
Website: TorontoGarlicFestival.ca *(see ad on page 10)*.

4th Annual Stinking Rose Garlic Festival, Sat. Oct 27
Watershed Farm, Mahone Bay, NS
Ph. Camelia Frieberg, (902) 624-1979
Website: www.watershedfarm.org/

Editors note: by the time this issue goes to press, several early September Garlic Festivals will have taken place as well. We hope to get some reports on these for the next issue.

Just South of Algonquin Park

Whether you are growing garlic, a garlic group or yourself, you need three things:

1. A healthy foundation (soil),
2. A strong healthy seed or desire
3. A plan to manage all variables of what is required to develop a well formed mature quality product.

A garlic bulbil, clove or bulb have the same purpose, to unfold, develop, grow, adapt, change, mature and be ready to start the next season. The process is the same for a garlic group or individual. Within these processes, certain ingredients are necessary for good, strong, continuous healthy growth.

When we try to short cut any part of the process, we experience the consequences of incomplete knowledge and necessary developmental steps; this is known as **“growing pains”**.

We continue to experience these **pains of growth**, until we learn and apply what is needed for the next step or stage of development for the garlic, the group or oneself.

When we find ourselves frustrated and out of balance, it is time to return our focus to the basics. In our rush to grow, we forget to observe and obey the natural rules of growth for our garlic, our group or oneself.

One very important consequence in our rush to grow, is our willingness to push for and expect quality without giving the needed ingredients and work required for a truly quality product – whether our garlic – garlic group or oneself. In order to truly have the best, we have to give the best; in thought, word, deed or action.

So the question you need to ask yourself when you are experiencing **“growing pains”** is this, “if I am truly worth the best...which step in my quality control for optimum growth have I not observed and remedied?” Whether in growing my garlic, my group or myself...



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“SNAP IT”



1st Annual Scaping Workshop

Our “It’s a Snap” first ever scaping workshop was a small, but lively gathering, very interactive. First stop was the garlic patch and a “snap it” demo and participants were encouraged to snap their own scape. Multiple questions asked about all aspects of garlic and growing. Trekked back to the barn for scape preparation and taste test for 3 different recipes. Scapes for sale, gift basket raffle, info exchange and book sales rounded out the afternoon.

5th Annual Garlic Fest was “hot stuff”

- The hot garlic sales were Russian Red and Mennonite
- Sales this year were almost a 50/50 split between eating garlic and planting garlic
- Many questions about the different heats of garlic
- HCGGA was interviewed at the fest for its part in our local foods movement, hopefully our clip will make it into the mini-documentary being created by Harvest Haliburton
- Suggestions for next years’ fest – our customers are becoming more garlic savvy and are looking for informative, interactive & entertaining garlic education - garlic braiding, bulbil propagation, taste testing, which garlic is best for what, physical examples of good soil and soil management tips, vendors or volunteers cooking with garlic, to name a few

Around the same numbers 500-600 and with cooperative efforts we were able to secure more parking close enough but away from the very busy intersection that brings it all together.

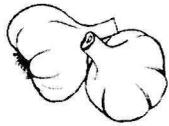
Another successful fest!

Submitted by Debbie Barnhart (aka Garlicgirl of the HCGGA)

To contact the Haliburton County Garlic Growers Association, Visit website: www.haliburtongarlic.ca or phone Sheila Robb, president, 705-489-4201, Email robbsheila@gmail.com

THE GARLIC DIRECTORY

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



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Plant Bulbils in the Spring!



The Garlic News 2012-13 Advertising Rates

Business Card Ad: \$50.00 for 1 year of 4 Issues

Box Ad: \$50.00 per column inch or 5 lines, \$50.00 for 1 year

Directory listing, For Sale or Wanted: 5 lines \$30.00 per year

¼ Page ad: \$30.00 per issue, \$100.00 per year of 4 Issues

Full Page Ad or flyer insert: \$100.00 per Issue, \$175.00 for 2 Issues,
\$300.00 for 1 year of 4 Issues.

Contact the editor for other rates. garlic@rideau.net

MORE GARLIC DIRECTORY

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.

Garlic & Saver Seeds for Sale: Grown sustainably, all natural, environmentally responsibly. Email or write for listing & prices. Denise O'Reilly, Hill & Dale Farm & A'Bunadh Seeds, Box 127, Cherhill, AB. Ph. 780-785-2622. Email: smileyo@xplomet.ca. Business card facing page.

Certified Organic Garlic from the 2012 Eastern Ontario Garlic Champions: Russian Red, French Rocamboles, Georgia Fire, Georgia Crystal, German Red, F4 Italian Red. Certified organic by Pro-Cert Canada. David & Miguel Hahn, Forest Farm, Godfrey, ON. Ph. 613-273-5545. Email dhahn@rideau.net. Website, <http://forestfarm.wordpress.com>.

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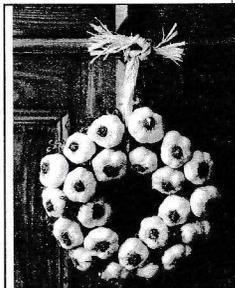
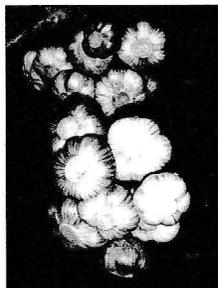
Present your organic garlic in style in an organic cotton garlic bag. Contact Liz Murphy at Enviro-Threads, 30 Simcoe St. S., Lindsay, ON, K9V 2G4, 705-328-2644. See article in Garlic News Issue #10. Email enviro-threads@sympatico.ca.

Natural & Organically Grown Music, smaller quantities of others, will ship. Simon de Boer, Langside Farms, Teeswater, ON. Ph. 519-357-1919. Email sbdeboer@hurontel.on.ca.

Certified Naturally Grown garlic for sale. Check our website, website: www.bluemarshfarm.ca for varieties. Blue Marsh Farm, NS. Ph. 902-945-2729. Email: barbara@bluemarshfarm.ca

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"As you sow, so shall you reap"

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Garlic for Sale: from Frenchy's Acres of Lafontaine ON. Featuring 14 varieties. Shipping within Canada. Chemical free. Jerome & Cora Charlebois. Ph: 705-533-4927. Email: frenchygarlic@gmail.com

Salt Spring Seeds on Salt Spring Island carry a great line of heirloom & heritage seeds including garlic. Contact Dan Jason at 250-537-5269, or email dan@saltspringseeds.com. Website: www.saltspringseeds.com

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Fall and Spring planting garlic seed and bulbils available. Alberta Grown Naturally. Home of OMA's Gourmet Garlic! Others; Purple Glazer, Northern Quebec, Spanish Roja, Georgian Fire and more! Also OMAs Garlic Powder. Email OMAsGarlic@platinum.ca (preferred), call or write: Liz Tobola: 403-601-2642, Box 100, Aldersyde AB T0L 0A0.

Railside Gardens Garlic: Music garlic and garlic products. Check our website or call. Laura & Tyler Duchek, 4 miles north & 1/2 mile east of Esterhazy, SK. Ph.306-745-3515. Email: lt@sasktel.net Website: www.railsidegarlic.com . See business card on facing page.

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Thoughts to ponder in the garden: A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows.

BUY LOCAL, BUY ORGANIC, BUY CANADIAN IT MAKES HEALTHY BUSINESS SENSE

The best garlic recipes and ideas

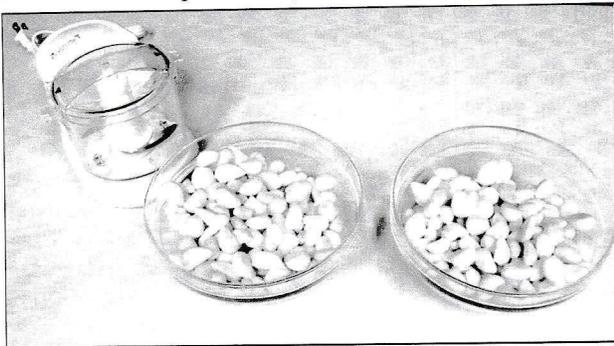
Trying to make garlic powder

*From the Garlic Guru's
kitchen experiments*

Having made some of the best garlic sea salt this side of the Dead Sea, I took up the challenge of making (no, that's trying to make) a healthy garlic powder. Well, easier said than done.

**WHEN IN
DOUBT
ADD MORE
GARLIC**

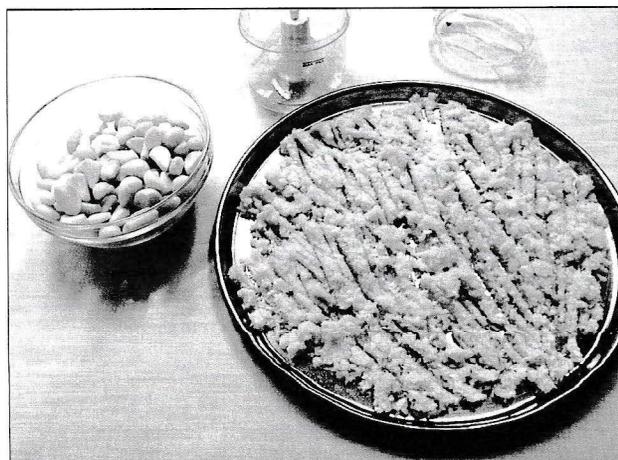
Problem #1. Peeling enough garlic. It takes a lot of garlic to make a little bit of garlic powder. After searching the web for a kitchen-sized garlic peeler, I discovered that there was nothing between the large, commercial peelers that handle a bushel or so of garlic at a time and the little rubber tubes that peel one clove at a time. I even tried the double wok shaking system found on U-Tube only to discover that it was as much of a sham as anything else found on these anti-social networking sites. So, I turned to my long-suffering bride and asked her to peel garlic! Wow! Ever feel like a skunk at a garden party? Well, once I had a couple of pounds of peeled garlic, it was time to slice or chop it for drying.



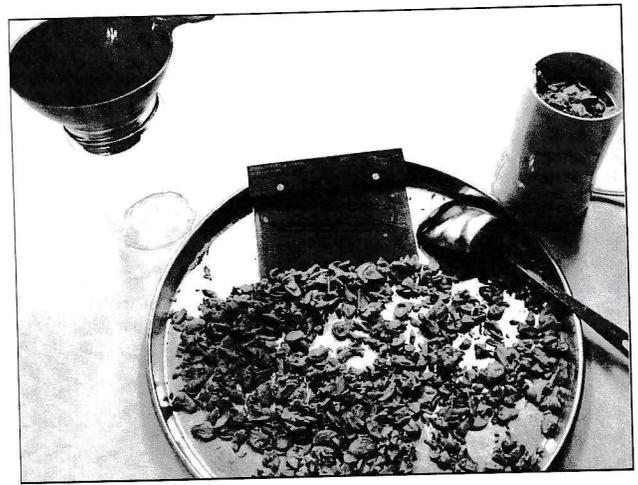
This is slightly less than 2 lbs, or the equivalent of 28 Jumbo size garlic bulbs.

Problem #2: Chop or slice? I decided to chop 1/2 in a food processor and slice the other half, using the vegetable-slicing gadget in the processor.

Then, I spread them on pizza pans for the drying operation.



Chopped garlic powder, spread and separated, ready to dry.

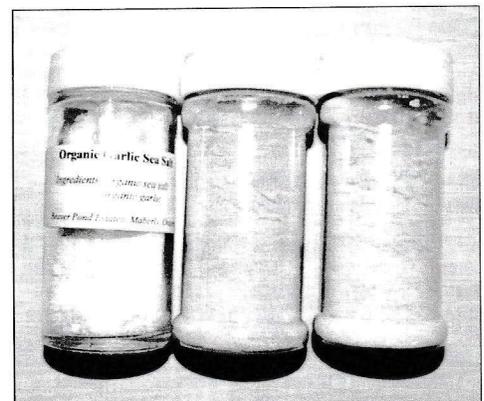


After 8 hours of drying at low temperature, the dried garlic slices are ready to grind into a powder. The chopped tray had a golden honey colour and the sliced tray was darker, almost a light brown.

I had purchased a new coffee grinder just to be sure of having one with sharp blades. Well done, Paul! It worked.



Each grinding of garlic powder was run through a sieve to remove large pieces. The little coffee grinder worked wonders. The chopped and sliced were almost the same.



The final product was bottled in little 2-ounce shakers.

Now, Problem #3: How do you sell this little bottle of garlic powder for \$10.00 when it cost \$75.00 to make?

More garlic recipes and ideas

Tomatoes, Tomatoes, Tomatoes!

With a hot, dry summer, the tomato yields from the garden have been overwhelming. Even with the losses due to blossom-end rot and the hungry, marauding crows, we've had so many that I've been trying them every way possible, and, giving bushels away to unsuspecting neighbours! The real beauty is that tomatoes and garlic are natural partners!

Freezing tomatoes

We no longer go through the trouble of blanching and peeling the tomatoes before freezing. The skins and seeds are both good. Very simply, wash the tomatoes, cut off any bad spots and pulse them in a food processor to the consistency you want. Place in saucepan, add a dash of garlic salt, and boil down to remove excess liquid. Cool, place in freezer containers of serving or recipe size, label with date and freeze.

They are handy to use until your next year's crop arrives.

Dried tomatoes

It's useful to have a small supply of dried tomatoes on hand for recipes calling for them and they are easy to make yourself. Select ripe, blemish-free tomatoes, the Roma paste kind preferred. Wash and slice into 1/4" thick slices. Lightly oil drying racks to prevent sticking, spread tomato slices in single layer, sprinkle with garlic powder or garlic salt, assemble racks in dehydrator and dry them (you can also dry them in the oven at low heat, spread on pizza pans). Rotate the racks so that all come to the same dryness. It will take about 6-8 hours. When crackling dry, remove and store in airtight jars.

If you prefer chewy ones, remove from dryer earlier but store these frozen or refrigerated.

Tomato Dill Soup

There are virtually hundreds of tomato soup recipes but I like the ones that use dill and garlic to give it some tang. Here's one to try.

Ingredients:

2 tbsp butter
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 med onion, chopped
10 ripe tomatoes, chopped
1/2 tsp dried dill weed (fresh is better if you have it)
salt & pepper to taste
2 cups chicken broth

Method:

Melt butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring until tender. Stir in the tomatoes and condensed chicken broth, and season with dill weed, salt & pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 45 minutes. Add garlic about 15 minutes before its ready.

Remove from heat and cool a bit. Use a food processor or blender to puree the soup in small batches until smooth. Reheat and serve immediately.

**WHEN IN
DOUBT
ADD MORE
GARLIC**

If you made too much, refrigerate and the next day, add some cooked macaroni, heat, and you have, ----

--- Tomato & Macaroni Soup

And, if you still have too much, the next day, add some chunks of cooked chicken, and you have, ----

----- Chicken & Macaroni Tomato Soup

No sense eating leftovers if you can have a different recipe every day!!

No Meat Sauce Spaghetti

From: Frances Legault

Ingredients:

1 tbsp olive oil
8 oz. uncooked spaghetti, broken into 1 inch pieces
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 1/2 cups chicken broth
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes, or to taste
salt to taste
2 tbsp freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese,
1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme

Method:

Heat oil in a saucepan over med. heat. Add spaghetti and toast it, stirring constantly, until golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir garlic into spaghetti pieces and cook for 30 seconds. Pour in 1/2 cup broth and increase heat to med. high. Stir spaghetti and broth until all the liquid is absorbed, 2 to 3 min. Repeat this process until all the stock is absorbed and noodles are desired tenderness, about 10 min. Reduce heat to low. Season spaghetti with salt and red pepper flakes to taste. Remove from heat. Stir parmesan and thyme into spaghetti and serve

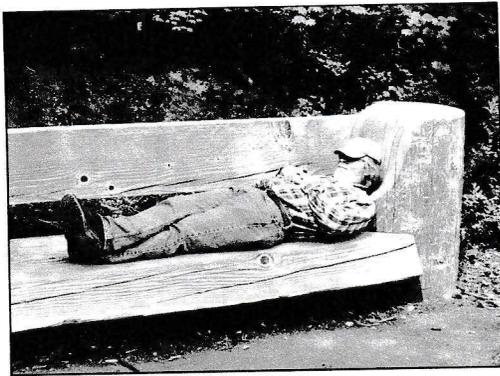
Kitchen Hint: Garlic salt or garlic powder clumping together in the damp weather? Add a few grains of rice to the shaker and keep the lid tightly closed.

Tomatoes are believed to benefit the heart, among other organs. They contain lycopene, a powerful natural antioxidant. Lycopene, especially in cooked tomatoes, may prevent prostate cancer, can protect against sunburn and helps in keeping the skin looking youthful. (They taste great, too!)

Report P/02/2012 BEAVER POND ESTATES: SMALL-PLOT GARLIC VARIETY TRIALS				
GARLIC MATURITY CHART: 2012 HARVEST				
18 day harvest period June 27 - July 15, 2012				
Very Early	Early	Mid Season	Late	Very Late
27 June – 01 July	02 – 06 July	07-10 July	11-14 July	15 July
TURBANS (8)				
Arg #4, L. Sicilian Xian, Chinese Purple Chinook, Rodrigo TT5V, Red Janice				
ASIATICS (5)				
Japanese (Sakura)	Pyong Vang Genki	Asian Tempest Solent Wight		
ARTICHOKES (23)				
Red Toch Susanville Philippino Vesey's White Maltese	Endurance Transylvanian Baba's Chesnek Kettle River Giant Korean Purple Wettergren Sicilian Gold F4 Italian Inchelium Piedmonte Festival Simonetti			
PORCELAINS (29)			All Porcelains	
Purple Stripe (2)		Persian Star, Chesnok Red		
P.S. Marbled (9)				
Metechi Russian Giant		Chesnok Red Siberian, Khabar	Brown Tempest N. Siberian, F21 Polish, Robust	Czech Broadleaf
P.S. Glazed (2)		Red Rezan	Purple Glazer	
ROCAMBOLES (34)				
		Yugoslavian F1 Rapido, Sp Roja F23 Rapture BP Roja, French Carpathian Hungarian German White Russian Red Spicy Korean Red	Tear Drop Chuck Prairie Purple Denman	Argentine Red Stripe Italian Purple
SILVERSKINS (8)			F40 Sovereign Silver Rose Silver White BPSS 95	Mother of Pearl Chilean Silver Zolton's Hungarian Luchka's Silver
CREOLES (7)				
All				
Notes: 1. Very early emergence in mid March followed by lack of rain leading to Level 3 drought resulted in a harvest two weeks earlier than normal. Soft necks thrived; Rocamboles were adversely affected by drought. Porcelains did very well.				

More calls and letters

Michael Fierst, Garlic Grower



Editor: The picture kind of speaks for itself, doesn't it?

Positive and Appreciative A regular buyer of our garlic, **Diana Borst of Belleville, ON**, wrote: The farmers who grow our food should be rolling in the dough, not just breaking even, going under, quitting etc. We all have to eat for goodness sake, something really wrong with the entire setup. Farmers should be cherished, revered, paid extremely well. Thank you for growing such outstanding garlic. Go in health, **Diana**.

Leek moth gone, at least for this season **Joni Seligman, Glen Tay, ON**, who used a ProTek Net cover over her garlic (see issue #32, page 4), wrote: "The leek moth is gone, at least for this season. My scapes were perfect. Leeks are growing well. I realize with harvest time coming up sooner than later I will have to uncover the area and decide whether to recover for two small rows of leeks. Can they be decimated still given the cycles of the moth?"

Editor: Yes, the leek moth will attack the leeks. If there are only a few, you might want to choose daily inspection, killing any you find. There is a risk of missing some and having them get into the stalk, thus ruining it but it's a trade-off against the extra work of putting the netting back on.

Growing garlic in the same bed?

John Cheney of Toronto, asked: I read in a magazine that it is not recommended to grow garlic in the same bed as the previous year. Is this your advice too?

Editor: Replanting in the same bed? A bad practice. Rotating your garden - all vegetables, not only garlic - is a good organic practice to follow. It allows the soil to recover, as plants have different nutritional needs and it also helps to reduce the multiplication of soil-borne diseases. You should organize your garden into either a 3 or 4-year rotation and move the vegetables from one section to the other in a regular cycle. That keeps the soil healthy and happy. If you plant the same vegetable in the same area year after year, the soil gets badly depleted and your plants effectively "starve" from lack of certain nutrients. Fertilizer helps with that but it doesn't help with diseases.

Advice needed on when to pull

Sue Joiner of Limoges, ON, asked: I am sure you are getting a lot of questions from growers about the crazy drought conditions we are experiencing. We are a little concerned about certain aspects of the garlic at this point in time. Our main crop, which is Red Russian, is OK, only 2-3 leaves dying back, but the tips of the leaves are pretty burnt. I don't think we should worry about that, however. What is your opinion? More watering at this point, or not?

The strain we are concerned about is the Sicilian Gold, which we bought from you in 2008. We have noticed that some (maybe 30%) of the plants are falling over, again with the tips of the leaves quite burnt.

Editor: First, don't worry about any of the soft necks falling over, and that includes Sicilian Gold. That's a normal characteristic of many Artichokes, Turbans, Asiatics and Silverskins. The trick is to figure out just WHEN to harvest them since the leaf count technique doesn't work. You just have to pull a couple every day or two until you get the best compromise.

No, no more watering, you'll only bring on underground decay.

Yes, do worry about the Rocamboles. With this strange spring and extended Level 1 drought, the Rocamboles have been affected the most. We had to pull ours early, ahead of the Porcelains, and even then, they had experienced considerable decay of the bulb wrappers despite lots of green leaves above. Effectively, I would have to call all our Rocamboles a "crop failure" this year.

Turbans falling over

Carolyn Smith of Roblin, ON, on June 21, asked: Hi Paul. My Turbans are falling over! I remember you telling me that they are early. Mine are looking close. Leek Moth has knocked them back as well. They sure taste good.

Editor: Yes, ours are falling over as well, also some of the Artichokes and Asiatics. We'll likely harvest the Turbans next week. Watch them very closely as they can change from being almost ready one day to having gone too far the next day.

Smaller Bulbs

Bob Woods of Almonte, ON, said: My little garlic patch was good. I do not water it so the bulbs were on the smaller size due to the drought we have. Thanks again for doing such a great job with the Garlic News.

Too much rain in Saskatchewan

Anna Schaab of Yorkton, SK, wrote: Garlic harvest is just around the corner. Plants are not looking as healthy out here, lots of yellowing this year and we are contributing it to all the rain. We have talked to a numerous amount of garlic growers around Saskatchewan and all report small heads.

Editor: You folks out there shouldn't hog all that good rain. We've had a drought, Level 2 heading for Level 3, forest fires all over.

Garden Hint: You save your garlic for replanting. Why not save your own tomato seeds as well? Or anything else in your garden?

More calls and letters

Growers like the Complete Book of Garlic

Cynthia Hyland, Perth, Ontario, asked: "I am interested in buying the garlic book you displayed at your Garlic Field Day but didn't take note of title or author. Can you help?"

Editor: The Complete Book of Garlic, by Ted Jordan Meredith. You can buy it online from Amazon Books. Various prices plus shipping and Canadian taxes.

Editor, again, to Ted: Your book is still very popular. I'll order some more and keep them on hand as growers keep asking about them. Its still the finest reference available.

Buckwheat Source

Lynn Gillingham of Toronto, asked: "I have been doing lots of reading about green manure for planting after harvest and one of the common recommendations is buckwheat. Would you recommend that and if so, where do I buy it? If not, what would you recommend? I live in Toronto but my plot is near Lindsay.

PS - thanks for your advice on the scapes - I sold all of them within an hour - took me much longer to pick them!!!

Editor: Buckwheat is a great crop to use as a green manure. You can grow and turn under 3 to 4 plantings in a season and it really does improve your soil. You can buy it in any farm or seed supply - certainly there are some in the Lindsay area - it costs about \$1.50 per lb. Call Mapleseed, Lindsay, Ontario, 1-800-461-7645. If they don't have it, they'll be able to direct you to a local supplier.

Lynn, again: Thanks Paul! I am hoping to make it to the **Toronto Garlic Festival** this October. I see that you are speaking there on the Saturday - I will make sure I find you to say hello and personally thank you for your help

Curing and Botrytis

Camelia Frieberg of Mahone Bay, NS, wrote: I am trying something different this year by isolating the garlic in a room with a dehumidifier and fans. About half of the garlic is hung from the rafters with about five stems to a bundle and some is spread out on flat metal mesh shelves. For the garlic that is on the shelves do you think it is ok to cut the stems or should I leave them long? Last year we burned about 8,000 heads of garlic, as it was all succumbing to Botrytis as it was curing and I didn't want to spread the spores to anyone else. So we bought in some new stock (that may have been part of what caused my problem in the first place last year!) and planted on soil that had never been gardened on before and now I am trying my best to dry the garlic despite humidity levels in the 90% range. Wish me luck!

Editor: Curing: High humidity is the worst threat to garlic during curing and many diseases thrive in hot, humid conditions. With climate change causing it in July and August, we had to move our garlic indoors several years ago and use both dehumidifiers and fans and haven't had a problem since. Use one of those little humidity meters and try and keep the RH below 40 % if possible. I don't think it makes much difference whether you rack or hang

the garlic as the fungus spores spread by moving air so they will get on the garlic in either place. Cutting off the greens means that bulbs will be a bit smaller. A smaller, healthy bulb is better than a diseased bulb or no crop at all. I've attached a picture of typical rack drying technique - thanks to Simon de Boer. Note the perforated racks to aid in air movement.



Botrytis: *There are a number of fungal diseases called botrytis. Did you have some sent to your agricultural lab to identify it? Might be worthwhile. There are fungicides for preventing the spread, but the most useful, from an organic grower's perspective, is to regularly make compost tea and use it as a foliar spray. It is an effective fungicide as well as a good, supplementary fertilizer. Another point in disease control: After harvest, be sure to burn all garlic residue, and if you still have mulch left on the garden, burn that off as well before turning the soil under. Keep the grass around your garlic plots well cut.*

Camelia again: Apparently it was *botrytis porri* identified by a plant pathologist but he did so without taking any cultures or samples but just by visual ID. He said that there was a lot of it last year throughout NS because of the rainy and humid conditions. Next year I will be sure to use some compost tea as foliar spray. And I appreciate the advice about removing the straw mulch as well. Of course it is tempting to turn it into the beds to add organic matter but it might be wiser to burn it. Do you think I should do so even if there are no signs of mold this year? This year's garlic is planted in an area that had never been in garden use before.
Editor: Whether or not the botrytis spores could have reached your new plot depends on a lot of things, like wind direction and drift, etc. I would rather err on the cautious side and burn the residue, just in case. You can always add other organic matter like manure or compost or even leaves in the fall.

Garden too small!

Sandy Kell of Lake Cowichan, BC, wrote: I am very proud of my garlic. It grew very good this year and I didn't get it planted till the first part of November 2011. I now have to work on promoting so I can sell lots. I always keep plenty for my own use and plenty to plant and keep expanding my crop. Only problem now it I've run out of space to grow all the other veggies I always grow. Darn yard - garden space is too small!

Editor: Thank you for your report on your garlic, Sandy. Selling shouldn't be too difficult as there's always a shortage of good locally grown garlic. Also, think of the customers who go without local garlic around Christmas. On your space problem: Always leave room for other veggies. Vine ripened tomatoes, a small trellis of sugar snap peas, a few baby potatoes in July, fresh spinach in the spring - these, to name just a few, are worth growing. As much as I encourage garlic, there is great joy in the others as well.

Still more calls and letters

Large Garlic, Wild Garlic, Wild Onion

Alex Oliver of Camrose, Alberta, wrote in early May: My 456 cloves of garlic have all produced this spring and the plants are about 8 inches high now. What have you got for seed with the largest bulbs? How are the prairie onions doing?

Editor: From the looks of this year's crop - I look at stem diameter to estimate likely bulb size - the most promising ones are Majestic & Chiloe in the Porcelains and Argentine #4 in the Turbans. However, we still have 2 + months to go till harvest and a lot can happen in the interim.

The Prairie Onion is doing well in my plots. If all goes well, I should be offering it for sale next year. It seems to be very similar in size to wild garlic, allium canadense except for the flowers. Will you be propagating it for sale?

Continuing the discussion in early July

Editor: Just finished our harvest. As expected, Argentine #4, a Turban, came out the best overall. Rocamboles suffered badly with the drought, Turbans and Artichokes thrived. Haven't done the numbers yet but in the Porcelains, Millar will take the prize for the best crop size with Majestic and Romanian Red close behind!

Alex again: I won't be selling any wild garlic. I should have some fresh garlic ready in a couple of weeks. I have two restaurants that will take my garlic now. – Great!!

The wild garlic bloomed this year. I'll have about 25 plants next year. The wild onion patch in the valley has in excess of 200 plants in it. I'll have about 40-50 wild onions next year.

Bulb wrappers breaking down?

Ian McAra of Chilliwack, BC sent this picture, asking why only some of the bulbs (8 of 200) were broken down.



Editor: It appears that the bulbs were left too long in the ground and the outer bulb wrappers decayed away. From the pictures, I can see no sign of disease or other problem that may have caused it. Remember that each green leaf above ground represents an unbroken bulb wrapper below ground. If all the leaves above ground are dried out, all the bulb wrappers below ground are broken down. All plants don't mature at the same time. These could have been earlier than the others, accounting for the difference. Since the garlic is a hard neck, the rule of thumb for harvesting is to watch the leaves. When the bottom 1/3 are dried out or dead and the top 2/3 are still green, it's time to pull a bulb or two. If you are happy with the size, lift them all. If needed, wait a day or two. Just don't let all the leaves dry out.

As well, if the bulbs sat in water for a long time before harvest, the underground wrappers could decay without the leaves drying out.

Simon de Boer, Growing Quality Garlic

Simon de Boer of Teeswater, ON, wrote: I don't know of a glut of garlic. I know my crop is as good as it has ever been in spite of the dry weather. And especially now when water is not needed and drying is of the essence. The quality of the crop is second to none.



I don't know who is propagating the rumours but it is time to start another "rumour", that being we have worked hard to supply demand, the demand keeps rising so I cannot believe that prices should retreat for the kind of garlic we grow.

I tried to enter the big production scene once, and grew 25 acres looking for big returns for me in commodity style. I am happier now growing 2 acres for the customers. Garlic can be grown by anyone but good quality, no-chemical-and-nitrate-fertilizer-grown-garlic with good keeping qualities is what will keep repeat customers. Huge bulbs look nice but often don't keep near as well till next garlic harvest. Garlic handled with TLC, grown naturally, cured properly and dried down with tops on goes a long way to having customers come back year after year. Every one has the right to see the dollar go farther for a lb of garlic but time will tell whether that dollar was well spent. I just got a message from a friend in Australia where garlic is \$20.00 a kilo, while the glut garlic from China is going for 3.00 a kilo so you get what you pay for.

Right now, it's up at daybreak and down at dusk, 15-hour days are everyday. I am not afraid of a glut, Paul. Those who bought from me in the past appreciate what they have gotten and are planning on buying more. They also know if there was a problem they can come a see me and I will see if I can make things right. It is precious to be able to meet the customer and see them happy with the best I can produce and if it's better than usual, we both win.

p.s. Thank you Paul for the referral to Newfoundland. We have already contacted and connected I and I will supply him with not 20 but 30 lbs. of garlic. I sent him pictures of my garlic; he must like what he sees. **Simon**

Editor: I've known Simon for many years and have respect for his dedication to growing top quality organic garlic. I'm further pleased that he abandoned his foray into growing "commodity" garlic on a large scale; his customers can be assured of the quality of his handcrafted garlic once again. Oh, yes, and Simon farms with horses where appropriate. Saves the air from diesel fumes!

Benefits of Cover Crops or Green Manures

Adapted from a Garden Web paper

Cover crops and green manures are basically the same term. When these plants are alive they are cover crops. When the plants are decaying they are green manures. Green manuring has all the soil benefits of composting, plus other benefits:

1. Green manures can fertilize large acres of land cheaper and easier than hauling in tons of finished compost.
2. You can eat the produce of certain cover crops like beans, peas, or radishes. It is harmful to humans to eat compost!
3. The roots of certain legume green manures can supply tons of free atmospheric nitrogen per acre to the topsoil after the cover crop plants are tilled, mowed down, or smothered. Rhizobacteria live inside the legume roots creating a unique relationship that actually converts atmospheric nitrogen into organic nitrogen for the legume to use. This extra nitrogen fixation built up by the rhizobacteria can not be beneficial to other plants near by, or future crops in the soil next season, until that legume is dead and recycled into the soil by the green manuring process. Compost can't fix nitrogen in the soil.
4. All green manures supply extra organic matter (OM) to feed and breed beneficial soil organisms for soil fertility and soil health.
5. The roots of certain cover crops can go down several feet below the topsoil and into the subsoil to break up hardpan and pull essential nutrients up to the topsoil level at green manuring time. After 24 months of continuous growth, alfalfa roots can extend over 20 feet down, that can turn it extra OM down into the subsoil! No regular tractor or mechanical tiller can plow that deep! Without tilling it in, compost can't do that.
6. Some cover crops can weed out other plants. Buckwheat, oats, and sunflowers are good types of these allelopathic plants.
7. Some cover crops, like marigolds and crimson clover, can attract beneficial insects and repel bad insects. Compost can't do that either.
8. Some special cover crops can help control diseases in the soil or on the foliage of nearby plants. Examples are garlic, onions, hot peppers, basil, marigolds, thyme, and other herbs. These plants can protect plants like tomatoes from diseases. They can also control bad nematodes or other soil problems. Some of these cover crops can do these functions as living plants or as decaying green manures.
9. Some legume cover crops, like white clover, can be planted next to your crops during the warm season to be used as living mulch.
10. Green manures work best when mixed with legumes and non-legumes. That way you get the nitrogen fixing benefit from the legumes, but also you maximize the fast growth of the expansive root development and tall foliage height that is characteristic of grasses and grains.
11. Did you know that about 95% of all the bulk and biomass of all non-legume cover crops is a direct production from only water and photosynthesis! The other 5% is straight from the soil.

12. Legume cover crops go farther and pull free nitrogen from the air also. That means that all cover crops will add more humus to the soil than what was there before just from energy from the sun and the atmosphere. Since humus is mostly carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen from the air, that means that cover crops greatly benefit the biosphere.

OM = Organic Matter

Partial list of cover crops and their basic purposes:

- A. Crimson clover** - cool season annual legume. More cold hardy than most other clovers. Grows great on all soil types in 1-2 months. Supplies lots of foliage and roots OM. Crimson clover and winter peas can be found in deer plot mixes. Attracts lots of beneficial insects. Easy to green manure.
- B. Hairy vetch** - cool season annual legume. It is the most cold hardy of the popular legumes. Can grow in temps below -5 degrees F. Great legume weed suppressor. Grows great with a non-legume like rye as a nurse crop.
- C. Rye, winter wheat, and oats** - cool season fast growing grass/grain non-legumes. Rye is the most cold hardy of all green manures, and it can grow almost anywhere in temps below -20 degrees F. Rye and oats are a great non-legume weed suppressors. These crops can grow fast in a few weeks. Supplies lots of OM. Rye must be killed at least 4-6 weeks before planting spring crops to not hinder seed germination.
- D. Legumes (All beans and peas)** - All beans are warm season except fava beans. Most peas are cool season. The most cold hardy peas are winter peas. Most dry beans and peas sold in bags in grocery stores will sprout and grow fine.
- E. Radishes, mustard greens, rape, kale** - Great cheap fast growing cool season annual non-legumes for lots of foliage OM. A thick crop of mustard, rape, or kale is a great non-legume weed suppressor. A thick crop of radishes is great for repelling many bug pests all year round.
- F. Buckwheat and sunflowers** - Great fast growing warm season annual non-legumes that can break up hardpan, kill weeds, and pull up insoluble subsoil phosphorus from minerals up to the topsoil to make available for next crops. Buckwheat can grow fast on any soil type (4-6 weeks to maturity).
- G. Marigolds and other herbs** - warm season annual non-legumes. Marigolds when planted thick are great for nematode control and other pest controls. Garlic, onions, and hot peppers control many soil pests.
- H. All weeds** - This unknown class of green manures recycle much needed foliage and root OM and nutrients back to the topsoil.

All cover crops should be tilled in, mowed down almost to the ground, or smothered by organic mulches before they go to seed, to prevent sprouting later in the year and becoming a weed themselves. Year round green manuring practices can not only improve your soil health and texture, but also decrease extra periodic plant fertilizers and soil amendments.