



KCCCG Garlic Guidesheet

Growing Great Garlic!

Growing this pungent bulb is fairly easy when armed with the right knowledge and tools. Garlic needs cold winter temperatures in order to develop from a single clove into a bulb with multiple cloves in the spring. Ideally, garlic is planted in mid- November through mid-December while the temperatures are still cold, but the ground has not yet frozen solid.

KCCCG sells two types of garlic. Hardneck garlic is well-adapted to cold winter temperatures and will provide larger garlic cloves. Many people love the intense taste of this garlic and it is easy to peel and perfect for roasting. Softneck garlic is less expensive than hardneck but is typically grown in more southern regions and will not give you as large of cloves when grown in Kansas City. The soft-neck garlic sold by KCCCG tastes similar to the standard varieties found in supermarkets.

Garlic has a long growing season, so remember that whatever garden real estate you give use will be tied up through early summer. Additionally, do not plant garlic in an area that you will need to till in the spring; raised beds work very well for growing garlic. To plant, break up the garlic bulb to separate the cloves, but do not peel the cloves. Dig a hole 2-3" deep and then stick one clove in the hole, with the root side down (pointy side up). Fill the hole with soil and you're good to go! Garlic cloves should be planted 4-6" apart. After a hard freeze, mulch the garlic with 4" of straw.

Your garlic should sprout sometime in April, when temperatures start to warm. When you see the garlic sprout, give it a boost with some fertilizer. Water your garlic regularly and fertilize every two weeks. In late spring, hardneck garlic plants will produce a round stem with a seed pod on the end. Cut these seed scapes off as soon as you see them, as they put the plant's resources into making seeds instead of making a big garlic bulb. The seed scapes are edible - use in place of garlic in recipes such as stir-fry, salsa and pesto.

Garlic is typically harvested in mid-June when the leaves start to brown. Stop watering garlic two weeks before you plan to harvest so that the soil is loose and plants pull up easily. Allow garlic to dry in a cool, dark place. You can braid the stalks together and hang or cut off stalks about an inch above the bulb and store in a dark, dry location (about 60-70 degrees). Avoid storing garlic in the refrigerator as it will not keep as long. If stored properly, garlic can last 4-6 months.

So, do one more thing in your garden this year and plant some garlic! In the spring, you will be glad you did!

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