

Lara Farm Produce French Island

Garlic Planting Guide

Selection

Congratulations you have achieved the first rule already by purchasing our high quality organic seed stock garlic.

Garlic sourced from overseas for sale in supermarkets is treated with methyl bromide to meet quarantine regulations and even locally produce garlic may be treated with growth inhibitors to slow down sprouting.

The second rule of growing great garlic is selecting the correct variety for your climate. In order to achieve the garlics full potential only the largest cloves from a bulb should be selected for planting. The larger the clove provides you with the best chance of growing a large bulb. Use the smaller discarded cloves in your cooking.

Preparation

The third rule of growing garlic is **soil preparation**. We cannot stress this rule enough. The more time and effort that you spend preparing your soil will enhance your results. A free draining soil approximately 400mm deep with plenty of organic matter is required. We fork through liberal amounts of cow manure in our garlic beds.

If you are experiencing trouble with your soil drainage you can form mounds in your beds which will help encourage drainage.

Soil PH of around 7 or neutral is preferable. If your soil is lower than 6 add some dolomite or lime to raise the PH.

Always rotate your garlic beds, never plant your garlic in last years beds.

Choose a sunny spot that receives as much unshaded sun as possible.

Prepare your garlic beds in advance to planting, minimum of two weeks to give your soil the opportunity to settle in and establish the microorganisms and worms needed for healthy soil.

We like to crack our bulbs and sort out the largest cloves that we want to plant and then store them in the crisper of our refrigerator for two weeks prior to planting. We find that this chilling period increases the size of our bulbs and is necessary especially if you live in warmer climates.

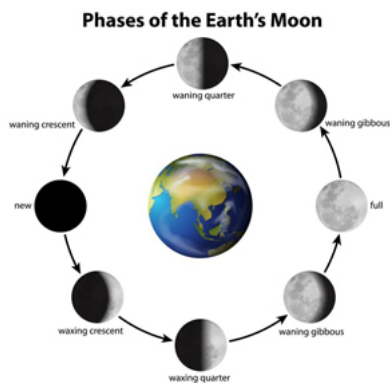
Twenty four hours prior to planting we soak all of our cloves in a diluted mix of seasol with a teaspoon per litre of bicarbonate of soda.

The bicarbonate of soda helps to eliminate any disease or bacteria and the seasol primes the cloves with resistance to fungal attack.

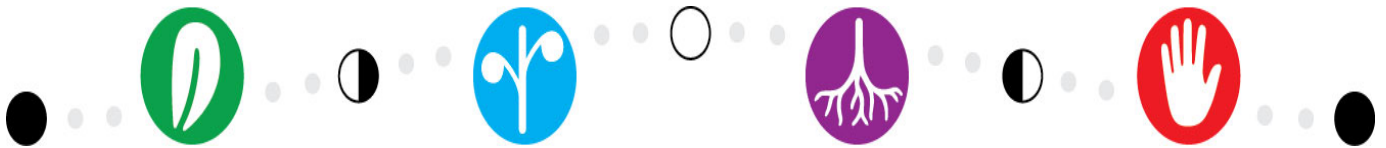
Prepare To Plant

We plant our garlic in April in accordance with the timing of the new moon. This is our preference however you can also plant in March through to May depending on your local climate.

The cycle of the moon directly affects the rise and fall of sap within all plants as it also controls the oceans tides. This being said you can plant in all cycles of the moon except for the no go zone.



This general pattern can be divided further into the quarterly moon cycles.



The new moon phase (from new moon to first quarter) is most suited to sowing or transplanting leafy annuals, where we value or eat the leaves or stem. Plants like lettuce, spinach, cabbage and celery.

The first quarter phase is most suited to fruiting annuals (not fruit trees) where we value or eat the fruit or seed bearing part of the plant. Like tomatoes, pumpkins, broccoli and beans.

The full moon phase (from full moon to the third quarter) is most suited to sowing or planting out root crops as well as decorative or fruiting perennials. Like apples, potatoes asparagus and rhubarb. It's also a good time for taking cuttings and dividing plants.

The last quarter phase is a time to avoid planting and focus on improving the soil, by weeding, mulching, making compost and manure teas as well as digging or ploughing. The one caveat for this method is that 12 hours before and after the transition time from one phase to the next is when sowing, planting and pruning is best avoided. Use this time instead to improve your soil.

Sowing Garlic

Plant your garlic approx. 50mm deep, pointed end upwards.

We plant our garlic 150mm apart in rows spaced at 150mm.

that said our soil is very well prepared. We would advise 200mm x 200mm or greater spacing for the home gardener. This will give your garlic room to develop and aerate between leaf stalks. Once planted water your cloves in well with Seasol and cover the bed with a good 50mm covering of mulch. We use organic sugar cane mulch which is free of weeds and turned back into the soil at the end of the growing season.

