



# WISCONSIN GARLIC

**HAND-PLANTED • TRADITIONALLY FERTILIZED • HAND-PICKED**  
**NO HERBICIDES • NO PESTICIDES**



## How to Grow Garlic



### **So, you want to grow great garlic in Wisconsin? Anyone can grow garlic - growing great garlic is a true challenge!**

Here's what to do:

The biggest factor for garlic is not seed, sun, or water - it is SOIL. If you do not grow garlic in the right soil, garlic will not grow well no matter what you do. That means small bulbs and lots of wasted time and most importantly a huge psychological let-down. Remember to till your land and rake to remove rocks and weeds.

The best soil for garlic is well drained loam. Sandy loam will also work, but will require more watering in dry times. Till in some chicken manure in the fall and unless you have soil that is completely played out, you are ready to go!

Sun also plays an important role, but not as much as with leafy plants or trees. Make sure your garlic is planted in full sun and gets at least 6 hours sun every day.

Watering in Wisconsin is rarely necessary and, if it is, is usually the month before harvest (mid-May-mid-June). Two weeks before harvest (around July 1st in Southern Wisconsin) watering should be stopped so soil dries and you don't pick "mud-balls" with garlic centers.

Seed is also a critical factor for garlic. Garlic takes time to acclimate to it's conditions - planting large cloves/bulbs the very first season is not advisable because there is a very good chance the garlic is acclimated to the seed providers criteria and that will cause severe loss or small crops. Seed shouldn't be tiny, but average size cloves are what to plant the first year. Then save cloves as they get bigger (a sign of acclimating) each season to get slightly larger bulbs the next season. After several seasons, your garlic will be "peak-size" for the variety selected.

There is one more very critical factor with garlic: Planting Window.

The planting window in Southern Wisconsin is around Mid-October and only lasts about 7 days. It is imperative that garlic is planted roughly 2 weeks before the first hard frost. This is difficult to predict at times in Wisconsin! Ideally, you want your cloves to be in the ground and starting to root BEFORE the frost comes - if they are put in too late, they will be lost over winter. If they are put in too early it is okay as long as growth before first hard frost is minimal (no more than a few inches).

Garlic should be planted in rows at least 16" apart that run North/South. Space between bulbs should be 6-8 inches. Plant cloves at a depth of 4" - do this exactly and measure or there is a good chance your cloves will either pop out of the ground with frost-heaves over winter, or they will be too deep and not have the energy in the clove to actually get to the surface in the spring (especially in years where it freezes/thaws/freezes/thaws/etc.).

Cover planting with straw when completed.

In spring, some remove the straw - that is a function of how much water your soil holds in our experience. If you have wet soil regularly, remove the straw and water when necessary. If you have soil that will dry out and is very well drained, leave the straw and water if necessary. Finally, weed when necessary. Your field does not have to be pristine to produce good garlic, but garlic is a poor competitor so do not let weeds get the upper hand. The straw helps, and we generally do 2-4 weedings per season. Garlic comes up around March, so that is not much weeding over a 3 month+ period.

**Best of luck to all growers! Thanks again for choosing Wisconsin Garlic!**