

# Garlic Combo *Planting & Growing Guide*



## How to Identify the Garlic in your Combo Pack

- A. 1 head of *conventional* Elephant - the single huge, white head.
- B. 3 heads of organic CA Early White - 15 cloves and softneck.
- C. 3 heads of organic Music - white sheath, maroon cloves.
- D. 3 heads of organic Russian Red - purple/red bulb with hardneck.
- E. 3 sets of organic French Red Shallots - red/orange in color.

## Calculating Seed Quantity

One lb of Garlic bulbs equals approximately a 25' row with 4" spacing between plants. For most Garlics, expect an optimum 10 lbs yield for every lb planted. Remember, garlic loves water and food, but it must have good drainage or it will rot. In the spring, feed the garlic with either composted manure or a well-balanced fertilizer before the bulbs begin to enlarge. Keep the weeds away from your garlic at all times; you either grow weeds or garlic, but not both! If your garlic sends up a flower stalk in spring, snip it off, making the cut as close as feasible, or it might grow back. If you let the garlic go to seed, you will end up harvesting smaller bulbs.

## Harvesting & Storing

When the garlic leaves begin to turn yellow in the summer, stop irrigating for 2 weeks and then pull up the plant. Immediately place plants in a shady place to cure. Regardless of what you read elsewhere, do not leave your garlic in the sun because it will sunburn and rot. A good way to cure garlic is to tie it in bunches or braid it (if it is a soft neck garlic) and hang it in a dark place where it will receive good air circulation. Cure Elephant garlic for thirty days before eating it. "Green" Elephant garlic is bitter, but it becomes milder with age. Standard garlic takes less time to cure and becomes stronger tasting with age. Hard neck varieties generally will only store for 6 months or less. You can store your garlic in mesh bags (like onion sacks) in a cool dry area. The optimum storage temperature is 50°F, and the relative humidity should be below 60%. If some of your bulbs turn out onion-like (do not divide into cloves) you can eat them or use them as seed next year.

## Preparation

Garlic prefers sandy loam soil, but grows well in nearly any well-drained, slightly acidic (6-7 pH), fertile soil. The looser the composition of the soil, the larger your garlic will grow. Prepare your garlic bed by turning under or tilling in compost (be sure to use compost that is fully aerobically broken down and contains animal manures and plant residues, rather than cedar or redwood). Make sure your soil has ample phosphorus. Avoid planting garlic in the same place you've previously grown garlic, onions or any other alliums for 3 years, because of the potential for spreading diseases like white rot. Gophers love garlic; protect your beds with gopher wire or traps.

## Planting & Growing

You will receive whole garlic bulbs from us, but you will be planting the cloves (the sections of the bulb). First "crack" the garlic bulb (separate the cloves for planting). Once you have cracked the bulbs it is best to plant within 5-7 days before cloves begin to dry out. A clove pre-planting dip can help the cloves off to a good start: in one gallon of water, place two tablespoons of Liquid Kelp Extract & Humic Acids or liquified Maxicrop. Mix well, add garlic cloves, and soak for one hour. Removal of the clove skin cover is not necessary. Plant your garlic cloves root end (blunt end) down. Plant garlic cloves (and Elephant Garlic) in rows spaced 18" apart. Plant cloves 4" to 6" apart down the rows. Down Elephant garlic rows, plant 8"-9" apart. Cover cloves with about 2" of soil. (In northern areas, cover with 3-4" of soil). After you have planted, it is a good idea to mulch the garlic. Leaves, compost or straw make good mulches. In the south, a light mulch will suffice, but in cold northern areas, up to 8" of mulch is recommended. Remove the mulch in the spring once frost danger is over. Water well and then only water again when the soil is dry. Moisture is a critical factor in spring; watch your soil moisture levels and irrigate accordingly.

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