

**Fall Seed Planting**

Many of us think of seed planting as spring time activity but many of the flowers we try to seed in the spring benefit from being planted in late fall after the killing frost as you’re planting your bulbs.

Here is a list of fall planting seeds:

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| Alyssum (many species)Bachelor Buttons / Cornflower Centaurea cyanusBee Balm MonardaBlack Eyed Susan RudbeckiaBlanket Flower GaillardiaBlue Flax Linum perenne lewisiiBells of Ireland MoluccellaCalendula CalendulaColumbine AquilegeaConeflower EchinaceaCoreopsis CoreopsisCosmos CosmosCupid’s Dart Catananche caeruleaDaisy, Painted Chrysanthemum coccineumDelphininuim Flax Linum grandiflorumFoxglove DigitalisLarkspur Consolida | Love-In-A-Mist Nigella damascenaLobelia LobeliaLavender LavandulaLady’s Mantle Alchemilla[Milkweed](https://empressofdirt.net/growing-milkweed-seed/)AsclepiasNasturtium TropaeolumPansy ViolaPenstemon PenestemonPincushion Flowers  ScabiosaPinkball Thrift Ameria FormosaPoppy PapaveraceaePrairie Coneflower Ratibida columniferaRose Campion SileneSnapdragons AntirrhinumSweet Pea Lathyrus odoratusSweet William DianthusVirginia Stocks Matthiola maritimaWallflower Cheiranthus cheiri |

How to sow

Dig the earth to loosen the soil in area. Sprinkle seeds over area, compress area, do not bury. Place marker indicating what you have planted for next spring. Let nature do her thing. In spring, after the last frost, begin to water area where the seeds are located.

**Planting Garlic**

Garlic can be planted in the spring as soon as the ground can be worked, but fall planting is recommended for most gardeners. Garlic roots develop in the fall and winter, and by early spring they can support the rapid leaf growth that is necessary to form large bulbs.

Ensure soil is well-drained with plenty of organic matter. Select a sunny spot. A sandy, clay loam is best. In heavier soil, plant it in raised beds that are two to three feet wide and at least 10 to 12 inches tall.

In areas that get a hard frost, plant garlic as early as 6 to 8 weeks before the first expected fall frost. before the ground freezes. The timing may vary with local climate; the aim is to give a long enough period before the ground freezes for the plant to develop good roots, but not enough time to for it to form top growth before freezing temperatures set in. In northern climates, planting is usually between September and November. In southern areas, February or March is a better time to plant.

Lime the soil if you haven’t done so recently. Before planting cloves, work a couple tablespoons of 5-10-10 complete fertilizer, bone meal or fish meal into the soil several inches below where the base of the garlic will rest. Select healthy large clovers, free of disease. The larger the clove, the bigger the bulb you will get the following summer.

Break apart cloves from bulb a few days before planting, but keep the papery husk on each individual clove.

Do not plant cloves from the grocery store. They may be unsuited varieties for your area, and most are treated to make their shelf life longer, making them harder to grow. Instead, get cloves from a mail order seed company or a local nursery.

Place cloves 2 to 4 inches apart and 2 inches deep, in their upright position (the wide root side facing down and pointed end facing up). Plant in rows spaced 10 to 14 inches apart. A single 10-foot row should yield about five pounds of the fragrant bulbs.

In the spring, as warmer temperatures come, shoots will emerge through the ground.

**HARVEST/STORAGE OF GARLIC**

Harvest from fall plantings will probably be in late July or August. In Southern climates, it will depend on your planting date. The clue is to look for yellow tops. Harvest when the tops begin to yellow and fall over, before they are completely dry.

It’s time for a sample! Lift a bulb to see if the crop is ready. The garlic head will be divided into plump cloves and the skin covering the outside of the bulbs will be thick, dry and papery. If pulled too early, the bulb wrapping will be thin and disintegrate. If left in the ground too long, the bulbs sometimes split apart. The skin may also split, exposing the cloves and causing them not to store well. Dig don’t pull! We often dig up a bulb before the tops are completely yellow (in late June or early July) as some garlic types will be ready earlier. Careless harvesting can ruin a fine crop of garlic.

To harvest, carefully dig up the bulbs with a spade or garden fork. Lift the plants, carefully brush off the soil, and let them cure in an airy, shady, dry spot for two weeks. We hang them upside down on a string in bunches of 4 to 6. Make sure all sides get good air circulation. Be careful not to bruise the garlic or it won’t store well.

The bulbs are cured and ready to store when the wrappers are dry and papery, and the roots are dry. The root crown should be hard, and the cloves can be cracked apart easily. Once the garlic bulbs are dry, you can store them. Remove any dirt and trim off any roots or leaves. Keep the wrappers on—but remove the dirtiest wrappers. Remove the tops and roots.

Bulbs should be stored in a cool (40 degrees F), dark, dry place, and can be kept in the same way for several months. Don’t store in your basement if it’s moist! Do not store garlic in the refrigerator!

The flavor will increase as the bulbs are dried. Properly stored, garlic should last until the next crop is harvested the following summer.

If you plan on planting garlic again next season, save some of your largest, best-formed bulbs to plant again in the fall.

**GARLIC VARIETIES**

What type of garlic should you plant? There are three types of varieties of garlic: Softneck, Stiffneck, and Great-headed (Elephant). Most types are about 90 days to harvest, once growth starts

Hardneck varieties grow one ring of cloves around a stem, there is not a layer of cloves as there is in softneck varieties. They are extremely cold hardy, but do not store as well or long as other varieties. Flavor is milder than softnecks. Common hardneck types include Korean, Dujanski, Siberian, Music, Chesnock Red, German Red and Spanish Roja. These varieties produce tiny bulblets at the end of a tall flowering stalk in addition to a fat underground bulb of cloves.

Softneck varieties, like their name suggests, have necks that stay soft after harvest, and therefore are the types that you see braided. Especially recommended for those in warmer climes, as it is less winter-hardy than other types. Strong, intense flavor. They tend to grow bigger bulbs because energy is not being diverted to top-set bulblets like hardnecks. Softneck varieties include Silverskin, Inchelium Red, California Early and California Late.

Great-headed (Elephant) garlic is not recommended if you’re looking for a garlic taste. It’s less hardy, and more closely related to leeks than other varieties. The flavor is more like onion than traditional garlic. Bulbs and cloves are large, with about 4 cloves to a bulb.

**Fall Pruning**

A good starting point for pruning any plant is to remove dead, diseased, or damaged stems as soon as you see them. Dead stems attract insects and invite diseases to develop.

Also remove crossing branches, water sprouts (vigorous upright growing shoots that form on trunks or side branches), and suckers (vigorous shoots that develop near or from below ground).

Hydrangeas

Mophead, lacecap and oakleaf **should not** be pruned in the fall. Prune them midsummer otherwise you remove the flower bud.

All other hydrangeas can be pruned in the fall.

Always cut on a diagonal so that water runs off of the opening.



**Fall clean up**

Fall is a great time to plant trees and shrubs, cut back perennials, remove annuals and get your lawn healthy for next spring. Remember to keep watering. Trees and shrubs that are deprived of water now will be easily stressed in the winter. Below is a handy guide to fall clean up tasks.

**September:**

Collect seed and herbs for drying.

Add compost or manure to garden beds.

Cover water features with netting to collect falling leaves.

Check houseplants for pests, then start to move indoors.

Plant new trees and shrubs, to give them at least six weeks before frost.

Plant spring flowering bulbs.

Clean bird feeders, gardening tools.

Continue watering trees and shrubs until the ground freezes.

Bring in any clay pots.

Fertilize your lawn.

**October:**

Transplant shrubs or young trees to new locations.

Cut diseased areas out of perennials. Do not compost.

Rake and compost any fallen leaves.

Clean up garden debris. Remove all vegetable plants and fallen fruit.

Remove dead annuals from the garden, after a frost.

Cut back perennial foliage to discourage overwintering pests. Leave flowers with seeds for the birds.

Continue watering trees and shrubs until the ground freezes.

Dig up tender bulbs such as dahlia, canna and gladiola. Wrap them in moist material and store in a cool, dark space.

Divide spring and summer blooming perennial plants.

Wrap screening around fruit tree trunks to protect from small animals.

Mulch rose bushes.

\*\*If you wish to learn more, please join us on our meeting night – 4th Wednesday of the month. Please see our website for schedule – *Brooklinhorticulturalsociety.com*. Also check out our Facebook page.



***This handout was developed for the Brooklin Horticultural Society by Julia Noakes for the Harvest Festival.***