



Using, Storing and Preserving



Garlic



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Garlic (*Allium sativum* L.), a member of the onion family, has been cultivated for thousands of years and is widely used for both its culinary and medicinal attributes.

Recommended varieties

Softneck garlic

Polish

Hardneck garlic

German White

Music

Storage and Food Safety

- Select bulbs that are completely dry.
- Choose bulbs whose cloves are plump and firm.
- Look for plenty of papery sheath.

- Avoid soft or crumbly cloves, spongy or shriveled cloves, and bulbs or cloves with green shoots (they are past their prime).
- Store fresh garlic in either an uncovered or a loosely covered container in a cool, dark place away from exposure to heat and sunlight.
- Depending on its age and variety, whole garlic bulbs will keep fresh for about a month if stored properly. Inspect the bulb frequently and remove any cloves that appear to be dried out or moldy. Breaking the bulb reduces its shelf life to just a few days.
- To prevent cross-contamination, keep garlic away from raw meat and meat juices.
- Wash hands before and after handling fresh produce.

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How to preserve

Canning is not recommended for garlic.

Garlic used in pickling may react to the iron, tin or aluminum in your cooking pot, water or water pipes, turning green or bluish green. Some garlic may naturally have more bluish pigment, which is even more evident after pickling. This discoloration is not a safety concern.

Freezing

Garlic tends to get strong and bitter when frozen.

Research performed by the National Center for Home Food Preservation confirmed that mixtures of garlic in oil stored at room temperature are at risk for the development of botulism. Therefore, garlic in oil should be made fresh and stored in the refrigerator at 40 degrees F or lower for no more than seven days. It may be frozen for long-term storage — up to several months. Freeze garlic in oil in glass freezer jars or plastic freezer boxes, leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal, label, date and freeze.

Drying

Peel and finely chop garlic cloves. No other pretreatment is needed. Odor is pungent. The estimated drying time in a dehydrator is 6 to 8 hours.

References

National Center for Home Food Preservation (nchfp.uga.edu/)

Andress, Elizabeth, and Judy A. Harrison. 2006. So Easy to Preserve (fifth edition). Bulletin 989. University of Georgia Extension.

Producing Garlic in Michigan. Extension Bulletin E-2722. Available at migarden.msu.edu/uploads/files/e2722.pdf.

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