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Division of Marketing  
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1999 Grant Project Final Report

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Signed

date

With this writing, our final “Stinking Rose Project” report, along with the accompanying Economic Impact Survey and our completed “Growers Guide”, we will not demonstrate or answer every question or problem that may come up regarding the wonderful and mysterious herb-GARLIC.

As with most adventures ( and modern physics ) with every door that is opened, many more appear. To challenge and inspire. To plant the seed of passion in your heart. As small family farmers we believe this to be true. Our hope is that our effort, along with the generous assistance from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection-ADD Grant Program inspire and challenge the reader.

Probably the most important discovery we’ve made over the last two years was that “Although practically anyone can grow garlic, growing magnificent garlic for its full profit potential, demands a full time commitment to the time and labor required to produce a superior product and then sell it with passion.”

## PROJECT GOALS

The original intent or goal of this project was the identification, selection and evaluation of specific garlic varieties suitable for successful commercial production in Wisconsin, and then develop a production system for the small scale producer, made available in an easy to read, guide format. This guide will be made available to the public thru the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. These goals along with the production of two new products developed in our home kitchen have been realized.

Our final goal, one we stressed was most important, was the establishment of a growers association. Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful in this endeavor, and believe us when we say we tried. Although we answered over 200 inquires and were published in at least a dozen news papers, we could not convince more than a handful of “already busy” farmers that an Association was needed at this time. I feel we were successful at inspiring many to plant garlic, however, it seems we lacked the talent and time to organize a group into an organization. Our hope all along was that someone closer to an urban area, maybe not even a farmer, would take the proverbial “bull by the horns” and run with it. Alas, it did not happen. We can only apologize for setting our sights a bit high, however, we feel that garlic’s continued success will eventually result in some form of organization. This project will benefit Wisconsin Agriculture by making our experience’s, good and bad, available to those interested in a viable means to diversify their current farm operation.

The ADD Grant allowed us to accelerate what we had envisioned and take the risks necessary to prove commercial viability. The funds supported our effort to investigate and select varieties suitable to Wisconsin in quantities that would allow us to realize a profit, thus proving commercial viability for small scale production, instead of waiting several years while our seed stock grew. With the funds from the Grant we were able to expand our production and our interests in other aspects of garlic production. In this endeavor I believe we were also successful as we tested the feasibility of farm processing. Our only hold back has been our inability to supply the minimum required for mass production, as most processors require quantities in excess of one thousand filled jars. However, as we continue to expand, and others take up garlic farming, we feel certain it wont be long now. We still strongly hold the belief that in order for Wisconsin to be a competitor in garlic production, an association must be formed.

## SEED

If you can grow disease free, viable seed, you will sell out. There are only a handful of reputable seed growers out there, so we feel the seed market is ripe and ready for more growers. As our original goals included the afore mentioned Growers Association and the planting of 1 acre of selected Wisconsin

proven seed, we regretfully have failed at both due to circumstances beyond our control, namely time and the weather. This does not mean the project was a failure. In contrast, we were successful in identifying good Wisconsin proven seed, the development of an efficient production system, and the processing of two possible future commercial products. We also learned some very valuable lessons along the way. For more details on lessons, please see our guide book, "Growing High Quality Commercial Garlic in Wisconsin."

Our project should benefit Wisconsin farms choosing to diversify with garlic production, and if handled properly, will positively impact the future of Wisconsin Agriculture by our eventual inclusion and recognition as a commercial garlic producing state.

Listed below are the varieties studied during the grant project:

**SPANISH ROJA-Hardneck, Species-Allium Sativum, Variety-Rocambo**

Joseph Subser reportedly described this as the "most piquant garlic in the world." Clove color varies by soil from teak-brown to dark brown almost obscured by red-purple blush. Six to 13 cloves per bulb, but 6 to 10 most common. Double cloves common, especially in rich soils or after mild winters. Very easy peeling cloves. Four to six months storage if well grown-a fresh market garlic. (This strain is to garlic what Walla Walla Sweets are to onions.) A Northwest heirloom brought to the Portland area before 1900 and often called "Greek" or "Greek Blue" by Northwest gardeners. When well grown its flavor describes true garlic. One of our personal favorites.

**KILLARNEY RED-Hardneck, Species- Allium Sativum,Rocambo**

Outstanding Rocambo from Idaho. Original source unknown. May have been German Red or Spanish Roja but now superior to both. Better adapted to wet conditions than any variety we have grown so far. Very resistant to mold.

**RUSSIAN RED-Hardneck, Species-Allium Sativum, Variety-Rocambo**

Large to very large bulbs copper veined and purple blotched. Deep green broad leaves. Matures with Spanish Roja. Cloves all brown, easy peel. Eight to 13 cloves per bulb, doubles common. Another North West heirloom brought to British Columbia by Doukhobor immigrants from Russia. Strong flavored with warm, sweet aftertaste.

**CARPATHIAN-Hardneck, Species-Alliums Sativum, Variety-Rocambo**

From Carpathian Mountains of southeast Poland. Large, uniform bulbs. Not many doubled cloves. Bulb wrappers with thin copper veins and varying purple blotching. Plants deep green and vigorous. Matures on week after Spanish Roja. Classic garlic flavor, nice overall tang, hot and spicy, strong and garlicky.

**GERMAN RED-Hardneck, Species- Allium Sativum, Variety-Rocambo**

From old time gardeners of German descent in Idaho. Very vigorous, deep green, large bulbed. Cloves light brown with faint purple at base. Double cloves common. Often 10 to 15 cloves per bulb. Strong, hot, spicy flavor.

**CHESNOK RED-Hardneck, Species-Allium Sativum, Variety-Purple Stripe**

Large, nicely colored bulbs. Gatersleben #6811 from near Shvelisi, Georgia. Good aroma and good lingering flavor. One of the best baking garlics.

**METECHI-Hardneck, Species-Allium Sativum, Variety-Purple Stripe, Group-Marbled**

Plants upright and broader leafed than others. Large bulbil capsule and bulbils. Bulbs nicely colored and very firm. Cloves few, large and fat, with pink blushed and lined skins that are thick. Long storing. Raw taste fiery but with nice finish.

SIBERIAN-Hardneck, Species-Allium Sativum, Variety-Purple Stripe, Group-Marbled

An outstanding strain with very large bulbs due to weak flower stalks. 5 to 7 fat, dark brown cloves.

ROMANIAN RED-Hardneck, Species-Allium Sativum, Variety-Porcelain

One of the few strains from this group apparently introduced to North America a long time ago. Introduced to British Columbia from Romania. In poor soil bulbs may be purple blotched like Rocambole, but in rich soil wrappers are paper white. Cloves streaked and lined on buff brown background, one of the largest bulbs we have grown, with usually 4 or 5 cloves per bulb. We found the plant to be the tallest of the varieties we have grown. Very good storage. Taste hot and pungent with a healthy bite that is long lasting.

BAVARIAN-Hardneck, Species-Allium Sativum, Variety-Porcelain

Similar characteristics to Romanian Red.

INCHELIUM RED-Softneck, Species-Allium Sativum, Variety-Artichoke, Group-Off White.

A very large-bulbed vigorous strain but very susceptible to mold. In a 1990 taste test at Rodale Kitchens, with twenty garlic strains, this one was the top rated softneck. Discovered on the Colville Indian Reservation in an Inchelium Washington garden by Larry Geno. Original source unknown. Four to five clove layers with eight to forty cloves. Typical clove color. Bulbs over three inches possible. This strain seems to have higher soluble solids (i.e. denser, heavier bulbs.) Mild but lingering flavor with a tinge. Taste sharpens with storage.

ASIAN TEMPEST-Softneck, Species-Allium Sativum, Variety-Artichoke, Asiatic

From South Korea. Beak on bulbil capsule can reach 18 inches. Bulbs finely striped. Long storing and very uniform in size. Must be harvested as soon as leaves start browning. Said to be a relatively recent evolved variety, closer related to *Allium longicuspis* than any other variety. Fiery hot.

KOREAN-Softneck-Allium Sativum, Variety-Artichoke, Asiatic

Also from South Korea, but not as uniform in size. Many misshapen bulbs. Long lasting fiery hot. Excellent in Asian cooking.

DIXON-Softneck-Allium Sativum, Variety-Silver Skin

First obtained from the Baty's in Dixon, Montana. Fussier than Artichokes about soil and climate but still highly productive. We found this variety to be very susceptible to mold. More elegant and refined in appearance. Cloves tallish and often pinkish. More likely to have small interior cloves. Excellent for braiding and storage. Mild in flavor.

CZHECHLAND RACE-Hardneck-Allium Sativum, Variety-Purple Strip

Similar characteristics to Bavarian.

UKRAINIAN-Hardneck-Allium Sativum, Variety-Purple Stripe

Similar characteristics to Bavarian.

## THE FUTURE

As recently reported by the USDA, garlic use in the US has soared, hitting a record 3.1 pounds per person in 1999, three times the level in 1989. Despite impressive growth of other vegetables, none have experienced stronger growth in demand over the last 10 years.

This vigorous demand has resulted in the doubling of U.S. garlic production over each of the last 2 decades. Out put was again a record high in 1999 with more increases expected for 2000 and beyond. At Round House Gardens, we confidently believe that there will be room for more quality growers for many years to come. The current U.S. farm value for garlic is now estimated at 200 million dollars.

The results of this project, while in some ways exceeded expectations, also presented challenges as already mentioned. Thus is the nature of farming. We offer no excuses for our successes or failures. The main conclusions we have made are that certain varieties of garlic can in fact, perform exceptionally well in Wisconsin when consistently monitored and cared for. And perhaps, more importantly, the market still needs more growers due to increased demand. Our experience as recorded and the on going expansion in demand should assure any farmer wishing to diversify with garlic production.

The information contained in this report as well as our growing guide is made available to any interested party, either through Round House Gardens or the WDATCP-ADD.

## GARLIC PROCESSING

To pickle garlic spears or cloves is actually quite simple once you've decided on a recipe. And information is available from a variety of sources. We tried several recipes before choosing the ones we liked best. We encourage everyone to experiment, but basically any pickling recipe will do. Depending on the amount to be processed, however, the amount of time and the equipment involved will vary substantially.

### PICKLED SPEARS

Of most importance when pickling garlic spears is to process FRESH and keep COOL until your ready to do the actual work. This is important due to conditions that result in soft, rubbery spears. As soon as the spears are cut, just as they begin their curl, we pack them in ice until their ready to be put in jars. We have a old chest freezer that we use for both cleaning and ice packing the spears. All jars, caps, tools and utensils should be clean and ready BEFORE you begin the processing. We pack between 30-40 spears into a 16oz jar and have determined that it would take at least an acre of harvested spears to process 1000 jars. This is the minimum required by most small food processors.

### PICKLED GARLIC CLOVES

Pickling garlic cloves requires much more labor as each clove must be peeled (we did it by hand, although we've heard of methods using compressed air which have been successful). Once the cloves have been peeled and cleaned, again using most any pickling recipe, will yield satisfactory results.

## GARLIC POWDER

Processing garlic powder is perhaps the most labor intensive method of preserving garlic but in our opinion the most satisfactory. Garlic powder is easy to use, stores practically forever and holds the flavor better than any other method we know of. And customers love it for these same reasons so you'll sell all you can produce. We actually discovered the most efficient method for processing garlic powder after we'd done about half (about 100lbs) the hard way. Originally we painstakingly peeled and then thinly sliced each clove (by hand) and placed in our food dehydrator to dry. Definitely a difficult, tedious, time consuming and VERY STICKY process. Once dry we put the slices in our food processor to grind up into powder. What we discovered (better late than never) was we could eliminate the slicing process by just placing the cleaned cloves directly into the food processor and grinding to a puree. The puree is then poured onto Teflon sheets and placed in the food dehydrator. Once the sheets are dried they are broken up and ground up in the food processor. The great thing about this method, besides saving time, is that you have control over the end result, having either fine powder or nuggets/granules. This has proven to be a great selling point. Our garlic nuggets sold very well, although at least so far, the labor/profit ratio has not been very satisfactory.

## FINAL WORDS ON PROCESSING

Although processing our own garlic was a complex, insightful learning experience, one of cyclical completeness (from seed to jars), it remains an endeavor we'd just as soon pass on to the experts in the field of "Specialty Food Processing." The research, testing, state licensing and related regulatory details associated with any food production can be overwhelming at best. While we would not trade the experience, we feel that any one seeking to go into food production must be prepared for the work involved.

In closing we wish to thank the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, specifically the ADD Department for their continued support for new innovations, diversity and the promotion of sustainable farming in Wisconsin. Without your assistance the dreams of many creative people would go unrealized.

This report was researched and developed by Lonna and Thomas Manthe from Round House Gardens, Stone Lake, WI.

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Signed

date

# **Growing High Quality Commercial Garlic in Wisconsin**

*A Guide for The Small Scale Organic Producer*



By Thom and Lonna Manthe

This guidebook was made possible with a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Agriculture Development and Diversification.

## **Introduction**

### **Our Philosophy**

This guidebook was written with the small-scale producer in mind. We will discuss the methods widely used by successful small-scale commercial producers seeking top dollar for a high quality specialty crop. When it comes to growing high quality garlic, our philosophy is ‘smaller is better’. Our book is an example of that philosophy.

### **The Challenge**

We were hesitant when we began growing garlic in northwest Wisconsin. This was mostly due to the advice received from growers in California, where over 90% of our domestic crop is produced, who told us it wasn’t possible due to our harsh winters.

### **The Facts**

After that first successful planting of 1 pound of garlic seed in 1989, we talked to several growers from Washington State, Montana, New York, and Canada. We found out quickly that in fact most of the world’s gourmet varieties not only did well in our climes, but also produced more successfully than grown in California. The initial 1 pound planting developed to an 800 pound harvest in 1999.

So with the success of our own experience in mind, our goal is to quiet some myths of the past, demonstrating that garlic can be grown well in the far north, and that growers/consumers aren’t limited to California varieties.

The best advice we can give is to start small (10 pounds should yield approximately 50 pounds of harvest). *Learn* as you go, and expand as time and labor permits. Last, but certainly not least, we believe having a passion for garlic will enable an exceptional crop.

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## Site and Soil

Enough can't be said about selecting your site and preparing your soil for maximum results. Garlic grows best in a fertile, loose soil, much like other root crops.

The site should receive full sun all day and optimally has a gentle slope for excess drainage and run off.

After selecting your site most growers recommend preparing the soil for at least one season, preferably two with green manure crops such as winter rye, vetch, clover and our favorite for adding organic matter is buckwheat. The more organic matter introduced to the soil before planting the better. We especially like buckwheat because it grows fast and tills easily into the soil. You can grow at least two plantings during our average northern season.

By planting time, your soil should be weed and rock free. Here at Round House Gardens, we grow everything in raised beds approximately 6 inches high and 30 inches wide. Any wider makes it difficult to cultivate and weed the beds. Garlic is wonderfully suited for raised bed conditions and should result in large, gourmet quality bulbs.

Failing to prepare your soil will still produce garlic. We've had many seasons where 'volunteers' have sprouted in our gravel driveway. The overall quality although will suffer. The small, malformed bulbs will be the results limiting your profit potential.

Note that mechanization is at a minimum when seeking a high quality garlic crop. Other than the initial soil preparations, the tilling, and periodic light cultivation during the growing season, most of the labor needed to grow a superior high value crop is hands on. In fact, we sell our bulbs promoting them as hand crafted at every given chance.

## Seed

Much like prepping the soil, enough can't be said about choosing your seed. Sure, you can go to your local grocer and purchase some bulbs, then plant the cloves and end up with garlic bulbs. However, your crop may be mediocre at best. For optimal results, we strongly recommend purchasing disease free seed from a reputable grower, preferably one in your region.

All strains of today's garlic fall into two main subspecies: ophioscorodon (hard neck), and sativum (soft neck). The two subspecies breaks down further into five sub-varieties as shown below.

Hard Neck - Rocamboles; Purple Stripe; Porcelain

Soft Neck - Artichoke; Silverskin

At Filaree Farm in Washington State, they currently grow over 400 different varieties of garlic, adding to their list continuously. Ron Engeland, owner of Filaree Farm and author of the book 'Growing Great Garlic', a must read for anyone interested in garlic production, has been our mentor and inspiration for many years. He deserves credit for much of our own success. Get his book!

The power of profit resides in the seed selected for planting. Once you've determined that you have disease free seed bulbs, separate (*crack* in garlic growers terms) and plant the biggest cloves from the biggest bulbs. If your soil has been properly prepared, your effort should yield large, nicely shaped gourmet bulbs. Remember that while practically anyone can grow good garlic, it takes much effort to produce high quality (for high profit) gourmet garlic.

## Seed Sources

Irish Eyes With A Hint of Garlic PO Box 307 Ellensburg, Washington 98926	Filaree Farm RT 2 Box 162 Okanogan, Washington 98840
Nichols Garden Nursery 1190 N Pacific Hwy Albany, Oregon 97321	Round House Gardens 15699 W park Rd Stone Lake, Wisconsin 54876

## Planting

Once your soil has been prepared, raised beds have been made, and seed garlic purchased, you're ready to begin planting. For maximum profit, your goal should be to produce as many bulbs per square foot as possible. Planting in raised beds will facilitate this process.

The cracking (separating cloves) of the bulbs should take place as close to planting time as possible to prevent disease from infecting your seed, preferably within 24 to 48 hours. As of this writing, there is currently no known successful method to mechanically plant your garlic seed. So it must be done by hand, as garlic seed (cloves) must be planted pointed end up, root end down. This is vitally important because planting your cloves/seed upside down stresses the plant and will result in smaller than desired bulbs.

As already mentioned, to maximize profit and minimize expense, plant intensively in order to produce as many bulbs per square foot as possible. We and other high quality growers recommend planting seed between three and six inches apart. Since garlic does not compete well with weeds, growing intensively will minimize weeds as well. The area needed for 100 pounds of garlic is 1,000 square feet of growing area for intensive raised bed planting using 6 inch spacing, for 1 acre you will need 1,000 pounds. Planting this way should yield between 3 to 6 tons of harvested garlic bulbs per acre.

In Wisconsin, planting should take place in autumn, approximately 6 to 8 weeks before the ground freezes. This is to assure root establishment, which helps prevent frost heave.

So your beds are made, cloves are cracked and you're ready to plant. Start by using a garden hoe or trowel and make furrows the length of your planting area. Plant your cloves (remember pointed side up). Cover with soil approximately 2 inches deep. Then lightly tamp down the soil, firming it. Reminder: To yield big bulbs, plant the biggest cloves from your biggest bulbs.

Now comes what we call 'putting your garlic to bed'. This means covering with some type of mulch to protect your hard work from the upcoming winter freezes. We have tried many mulch varieties over the years, from leaves (too compacting), to pine needles (too acidic), and found that hay or preferably straw makes the best mulch. Once you've chosen your mulch, simply place it over your planted beds (along the sides too) approximately 4 to 6 inches deep. By spring it will compact to an inch or less, breaking down and adding organic matter to the soil.

Now you can relax for the winter, unless you have bulbs to sell from your previous harvest!

## The Growing Season

Garlic's growing season actually begins the moment you place it in the soil and cover. However, there's not much for you to do until spring, except taking the worthwhile effort to plan a marketing strategy.



Garlic shoots are usually the first greenery to appear come spring. We've found that before the shoots emerge is a good time to add more mulch (another 4 to 6 inches). Mulching your garlic is an effective way to prevent weeds. Don't worry. Your garlic greens will push up through the mulch. Conditionally, during abnormally wet years you may have to go through the preventive cycle of removing and replacing mulch to prohibit mold or fungus problems.

Simply pull back the old mulch, leaving it in your paths between the beds.

Garlic is in the ground longer than any annually harvested crop we are aware of, nine months, so weed control is a must. Besides mulching, you will still have to pull weeds. Other than petrochemical sprays, which we don't recommend, there are few if any alternatives. Remember that organically grown high quality garlic commands a higher price per pound than garlic typically sprayed with herbicide and fungicide found on most grocery shelves in America.

Garlic needs lots of water to produce large bulbs. Adding mulch will help to retain moisture, but to get moisture to the roots, as deep as sixteen to twenty inches, watering is likely at some point. The most important time to water during the growing season is when the bulbs are fattening up between April and June. Although water is important at this point, it's best to hold off on watering about a month before harvest, usually the end of July or early August. Too much water just before harvest can introduce disease problems and once mold and fungus take hold, they can be especially difficult to eliminate.

## Harvesting

If you watch your garlic crop, it will tell you when it's time to harvest. The best indication we've found is when 1/3 of the plant above ground is still green and 2/3 is brown. Try pulling a few to inspect, as they get close. Depending on the variety, garlic is ready to harvest beginning around mid July to mid August. We recommend harvesting your crop on a warm, dry day to make future cleaning easier.

The best advice we can give you here is 'better too early than too late', as waiting can cause splitting of the protective paper surrounding your bulbs, making them virtually impossible to sell as Grade A high quality garlic bulbs.

There has been some success in harvesting garlic through mechanical devices similar to a potato harvester. One we've seen is simply a L-shaped piece of iron used to drag and loosen the soil AND your precious bulbs for easy pulling. NEVER pull your garlic bulbs without loosening the soil first. The risk of breaking the protective paper at the neck is too great. Whatever method used, be careful not to bruise your bulbs during the harvest.



We use a 'Team Work' approach when harvesting, with each member of the team carrying out a specific duty.

Step One: Loosening the soil either by hand with a potato fork (hard work) or previously mentioned mechanization.

Step Two: 1 or 2 workers pulling the loosened bulbs one at a time and making small piles right in the beds.

Step Three: 1 or 2 workers gathering the piles as soon as possible, placing the gathered garlic into some sort of transport (wheel barrel, garden cart or pickup truck); the sooner the better to remove garlic from the damaging rays of the sun. The garlic will actually sunburn if left out too long.

Step Four: This part may actually be a bit of a social gathering with everyone getting together to bundle the plants (groups of 5 to 10), tying with twine and hanging in our drying facility. We've found that hanging the bundles upside down increases storage life, but we encourage you to experiment.

## Curing & Cleaning

You thought we were done, hey?! Nope, the fun is just beginning. Still, you now have a month off to go fishing, take the kids on vacation or begin figuring out where you'll sell your crop.

With normal humidity, curing and drying should take about 30 days. If the season is exceptionally wet, you may have to install fans and heaters to get optimal results. Garlic loses up to 50% of its weight during the curing process, and also enhances flavor substantially while curing.



You'll know when your bulbs are ready to clean if the outer paper removes easily. Most varieties have between 5 to 10 layers. The object is to remove one or two layers without exposing the cloves. This activity can take a bit of practice to perfect, so start with small or malformed bulbs. During the cleaning process, we typically will separate the bulbs into 3 main groups; Sell, Seed, Eat. Sellers are our medium sized 2 to 3 inch diameter bulbs with no scars, bruises or disease. Eaters are the tiny ones, and misshapen

bulbs (we sincerely believe they taste better and last longer). Seed garlic, as previously mentioned is our biggest and most beautiful bulbs. Remember, plant the biggest to yield the biggest.

To clean your garlic, take the bundled garlic down. Trim the tops 1 ½ to 2 inches above the neck, then with the edge of your thumbnail, lightly take one or two layers of paper off, exposing the beauty within. Then rub the root end in the palm of our hand and trim the roots to approximately 1 inch.

If you have more than 1 variety, be sure to keep them separate from each other. Once your crop is cleaned and separated into the 3 groups, you've got some time again to explore your marketing strategy.

Garlic is an extremely cyclical crop. Just as the season winds down, the process begins all over. Here in Northwest Wisconsin, we typically plant during the first or second week in October.



## Marketing

In any marketing endeavor, success is only limited by how much time and energy put into it.

At Round House Gardens, we only sell high quality hand-crafted gourmet garlic. If we didn't put the time in the field along with equal effort in marketing, our quality and consequently our profit suffers.

Since we primarily concentrated our sales at area festivals, we will only discuss those methods which have proven successful for us. We try to adhere to 5 main rules to go by. Yet, we are continuously open to making changes in presentation.

1. Sell only the cleanest, most beautiful bulbs you have.
2. Be prepared to talk garlic all day long. Your sales will suffer if you don't. Showing passion for your hard work and product will increase sales.
3. Give out samples and information such as a basket of bulbs, recipes, processed garlic products, storing tips, and growing tips.
4. Arrive early and stay late. Its amazing how many customers wait till last to buy the best, and that's your product!
5. The bigger the festival, the bigger the sales. 10 to 20,000 attendances should result with a full day sale of 60 to 100 pounds of garlic.

Early each year we go through our list of area festivals, and select the ones we want to set up at. Fortunately, northern Wisconsin hosts several festivals in the fall within 100 miles of our home. If you live near a city, your options will increase dramatically. We feel a day spent outside getting to know your customers, promoting your garlic and growing philosophy (organic) is time well spent. It keeps you sharp about your process and in tune with your customers.

It can be demanding, but you will be hooked after the first time you break sales over 100 pounds. At least that's how it worked for us. Don't ever be afraid to try new things (chocolate chip and garlic cookies). If it works, great, if not, you still learned something from the attempt. Most important, have fun!

## Last Words?

Garlic use in the U.S. as recently reported from the USDA has soared. Hitting a record high of 3.1 pounds per person in 1999, tripling the level in 1989! Aside impressive growth of several other vegetables, none have experienced stronger growth in demand over the last 10 years.

The rigorous demand has resulted in doubling of U.S. garlic production over each of the last 2 decades. Output was a record high in 1999 with more increases expected for 2001 and beyond. At Round House Gardens, we confidently believe that there will be room for more growers for years to come; that is quality growers. The current U.S. Farm value for garlic is estimated at \$200,000,000.

If the above statistics don't motivate more interest in this wonderful herb, nothing will.

So here are our guidelines. By no means complete, but it's full of our own observations and experience. We hope the information contained here inspires you to explore the possibilities of small scale commercial garlic production. At the very least we promise a 'stinky' experience!

A few other marketing ideas (some we've tried, some we may yet):

- Roadside stand
- Wholesale grocery sales
- Farmer's market
- Processed garlic products
- Mail Order via postal mail catalog
- Web site

We invite your questions and comments. You can reach us at:

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