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The garlic is upon us. This one really snuck up on me but now we're in the heat of it. Harvesting garlic was about the last thing I wanted to be thinking about with the Field Day coming and the class finishing up but that's how garlic works. Long about the hottest week of the year it's ready!

So we went out to the field and tried to pry some out with our fancy English digging forks but there was no having it. The ground had dried solid and hard and we were starting to sweat a little. Luckily the orchard came to the rescue once again and pulled out a funky custom digging tool they have for pulling up raspberry plants with the tractor.

We stapped this strange device on our tractor and presto we could cut right under the garlic and break up the soil to ease in the harvest.

So last week you all got a bulb of the fresh soft neck variety that we grow. We only do one soft neck and you will be getting more once it has cured. These first bulbs are fresh and you should treat them like the Walla Walla onions that are also coming out of the field. They will not store well because they have not been cured. To cure the garlic we take it to the harvest shed and hang it in bundles from the rafters to dry out of the sun. It is important to keep the garlic in the shade and if at all

possible cooler that air temperature. If you have garlic at home you want to find a place to hang it where there is good air circulation and shade.

A garage or shed is perfect. So how do you know when its ready? You want to look at the number of green leaves remaining on the plants. Five to six green leaves is just about right for harvesting.

Each leaf represents a bulb wrapper and the more intact bulb wrappers you have the better. The dry leaves represent wrappers that are either gone or possibly decomposing in the ground.

This year we grew three different hard neck varieties: German Porcelain, Killarney Red, and Korean Red. You should be getting one of these in your box this week.

The garlic usually takes between two and four weeks to cure and then we will start to clean and bag it. This just involves cutting the necks and roots and then cleaning the outer wrappers. It is then ready to store, replant, or eat!

The cucumbers have also started. We have two varieties of green slicing cucs and the strange lemon cucumber. If you find a small light yellow round object in your boxes don't be alarmed. It's probably a lemon cucumber and can be eaten just like any other cucumber. Enjoy!

*The destiny of nations depends on how they nourish themselves.*

*-Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, 1826*



Wendy Darling is this week's featured student.

Wendy grew up right here in Pullman but has only recently returned to finish school while also raising two children with her partner Eric. She is just finishing her pre-nursing degree and is moving next month back over to the West side of the state to attend Seattle University where she will be enrolled in their nursing program.

Her goal is to obtain a master's in nursing and become a certified nurse midwife. Wendy has a real interest in medicinal plants and helped design and plant our new medicinal herb garden.

She's also wild about beets! Try her roasted beet salad but make sure you don't forget to turn the oven off while putting the kids down for bed.

Roast cleaned beets in 350 degree oven until you can pierce the beets with a fork. Remove and chill in the fridge.

Once chilled, peel the skins and thinly slice. Coat with a dressing of olive oil, red wine vinegar, French tarragon, Dijon mustard, and salt. Enjoy cold on these hot summer days.

As the garlic is upon us, I feel compelled to share with you a Provençal dish called Aioli, which has a long and beloved history in the South of France. Aioli is just the French word for garlic mayonnaise. The French make an entire meal around it called «Grand Aioli,» or even a big public festival Richard Olney calls «Aioli monstre.» I'll reprint below selections straight from Richard Olney's explanation and recipes, from his book, *Simple French Food*. Try making aioli to serve with fish and other seafood, or with countless number of cooked vegetables, as described below.

Each summer Provençal villages organize festivals lasting three or four days each, involving orchestras, dancing, music-hall attractions, local talent shows, and fireworks, the final day winding up with an aioli monstre in the public square, the entire population turning out to pile plates high with boiled salt cod, potatoes, carrots, green beans, artichokes, chick-peas, beets, hard-boiled eggs, snails, squid stew, and huge globs of garlic mayonnaise, liberally moistened with the local rose'. And it is the unquestioned Friday luncheon for countless Provençaux...

A good aioli is made with good olive oil. It is traditionally prepared in a marble mortar with a wooden pestle... when finished, should be stiff and heavy...a blender aioli is lighter and the flavor is altogether different.

Avoid any garlic cloves that are not firm and crisp. The oil and the egg yolks should both be a room temperature to discourage the aioli's breaking.

### **Aioli**

Take two cloves of garlic per person, peel them, place them in a mortar (or use your food processor, irregardless of what he says about the change in flavor - CPS), reduce them to a paste with a pestle; add a pinch of salt, an egg yolk and pour in the oil in a thin thread while turning with the pestle. Take care to add the oil very slowly and, during this time, never stop turning; you should obtain a thick pommade. After having added about three or four tablespoons of oil, add the juice of a lemon and a teaspoonful of tepid water, continue to add oil little by little and, when the pommade again becomes too thick, add another few drops of water, without which it falls apart, so to speak, the oil separating itself from the rest.

If, despite all precautions, this accident should occur, one must remove everything from the mortar, put into it another egg yolk, a few drops of lemon juice, and little by little, spoonful by spoonful, add the unsuccessful aioli while turning the pestle constantly.

An aioli for seven or eight persons will absorb something over two cups of oil.

And, with onions and summer squash appearing, it is time to share again the Vegetables Gratin recipe. I actually had someone who ate this last year and then moved away write to me for the recipe a few weeks ago. It's very simple so I'll give it informally.

### **Vegetables Gratin**

Wash and thinly slice one potato, one onion, one summer squash, and one tomato. Oil a small gratin dish with olive oil, then layer in the vegetables, starting with the potatoes and finishing with the tomato. Drizzle olive oil over the top, then pour in about 1/2 a cup of chicken or beef stock, or vegetable bouillon. Sprinkle with one or all of these herbs: rosemary, thyme, basil, parsley. Bake at 400 for 1 to 1 1/2 hrs until nicely browned and potatoes are tender. Serves 2 - 3. Double the quantities for a larger baking dish and more people.