

Tomato Variety Guide

STANDARD TOMATOES

Early Girl (54 Days): The oblate shaped fruit have a deep red exterior and interior color, and an excellent flavor for such an early variety. Early maturity, and a smaller plant make it a great growing tomato, and a relatively disease resistant one. This variety is our main field crop as well!

Jet Star (70 Days): A tremendous producer of large, clean fruit, relatively free of cracks and scars. Globe-shaped fruit, with bright, attractive color inside and out and a very pleasant flavor. Sturdy, indeterminate vines grow vigorously, producing heavily on stakes or on the ground. Low acid tomato, if you wish to can them, you may want to use lemon juice.

Supersonic (75 Days): Produces heavy yields of large, meaty tomatoes of excellent quality. Fruit are deep oblate in shape, smooth and crack free. Use ground or stake culture for this indeterminate plant.

Beefmaster (80 Days): Standard extremely large 20 oz., Italian beefsteak with outstanding taste.

Better Boy (75 Days): A standard large fruited hybrid used for bedding plants or baskets. Fruit average 16 oz.. Not much wilt tolerance.

Patio Hybrid (60 Days): Developed for bedding plant growers or container sales. Dark green, bushy, potato leaf foliage average 24 in. Produces large 4 oz. red fruit. Perfect for patio planters.

Crista (VFFFN-TSWV) (70 Days): A nice slicing tomato with an amazing disease resistant package. Great deep red color, taste



PLUM TOMATOES

Golden Milano (70 Days): hybrid gold colored Roma with great taste, mild non acid flavor, bushy plants. Excellent for fresh market sales, canning, sauces and novelty salsa.

Mr. Gallinelli's Plum (75 Days): Solid plum shaped fruit. High yield. Excellent for traditional sauces.

San Marzano Plum (80 Days): Slightly later than Gallinelli's Plum. Great taste and a great keeper both on and off the vine. Very popular for sauces.

CHERRY TOMATOES

Sweet 100 (65 Days): Must be staked. Popular high sugar, small 1 in. red cherry fruit.

Sweet Gold (60 Days): A round golden yellow version similar to Sweet 100. Same crack tolerance and size.

Sun Gold (57 Days): Bite sized golden orange high yielding fruit. Exceptional "oh-so-sweet, fresh-from-the-vine-flavor!" Produces large yields over an extended period of time. A great cherry tomato!

Large Red Cherry (72 Days): An excellent salad tomato, with clusters of 5 on spreading, hardy vines, with dark green foliage. Full-season, high yields of deep scarlet, round, 1 to 1-1/4" diameter, flavorful fruits. Green fruits may be pickled, while ripe ones are used fresh or for preserves.

SPECIALTY TOMATOES

Lemon Boy (72 Days): Lemon yellow, deep globe fruit average 7 oz. More attractive than "golden" types, very productive, with mild flavor and unusual color.

Sweet Olive (57 Days): Sweet, bite-size, firm, oval-shaped grape tomatoes are bright red and bursting with flavor. Strong tolerance to heat, humidity, and cracking. Medium-tall plants are manageable without pruning, but staking is recommended for ease of harvest.

Morning Light (70 Days): Prolific grape tomato with true yellow color. Extended harvest period. Single stem pruning recommended.

Brown Berry (70 Days): Unusual variety with cherry-type fruits dressed in appealing, earthy-brown skins. More than a novelty-the fruits have very good flavor and are sweet and juicy. A very different look for fresh and cooked cuisine.

Yellow Pear (78 Days): Vigorous vines produce high yields of 2", yellow-skinned, pear-shaped fruits with few seeds. Slightly later than Red Pear, but with the same prolific yields and dependable performance.

Rainbow (82 Days): Very large, orange fruits, with red spots or streaks, grow up to 4-1/2" in diameter. Firm, meaty flesh with low acidity, produces a delicious flavor that's ideal in a variety of dishes or eaten plain.

Orange Strawberry (80 Days): Lovely, heart-shaped fruits have sharp tips and are almost blemish-free. Strong, sweet taste in juicy fruits that are a vibrant, deep orange in color when mature, averaging 8 oz. to 1 lb. Don't be fooled by the wispy leaves - plants are very vigorous and high yielding.

Vintage Wine (85 Days): One of the very few pastel-hued tomatoes. A favorite of gourmet grocers, with attractive, 1-1/2lb., pale pink fruits set off by golden stripes. Elegant, sweet and tasty, with a nice, mild flavor that compliments most dishes.

Costoluto Genovese (90 Days): Volante's Tomato Trial Winner in 2006! Excellent grower, with a unique finish fruit shape. Ribbed, firm and distinct these fruits can weigh up to 7 oz. with a very sweet non acidic flavor. Also has good disease resistant traits.

Mortgage Lifter (75-85 Days): Long time favorite produces large pink toned skin fruits in sizable yields. Meaty consistency, with very few seeds. Comparable to Giant Belgium with less size. Very sweet and mild, a great eater! Also known as Radiator Charlie.

Caspian Pink (80 Days): The first tomato to beat Brandywine in the California taste test trials. Exceptional flavor, originally grown in Russia between the Caspian and Black Seas.

Persimmon Orange: (80 Days): Large golden-orange fruits average 1-2 lbs! Very few seeds and positively delicious flavor. Very good producer.

HEIRLOOM TOMATOES

Giant Australian: Huge, delicious beef steak type fruit. Very thin skinned.

Red Pear (70 Days): One of the rarest of the heirloom varieties and still grown today! Hardy, medium-sized plants yield plenty of small, red, pear-shaped fruits with very few seeds. Perfect for salads, sauces or pickles.

Giant Tree (80-90 Days): Very vigorous grower, can grow vines 10-18 feet long with very strong stems and thick leaves. Large fruit is pinkish-red and tasty.

Striped German (75 Days): Flat, medium to large, variably ribbed-shoulder tomatoes are about equally shaded yellow and red. As you can imagine, the slices look beautiful.

Belgium Giant (88 Days): Has huge, sweet, dark pink fruits, weighing 1 to 2 lbs., with smooth blossom ends and a mild, low-acid flavor. Thick meat is so sweet, some growers use them for making tomato wine.

Rutgers (75 Days): One of the best all-purpose varieties. Ideal for canning. Ripens evenly from inside out. Excellent flavor - rich, mellow, full-bodied. Bright red fruits with heavy walls, weighing about 7 oz. One of the most attractive. Disease resistant.

Brandywine (90-100 Days): Originated in the 1800's and known for the high standard of good flavor. Huge flat globe 10-16 oz./280-454 gr., pinkish red fruit (some stripes).

Abe Lincoln (87 Days): Beautiful dark red fruits, sweet, solid and meaty. Fruits are smooth, free from cracks and seams, and - although large - ripen all the way through. Ideal for ketchup, juice or slicing.

Bonny Best (72 Days): An old-time favorite producing 8 to 10 oz. globed fruits that are solid and meaty. Bonny Best is highly adaptable, and performs especially well in the North.

Prudens Purple (75 Days): Large, 10 to 16 oz., dark pink, nearly purple fruits mature quite early, with the delicious flavor and good production that heirlooms are known for. Potato-leaved vines.

Black Seaman (75 Days): Another beautiful dark colored tomato, this fruit has a rich, tangy flavor. Slightly plum shaped, plants produce a dark skin, red shouldered fruit. A very hardy Russian heirloom.

Green Zebra (78 Days): A very unique and tasty tomato which ripens to a bright green with lighter green stripes. Smaller sized round fruits. Also a determinate variety, which means it can be grown in a container!

Red Zebra (85 Days): Great tasting striped tomato. Dark red with bright golden stripes. Produces good sized crop of 3" fruits.

Box Car Willie (80 Days): Large multi use reddish-orange tomato. Great for slicing, canning or sauce. This tomato has it all!

German Red Strawberry (85 Days): New to Volante's in 2911! Large red tomatoes shaped like a strawberry. Fruit can grow to 1 lb. Copious amount of delicious, robust, "old tomato" flavors with a lingering sweetness.

Evergreen (75 Days): New to Volante's in 2011! Lime green fruit that weighs about 11 oz. Vigorous and very productive. Complex, lemony flavor that is sometimes tart. Perfect for salads. Great for making fried green tomatoes as well!

Red Pearl (58 Days): New to Volante's in 2011! Improved grape tomato. Slightly larger with a more tender skin and better flavor than the traditional grape. Resists cracking and stores well on and off the vine. High resistance (HR) to fusarium wilt.

Tomato Tips

SELECTION

Select a tomato for three reasons:

1. Time of planting: If you are planting early, you will need an earlier tomato, one that doesn't mind the cooler temperatures. If you are planning on a late harvest, plant a more heat tolerant variety.
2. Growing method: Do you want to stake or just grow the plant as a bush?
3. Variety: What types of tomatoes do you enjoy? What types are you curious about?

Sunlight

A minimum of 6 hours is good. The sun really helps to bring out the flavor in the tomato when it is harvested.

Planting

You will want to harden off the plants before planting. If you purchase them here at Volante's in late May, chances are we have done this process already. Place the plants deep in the ground, as roots will grow from the stalk to help stabilize the plant while it grows.

Watering

Water deeply and evenly, but try not to water the foliage. If the foliage is wet, try to avoid picking or pruning. A deep watering promotes deep rooting.

Fertilizing

Tomatoes enjoy fertilization, especially those which contain calcium. Products such as Tomato Tone are good for side dressing throughout the summer. If the plant appears to be yellowing, it is probably lacking nitrogen. Be careful not to apply too much nitrogen before the blossoms are present, or you will get all leaf and no fruit.

Pruning

For most varieties (indeterminate) you will need to keep a weekly eye on pruning. Break off the suckers that form in between the main stalk and the leafy branches of the plant. For the other types (determinate) like Patio Hybrid, you will only need to do this process once or twice while the plants are small.

Staking

Stems need help to support the heavy fruit. Use 6 foot stakes and fix firmly in soil at planting to prevent root damage in growing plants. As the plant grows, secure it to the stake with soft ties at 12 inch intervals.

COMMON PROBLEMS:

Blossom End Rot: A large dark brown spot will develop on the bottom of the tomato as it is about to ripen. Once the spot appears, there is nothing you can do. However, you should pick the tomato off so that the plant can use its' resources for the healthy remaining fruit.

Causes: Calcium Deficiency

Solutions:

- Water more evenly and deeply
- Work in a calcium based fertilizer
- Make sure pH is correct, a very acid pH will affect the plant's ability to take calcium.

Tomato Hornworm: A greenish black worm with a distinctive point on its' head. They are around 4" long, and relatively easy to find. They feed quickly and ferociously on the foliage of the plant.

Solutions:

- Hand pick the worms off of the plants, there should not be an overwhelming amount, and they should be easy to find.
- Fall tillage will help destroy the pupae for next year.

Aphids: Small bugs, either green or black, will feed on the stems of the plant, usually on the new growth.

Flea Beetles: Small jumping insects about 1/10" long.

Colorado Potato Beetles: Small bugs with yellow and black striped abdomen, will strip the plant of foliage.

Leafhoppers & Disease Transmission: Small long green bugs, which transmit common diseases like Curly Top Virus.

Solution: Keep garden weed free, plant later to avoid

infestation, try to get a small amount of shade for the plants during the day to make the plant less desirable to the leaf hoppers.

Blossom Drop: If temperatures are below 50 at night, you are running the risk of losing any blossoms that have set on the plant. Don't worry, more blossoms will come and your plant will still produce, but it will be a later harvest. If you want to plant early and you have a way to cover them on cold nights, then you can avert this problem. You can also wait until the temperature rises and try one of the earlier varieties, like Early Girl, and follow it with a later crop of a longer maturing variety. Blossom drop could also be caused by a magnesium deficiency.

Tomato Wilt: Most non-heirloom tomatoes are blight, wilt and nematode resistant, and therefore easier to manage.

Splitting: Too much water

Sun Scald: Yellow spots on the fruits. Usually caused by too much sun exposure, try to prune less aggressively or plant more sun tolerant varieties.

Early or Late Blight: Leaves develop large brown spots. Not much you can do other than treat with chemical. Try to mulch around the plant to prevent splashing and spreading in the future. It may be wise to remove the affected plant, as to avoid spreading.



Tomato Variety Guide & Tomato Tips



Courtesy of your friends at

Volante Farms
292 Forest Street
Needham, MA 02492
781.444.2351