



## Now Get Growing – Tips For Success

Now that you know a little more about tomatoes, follow these general tips for planting and growing:

- **Give them a warm reception** - Tomatoes are hot weather plants that harvest once a season and die with the first frost. Plant only when all danger of frost is past.
- **Step out of the Shadows** - Choose a spot with full sun and rich, well-drained soil.
- **Use a Magical Mix** - Mix or till-in a generous amount of compost, organic matter or Espoma Planting Mix with your soil; mix 3 inches into the top 6 inches of soil.
- **Feeding Frenzy** - Dig a planting hole for seedlings larger than the plant container. Add about 3 tablespoons of Espoma Tomato-tone into the hole. Bury the seedling deeper than it was in the container – up to the first leaves.
- **How mulch is too mulch?** Mulching is good, but not too early or it can keep the soil from warming up sooner.
- **Who says “more is better?”** Don't overfeed. Blasting tomatoes with bursts of liquid plant food will make them tall and spindly and diminish yield. Feed monthly with a high-quality, organic plant food formulated for tomatoes, like Tomato-tone from Espoma. It's rich in Calcium to help prevent blossom end rot.
- **Stay out of deep water.** Don't encourage disease. Water in the morning, not at night. Water the base of the plant, not the foliage.

There you have it, a tomato selection primer, of sorts. Put your newfound knowledge to work.

By season's end, you'll see that you really can pick 'em!

# Don't Be a Couch Tomato - Grow Your Own Tomatoes

Nothing tastes more delicious than home grown tomatoes. If you've never grown your own, now is the time. It's easy, fun, saves you plenty of money, and it's a great way to introduce kids to gardening. But with more than 700 kinds to choose from, how do you select and grow the right tomato for your garden?

## Growers can be Choosers

With more than 700 kinds of tomatoes to choose from, it's clear there's a lot to consider when choosing tomatoes for your garden. So do yourself a favor – consider the following:

- **How they Grow.** Do you want your entire crop to ripen all around the same time? If so, you want tomatoes known as 'determinates'. If you prefer to have tomatoes that ripen throughout the season until they are killed by frost, look for indeterminates. You should also consider whether you will need a stake, trellis, cage or container as well as how much space will you need to grow.
- **Disease resistance.** Unfortunately, some of the best tasting tomatoes are less resistant to disease – a gamble you might not want to take. If you don't want to take this risk, you might want to choose disease resistant varieties.
- **Seeds or seedlings?** Seeds offer a wider selection, but established plants save time and effort. Remember to start seeds early indoors – 6 to 8 weeks before the last expected frost.
- **Heirloom or hybrid?** Think time-tested vs. new and improved. Heirlooms are old varieties that produce seeds identical to the original plant, so you can grow an identical plant the following season. Hybrids cross two varieties to bring out desired traits. Hybrids are more resistant to disease and generally produce more fruit, but many believe heirlooms just taste better.
- **Flavor.** Whether for sauces or slicing, we grow tomatoes for one mouthwatering reason: the fruit.

## Which tomato is right for me?

For starters, take a look at these 6 favorites:



**Brandywine** – A big (1 - 1 1/2 lb), rosy-pink tomato; old-time heirloom tomato on the vine. Intoxicating flavor. *Indeterminate.*



**Cherry** – Hybrid-type vine that yields a generous number of small, sweet fruits; more like treats than tomatoes. *Indeterminate.*



**Beefsteak** – Here's the beef – up to 2 lb. fruit that slices beautifully. Full, juicy flavor. Hybrid, vine. *Indeterminate.*



**Rutgers** – Uniform, 4 - 6 oz. rich red fruit with great flavor that's hard to beat – an example of the legendary “Jersey tomato”. Vigorous, healthy foliage. *Determinate.*



**Early girl** – She's so popular. Early-ripening (50-60 days) hybrid vine with tasty, 4 to 8 oz. fruit. *Indeterminate.*



**Roma** – Also known as **Italian plum tomatoes.** Saucy little beauties – 2 to 4 oz. of marinara magnificence. *Determinate.*

For more information about our products and services please contact our customer support department at:

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