

TOMATO EL TOMATE



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An NNC
Program

TOMATO EL TOMATE



Pictured on front: Beefsteak Tomato

Tomatoes are a vibrant and tasty way to add flavor to your favorite sandwiches, salsas, sauces, salads, and more! There are hundreds of different varieties of tomatoes grown in PA with most types falling into one of five different categories: Standard Globe (regular-sized slicer tomatoes), Beefsteak (large slicer tomatoes), Cherry (mini tomatoes), Plum (paste tomatoes), and Oxheart (heart-shaped tomatoes). Some of the most notable types include Red Slicers, Saladette tomatoes, and Heirloom tomatoes. In general, fresh PA tomatoes taste the best when harvested in summer and early fall. ^[1]

Health Benefits of Tomatoes:

Tomatoes are a juicy fruit rich in the antioxidant lycopene (giving them their red color) which is linked to a reduced risk of heart disease and cancer. They are also full of vitamins and nutrients including vitamin C, potassium, folate, and vitamin K. Locally grown tomatoes are much denser in nutrients and taste! ^[2]



Growing Local Tomatoes:

Tomatoes are an extremely versatile and important food for many cultures. The Easton Urban Farm Manager, Mark Reid, notes that “many local farmers chose to grow tomatoes because they are always in high demand.” Tomatoes thrive in warm and dry climates, making them increasingly challenging to grow in PA due to inconsistent weather patterns and other environmental factors. In spring, many farmers will start tomatoes from seed indoors and transplant them to high tunnels to extend their growing seasons and increase crop success.



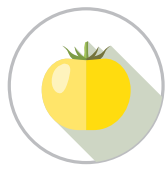
Heirloom tomatoes, like those grown at Red Sol Farm, are old varieties that have been passed down from generation to generation. They come in unique colors, patterns, and sizes. Locally grown tomatoes, especially heirloom varieties, are more sustainable than most supermarket-available tomatoes, requiring fewer resources while providing a better-quality crop. ^[1]



Pictured above: Green Zebras, Brandywines, Purple Cherokees, and Sun Golds

10 Common Tomato Varieties in PA:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Roma Tomatoes | 6. Celebrity Tomatoes |
| 2. Brandywine Tomatoes | 7. Green Zebra Tomatoes |
| 3. Early Girl Tomatoes | 8. Cherry Tomatoes |
| 4. Beefsteak Tomatoes | 9. Cherokee Purple Tomatoes |
| 5. Grape Tomatoes | 10. Sun Gold Tomatoes |



FUN FACTS!

The first tomatoes to arrive in Europe were probably a yellow variety, as the Italians described them as *mala aurea* (Latin for “golden apple”), which became *pomi d’oro* (“golden apple” in Italian) and finally *pomodoro* in modern Italian.

- There are over 10,000 varieties of tomatoes!
- Though we use tomatoes like most vegetables, they are really a fruit. They are legally considered vegetables because of an 1893 Supreme Court that determined that “for the purposes of trade and commerce - that is, the things covered by the Tariff Act of 1883 - tomatoes were really vegetables.”
- Tomatoes are considered to be an acidic food, registering an average of 4.6 on litmus pH strips - *a little zing for your tastebuds!*
- Tomatoes were introduced to Europeans in the 1600s by Spanish explorers who brought them back from the Americas where they originated.

[1] Orzolek, M., et al. (2006, September 21). Tomato Production. Penn State Extension. <https://extension.psu.edu/tomato-production>
[2] Bjarnadottir, A., (2019, March 25). Tomatoes 101: Nutrition Facts and Health Benefits. Healthline. <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/foods/tomatoes>

HOMEMADE PICO DE GALLO Recipe

Serving size: 4 /Total time: 10 mins

Ingredients:

- 5 ripe medium tomatoes diced
- 1/2 white onion, finely diced
- 1 jalapeno, finely diced (or more depending on desired spice level)
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 2 tablespoons of lime juice
- Salt to taste

Directions:

1. Place all ingredients into a large bowl
 2. Mix and season with salt, to taste
 3. Cover and place in fridge until ready to serve and enjoy! *Best served cold a few hours after prepping.
- Store in fridge.

Tomato Storage & Preservation:

Store ripe tomatoes in fridge. There are a variety of recipes that use tomatoes at varying levels of ripeness.

To preserve tomatoes, you can make sauce, paste or jam, then use a water bath canner to seal jars or freeze.

You can also make tomato pickles and oven-roasted tomatoes stored in oil. Red or green, there are so many ways to preserve and enjoy tomatoes!



This flyer, part of Nuture Nature Center's "Fresh Right Now: Advancing Agritourism in the Lehigh Valley through Seasonal Food Education" project, is supported by the 2022-2023 Pennsylvania Agriculture Product Promotion, Education and Export Promotion Matching Grant.