



# J&L Garden Center

The All Season Gift  
and Garden Center

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www.JLGardenCenter.com

## Tomato Care

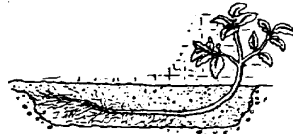
Centuries ago, long before the white man sailed to these shores, the tomato was a prize crop of the Indians of Mexico and South America; the Aztecs, Mayan and Incas. These ancient people believed the tomato to be a gift of Quetzacoatl, the god of healing. Baskets, heaped high with the jewel-like fruit, were carried on the heads of the temple priests to Quetzacoatl's altar. After tasting the wonders of the new world, the Spanish conquistadors turned their great galleons toward home. The holds were heavy with gold, but down in the captain's cabin there was another sort of treasure - a few tomato plants clinging to life in clods of dry Mexican earth, waiting to be transplanted into European soil. Cortez and his men had relished the flavor of the tomato; but somehow, their countrymen were more impressed by the plant's jewel-like blossoms. The tomato became the pride of the European flower garden, not the vegetable garden! Fortunately, some adventuresome individual took a bite from the bright, shiny fruit a century later and eagerly shared the delight of his discovery with others. Today, the tomato is among the most popular fruits in the world. *Yes, it is a fruit, not a vegetable.*



Apply two pounds of **Dr. Earth Vegetable Garden Food** per 100 square feet and spread one inch of **Bumper Crop, Soil Pep,** or "**well-rotted**" compost over the soil. Do not use fresh manure, it can rob nutrients from the soil and may cause blossom-end rot. Roto-till the soil thoroughly.



Plant tomato plants on an angle; not straight down. Bury tomato plants shallow, but only leave three or four inches of the stem out of the ground. The buried stems will produce roots. Be sure to remove all leaves from any buried stems.



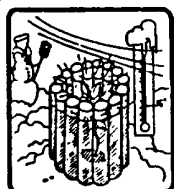
**Water immediately after planting.** Water them again with a mixture of water **J&L Root Starter.** Repeat the application of this liquid fertilizer weekly during the first month.

Protect your plants from the sun and from hot winds until your plants have climatized: at least a week. You can use an old pot or a piece of cardboard around the plants for protection against the sun and wind.

Protect your plants from frost, especially if you plant them in April or early-May. A **Hot Cap** will protect a plant from a mild frost while a **Wall of Water** will protect a tomato plant to about 16 degrees. Set up your Wall of Water at least 5 days before planting; to help warm the soil.

Water consistently but not constantly. Tomatoes prefer well-drained soil and deep irrigation. Tomatoes do not like sprinkling but they will tolerate it if you cannot irrigate.

Tomatoes do not like too much water, especially late in the season when they should start to ripen. Too much water will



delay ripening. Too much water, late in the season, may also cause the fruit to split. To help tomatoes ripen faster, let the soil dry out a little when the tomatoes start to mature and turn pink.

Do not over-fertilize tomatoes during the summer and fall. Too much fertilizer promotes plant growth, at the expense of fruit production. Tomatoes do not need much fertilizer after the first two months. Fertilize them once or twice a month with **Blooming and Rooting Fertilizer** to help the plants grow and increase fruit production as well.



### Two Common Tomato Problems

**Blossom End Rot.** Blossom-end rot is a dark, sunken area on the blossom end of the tomato. This problem is not a disease, it is a physiological problem within the plant. Blossom-end rot is caused by a calcium deficiency. Stress (too much or too little water) can create the calcium deficiency within the plant. Keeping tomato plants consistently moist, not wet or dry, helps to prevent this problem. Adding gypsum (calcium) may also help. If your tomatoes do have blossom end rot, you can still eat them. Just remove the bad portion and eat the rest.

If your tomatoes 'always-have-blossom-end-rot' or they 'just-don't-grow', try adding two tablespoons of **Epsom Salt** and four tablespoons of **Gypsum** around each plant when you first plant your tomatoes. You will be pleased with the results later in the summer.

**Blossom Drop** This problem is usually caused when either the **night temperatures are too cold** (stay below 55° F) or the **night temperatures are too hot** (stay above 75° F). This problem can also be caused by too much Nitrogen or water. Tomatoes set fruit when night temperatures stay between 55 degrees and 75 degrees. Use **Fertilome Pepper & Tomato Set** if the blossoms do not set fruit when they should, especially during the hot summer weather. Tomatoes rarely drop their flow-

ers for an extended period of time. It is usually just a problem during June and July. Unfortunately, that is the time the tomatoes need to set fruit so the tomatoes have time to ripen before it gets too late in the fall.

## Disease Resistance

The letters by each variety indicates that it is resistant to a particular disease.

- V - Resistant to Verticillium**
- F - Resistant to Fusarium**
- N - Resistant to Nematodes**
- T - Resistant to Tobacco Mosaic Virus**

If you have any of these diseases already in your soil, plant varieties that are resistant to them. There are no chemical controls for these diseases, and it takes several years to control these diseases by using crop rotation. See our **Crop Rotation** hand-out for more information about controlling these diseases.

## Definitions

**Determinate** - The plant grows to a determined height. It doesn't need staking. The fruit usually ripens within about a 2 to 3 week period. Most commercial growers use these varieties for easy harvest.

**Indeterminate** - The plant continues to grow all summer; to an indetermined size. Plants can reach a height of 6' to 8' tall, if they are staked. They produce flowers and fruit for an extended time.

## Tomato Varieties

**Acclaim 70-75 days Determinate.** Extra large, firm red fruit. Excellent flavor. Good fresh or canned.

**Ace 75 days VFN Determinate.** Large, red smooth skinned fruit.

**Amish Paste 74 Days Indeterminate.** Paste tomato. Large, plum shape, meaty, thick walled fruit with few seeds.

**Beefmaster 80 days VFN Indeterminate.** Large fruit up to 2 lbs. Hybrid of Beefsteak.

**Beefsteak 90 days VFN Indeterminate.** Produce ribbed, irregular, rough fruit

**Better Boy 72 days VFN Indeterminate.** Large fruit for slicing. Produces heavy crop. Sturdy, thick-walled fruit,

**Better Bush 72 days VFN Determinate.** Large tasty fruit. Good plant for pots.

**Big Beef 80 days VFN Indeterminate.** Large, slicing tomato with good flavor. New variety that many gardeners prefer over Beef Steak.

**Big Boy 60 days Indeterminate.** Thick-walled fruit. Good Slicing tomato.

**Black Tomato 85 days Indeterminate.** Medium, 2 to 3 inch tomatoes. One of the sweetest tomato varieties.

**Campbell 1327 75 days VF Determinate.** Firm, medium size fruit. Resistant to cracking.

**Caspian Pink Tomato 80 days Indeterminate.** Russian heirloom variety. Beefsteak-type fruit. Exceptionally flavorful, 10oz tomato.

**Celebrity 72 days VFNT Determinate.** Good mid-season tomato. Medium to large size fruit. Excellent flavor. Recommended by USU extension. One of the best varieties for this area.

**Champion 62 days VFN Indeterminate** Solid meaty fruit. Good for sandwiches. Large 10oz fruit.

**Christmas Grape Hybrid 80 days Indeterminate.** Small tomatoes in grape-like cluster. Strong, sweet flavor. High yield.

**Delicious 77 days Indeterminate.** Large beefsteak-type fruit. Can produce up to 2 lb fruit. Excellent flavor. Solid meat, small seed cavity

**DX 52-12 60 days Determinate.** Excellent flavor. Good for canning. Does not have much disease resistance. One of the most popular varieties in Utah, not well known in other areas.

**Early Girl 62 days V Indeterminate.** Meaty, small to medium 4 to 5 oz fruit. Good flavor. Produces continually in season.

**Fantastic 70 days VF Indeterminate.** High yield of smooth, medium sized fruit.

**Floramerica 72 days VF Determinate.** Fruit is large and sets readily, in almost any weather.

**Fourth Of July 54 days VFNT Indeterminate.** Early season, medium to small fruit, similar size as Early Girl. A new variety with a lot of potential. Excellent flavor.

**Golden Boy 80 days VFN Indeterminate.** Large, yellow fruit. Good, mild flavor.

**Health Kick 72 days Determinate.** Great for eating fresh. Contains 50% more lycopene than other varieties.

**Heartland 68 days VFN Determinate.** Round red fruit on compact plants. Good for patios and containers.

**Husky Gold Hybrid 70 days VF Indeterminate.** Medium to large golden fruit. Thick walled and meaty. Sweet and mild flavor.

**Jet Set 70 days VFNT Indeterminate.** Hybrid of Jet Star. Sets fruit well. Excellent flavor.

**Jet Star 72 days VF Indeterminate.** Medium sized, firm, good flavor fruit. Fruit is firm and holds up well in handling.

**Juliet Hybrid 60 days Indeterminate.** Small, 1 to 1.5 inch, 1oz tomatoes in grape-like cluster. Very sweet flavor. High yield.

**La Roma 62 days Determinate.** Firm, meaty red fruit. Hybrid of Roma. Excellent canning tomato.

**Legend 68 days Determinate.** Large, 8oz to 1lb red fruit. Very Tasty. Good slicer with few seeds.

**Lemon Boy Hybrid 72 days VFN Indeterminate.** Large, 7oz yellow fruit. Very smooth, high quality tomato.

**Long Keeper 78 days Indeterminate.** Firm, meaty red fruit. Stores for 6-12 weeks or even longer.

**Moscow 70 days V Determinate.** Smooth skin, thick-walled fruit. Good for canning. Older variety, not much disease resistance.

**Mr Stripecy 80 days Indeterminate.** Large, red and yellow striped fruit. Heirloom variety. Tasty to eat, does not can well.

**Oregon Spring 65 days Determinate.** One of the first to ripen, sets fruit at cool temperatures. Medium to small fruit.

**Patio Tomato 70 days F Determinate.** Strong, sturdy plants, great for container gardening. Small to medium, good flavored fruit.

**Red Cherry 75 days Indeterminate.** Small red fruit, up to 3/4 inch. Excellent flavor. Great for salads.

**Red Grape Hybrid 60 days Indeterminate.** Small, oval, 1inch, tomatoes in large clusters. Very sweet flavor. Chewy with few seeds.

**Red Pear 78 days Indeterminate.** Small, pear shaped tomatoes in clusters. Good fresh, in salads. Can be use for canning and in sauce.

**Roma 75 days VFN Determinate.** Good canning tomato. Solid meat, not particularly good for eating fresh. Common salsa tomato.

**Sugary Hybrid 60 days Semi-Indeterminate.** Small, 1/2oz pink tomatoes in grape-like cluster. Very high sugar content. Pointed end.

**Sunsugar Hybrid 62 days FT Indeterminate.** Small, yellow, cherry tomatoes. Very, very sweet flavor. High yield.

**Super Fantastic 70 days VFN Indeterminate.** Produces all growing season. Excellent flavor. One of the more common varieties grown.

**Sweet 100 VF 62 days Indeterminate.** Cherry Tomato. Produces clusters of sweet fruit. Plants can grow tall. The best cherry tomato variety.

**Sweet Baby Girl T Indeterminate.** Small, crack resistant tomatoes. Very sweet flavor. High yield.

**Tomatillo 80 days Sweet to mildly-tart, 1" to 2" green, fruit enclosed in a papery husk. A novelty fruit to grow.**

**Viva Italia Hybrid 80 days VFN Determinate.** One of the best 'Roma-type' tomatoes. High sugar content. Blocky, pear-shape fruit weighing 3 to 4 ounces. Great for canning, sauces, salsa.

**Whopper 70 days VFN Indeterminate.** Large tomato, up to 2 pounds.

**Yellow Pear 70 days Indeterminate.** Small, yellow, pear-shaped fruit. Very sweet. Great in salads. Good for pickling.