

A word about tomato types

There are several ways of classifying tomatoes. There are vine [indeterminate] vs. bush [determinate]. There are paste vs. slicing. There are regular vs. cherry. Some tomatoes are hybrids, others heirlooms. And of course, large vs. small.

Let's first look at the way the plant grows. Tomato vines that keep on growing longer and longer until frost kills them are called **indeterminate**, because it is indetermined how long the vine will grow. These are often grown on a trellis (NOT just a cage!). They will typically get six or eight feet long during a season, and may have many productive suckers which may be pruned off for earlier and larger fruit.

Plants which have vines that grow only a few feet before ending in a flower cluster are called **determinate**. They are smaller plants, but yield just as well, since they have productive suckers which grow a few feet before also ending in a flower cluster. And the suckers have suckers, and so on. Determinate varieties are often grown in cages to support them.

Trellising and caging are done to keep the tomato fruits off the ground, hence cleaner and less prone to insect or rodent damage. However, many folks [like us!] grow both kinds on the ground. Mulching the ground with plastic, leaves or hay keeps the fruit off the ground and helps retain soil moisture. **Paste tomatoes** have less juice, making them easier to use for making sauces and tomato paste, since they cook down more quickly. However, their flavor is good as any, and their less juicy interiors make them ideal for sandwiches and salads. All our paste tomatoes are determinates. **Slicing tomatoes** are "regular" tomatoes, real chin-wetters when you bite into them. **Cherry tomatoes** are a whole separate type of tomato, higher in sugars than non-cherry types. They are sweeter just before becoming fully ripe; more tomatoey flavored when fully ripe. Generally 1/2 to 1 inch in diameter, cherries tend to grow in clusters like grapes. All our cherries are indeterminate types. We refer to large tomatoes as anything larger than a baseball, some being large enough to more than cover a slice of bread. As a rule, larger tomatoes are later than smaller ones. Although there are important exceptions, small tomatoes (tennis ball to golf ball size) tend to ripen earlier and produce more fruit than larger varieties.

Heirloom tomatoes are varieties that have been handed down from generations of gardeners. Someone years ago discovered a great tomato and started a long line of seed saving that has lasted to this day. Since tomatoes tend to self-pollinate, there is very little cross-fertilization caused by insects, so it is easy to keep varieties distinct. You may save seeds from any variety labeled "heirloom" and know that next year you will get the same tomato. Almost all heirlooms are indeterminate. **Hybrids** are varieties that have been purposely cross pollinated to produce offspring with a desired feature. Crossing is done by hand pollinating tomato flowers, making the seed somewhat more expensive. Hybrids are often referred to as "F1", meaning first generation. Second generations of hybrids tend to go off-type, so saving a hybrid's seeds will give a wide range of tomatoes.

Protect your early tomato plantings

with individual greenhouses or

"cloches", using either of these two low cost methods:
1) Cut the bottom off a gallon milk jug, then slide it down over a stick stuck into the ground next to your tomato plant, so that the jug covers the plant. The stick keeps the jug from blowing off, and the jug provides several degrees of frost protection, plus warmer days and nights. Because the cover is not on the jug, daytime temperatures inside won't get too hot. When the tomato outgrows the jug, danger of frost is likely past.

2) Place a tomato cage around your tomato as soon as you plant it. Then place a clear plastic trash bag over the tomato cage, using the prongs of cage to skewer the bag to the ground around the plant. Then cut a slit across the bottom of the bag (now at the top of the cage) and hold it open with clothespins. If a cold night is forecast, use the clothespins to close the opening at the top, but remember to open it again before mid-morning on sunny days to keep your plant from baking. The larger size of this cloche allows the protection to stay in place well into late June to protect the tomato plant from occasional chilly nights and cold windy days. For added protection include a few jugs of water inside to warm up during the day and give off heat at night.

We'll have Tomatoes

In case you need more tomatoes than your garden produces, we will have tomatoes at market and at the farm from early August until late October. We grow all the varieties listed here, plus a few more.

Tomatoes for canning will be available from mid August to mid September, and we'll be bringing canners to market as soon as they are ready. We offer both "all red" canners and "mixed heirloom" canners. Our canners are tomatoes that are over-ripe or have slight defect (though usually not splits) and we offer them at a deep discount over our #1 tomatoes.

Beginning every mid-August we begin drying our tomatoes as well, and offer these in 3 oz. bags. Generally we separately dry several types: Hogheart tomatoes, mixed yellows, mixed pinks, and mixed reds. Try them all to discover your favorite.

You can find us...

...during the Market season at these locations:
Newport Farmers' Market, Saturday 9am-1pm
behind the Newport Cultural Center, downtown.

Orono Farmers' Market, Saturday 8am-1pm and
Tuesday 2-5:30pm at the Steam Plant parking lot on
College Ave.

Pittsfield Farmers' Market, Monday and
Thursday 2-6pm at Hathorn Park.

Unity Farmers' Market, Saturday 9am-1pm at
the Community Center on School Street.

Waterville Farmers' Market, Thursday 2-6pm on
the Concourse beside Main Street.

...and of course at the farm. We are at the end of
the Organic Farm Road, 1/2 mile down the Snakeroot
Road from the Higgins Road end. Complete directions
are on our website.

Come see how we grow tomatoes and cherry tomatoes
in our fields and greenhouses during our Annual Farm
Tour on the second Sunday in July, from noon to 4pm.

Seeds

We also have our own home-grown tomato seeds
available for all the varieties marked with an asterisk.
Tomato seeds remain viable for five or more years,
so a packet purchased this year will produce
seedlings for you for several years to come.

Our 2012 Tomato Varieties

- Slicing Tomatoes
- Paste Tomatoes
- Sandwich Tomatoes
- Cherry Tomatoes
- Large Tomatoes
- Small Tomatoes
- Early Tomatoes

From mid May to early July, we offer a wide range of
tomato plants for your garden or container. Our
heirloom and hybrid varieties are mostly from local
seed companies, so may not be familiar to you. Here
we offer variety descriptions and planting suggestions
which we hope will help you grow exactly the
tomatoes you would like to see in your garden.

All 6-paks are \$3.00

Singles are \$1.00 ea. or 6 for \$5



Snakeroot Organic Farm

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416-5417 tom@snakeroot.net or lois@snakeroot.net
<http://www.snakeroot.net/farm>

Tomatoes for 2012

* = our own organically grown seed; F1 = Hybrid
OP = Open Pollinated; OG=Organically Grown seeds
Letters in [BRACKETS] indicate how plants are labeled.

PASTE TOMATOES.

Tomatoes with less juice and more meat. Good for fresh eating or processing.

Hogheart. [HH] *OP An heirloom paste tomato we have been saving seed from since 1985. Five to seven inches long and pointed, hogheart is the size of a banana, with excellent flavor, fresh or cooked. Very good for sandwiches, sauces, or drying. Indet. Mid-August.

Snakeroot Golden Arrow. [SGA] *OP. OG. Det. A long golden very firm and dry paste tomato we have been developing ourselves for over 10 years. Heavy yielding. Early Sept.

Roma [ROMA] *OP. Det. 65 days. Compact disease resistant plants are vigorous, strong and heavy yielding. Thick walled, meaty tomatoes with deep red color and mild flavor.

San Marzano [SANM] F1. Indet. 80 days. Produces heavy yields of long cylindrical fruit with delicious balanced flavor & meaty flesh. A little larger than Roma, but much smaller than Hogheart.

Opalka. OP. OG. Indet. Massive 3x5" red paste tomatoes, excellent full flavor and few seeds. Vigorous, very productive. Late Aug.

CHERRY TOMATOES. All our cherry tomatoes grow large plants with grape-like clusters of fruits. Though not especially early, any of them will give you the keys to tomato heaven! All are indeterminate.

Yellow Pear Cherry. [YP] *OP. A teardrop shaped indeterminate heirloom, grows up to ten feet high trellised in our greenhouse. A flavor and color treat.

Red Pear Cherry. [RP] *OP. Like Yellow Pear, only red, and fruits tend to be somewhat larger and more tomato flavored. Pear shaped cherries are less prone to splitting in wet weather.

Gardener's Delight. [G.Del] *OP. An indeterminate heirloom producing one-inch round fruits of outstanding rich sweet flavor. Tendency to crack.

Sungold. [SG] F1. Bright tangerine orange with intense "tropical" flavor. Large indeterminate plants produce early and continue thru season. Tendency to crack, but flavor is worth it.

Black Cherry. [BC] *OP. 3/4 inch dark purple cherry tomatoes with mahogany color tones. Sharp and delicious tomato flavor.

EARLY TOMATOES. Who can wait for that first tomato picked from the garden? Although by the end of the season they are not the most prolific of producers, early varieties are the first to provide you with that long-awaited treat.

Moskvich. [MOSK] *OP Cold tolerant indet. heirloom, a real taste treat. Good sized early juicy tomatoes are usually the first tomato we bring to market. Moskvich starts producing large tomatoes, and keeps up until frost with gradually diminishing sizes, but still good flavor. Early Aug.

Valley Girl. [VG] F1 A cold-tolerant determinate hybrid that is among our earliest. Medium-large crack-resistant fruit for two weeks followed by two more weeks of smaller fruit. Early August.

Frosty's Heart. [FH] *OP. An Italian heirloom pink heart-shaped tomato, second early, prolific. Medium sized, smooth silky texture. Mid August.

Jetstar. [JET] F1.72 days. Indet. Tremendous producer of large, red, low acid tomatoes. Developed by Harris Seeds. Mid August.

Celebrity. [CEL] F1. 75 days. Multiple disease resistance and tolerance means a long picking period. Large, deep oblate fruits. Mid August.

Legend. OP. Very early 4-5" glossy red round fruit. Tolerant to late blight.

Mt.Princess [MtP] OP. Det. Early W. Virginia round red tomato, 6-8 oz., very productive. Mid Aug.

MIDSEASON & LATE TOMATOES.

The reason for growing the later varieties is that they produce nicer, larger and more varied tomatoes than the early varieties.

Big Beef. [BB] F1. Indet. Workhorse producer of near-perfect 10 oz red beefsteak tomatoes. Wide disease resistance. Large, vigorous vines. Mid August.

Pruden's Purple. [PRU] *OP. An indeterminate heirloom producing large irregular pink fruit about three weeks earlier than Brandywine, which it resembles. If you like tomato sandwiches, this is the one you want. Prone to cracking in wet seasons. Potato-leaved. Late August.

Japanese Black Trifele. [JBT] *OP OG. 74 days. Heirloom, pear shape and burgundy color. 4-6 oz. excellent rich flavor. Harvest when shoulders are green for best flavor. Indet. Mid August.

Paragon. [PAR] F1 OG. Vigorous determinate. Large, firm tomatoes with good flavor, organic seeds. Mid August.

Lillian's Yellow. [LIL] *OP. This indet. heirloom grows very large rich tasting lemon yellow tomatoes, some irregular, some perfect. Less acid than red varieties. A pretty addition to salads. Potato-leaved. Originated by Lillian Bruce of Tennessee. Early Sept.

Cherokee Purple. [CP] *OP. Indet. Heirloom. An unusual variety from Tennessee, originated by the Cherokee people. Large (10-13oz.) globes have brownish-purple flesh with green shoulders and sweet flavor. Early Sept.

Valencia. [VAL] *OP. OG. 76 days. Indet. Round, smooth, 8-10 oz orange tomatoes, heavy producer. Meaty interior, few seeds. Maine family heirloom.

Brandywine [BW] *OP. The benchmark for real tomato flavor. Indeterminate, potato-leaved. Pink, large, thin skin, meaty fruit, produces better in cool weather. Early September.

Paul Robson [PR] OP, OG. Indet. Russian heirloom 6-16oz. oblate brick-maroon tomato similar in taste to Black Krim with its own unique smokey flavor. Tangy sandwich tomato. Late August.

JTO 99189. [189] F1. Vigorous det. producing high yields of large blemish free fruit. Uniform ripening. Resistant to early blight. Early Sept.

Defiant [DEF] F1. 70 days. Mid-sized late blight resistant plants are high yielders of deep red round tomatoes with great taste. Mid-August. Det.

Black Krim OP OG. Indet. Smokey, juicy flavor. Average one pound fruits are ripe when shoulders are still green. Heavy producer.

Copia. Indet. 85 Days. OP. OG. Fine stripes of candy red and golden yellow inside and out, this tomato averages just under a pound each.

Red Defender. F1. Det. Large round red 4-5" fruits, excellent full flavor. Vigorous, very productive. Late Aug.

Indigo Rose. OP. OG. Indet. Vibrant indigo 2" fruits, with superb multi-faceted flavor. Vigorous, very productive. Late Aug.

Burpee's Beef. F1. OG. Indet. "Supersteak" Flattened red 1-2 lb. fruits, meaty dark red flesh, excellent full flavor. Vigorous, very productive. Late Aug.

Bobcat. F1. Det. Round red 12 oz. fruit on a thick, vigorous, strong vine. Excellent full flavor, very productive. Late Aug.

We'll also have small quantities of other varieties during late May and June. Ask us about them.

Tip: Save your plant labels so you'll know what to ask for next year.