INSECTS AND HARVESTING

- Pick when fully red or yellow and before the first frost.
- Select perfect fruits for storage in the fall.
  1. Pink ones will ripen at room temperature or can be stored a week at 55° to 65°F.
  2. Full-sized green tomatoes can be pickled or fried. Or, you can wrap them in paper when picked before frost and store them 3 to 6 weeks at 55° to 65°F. Leave stems on and check often. Throw out any that look bad. Move them to room temperature to ripen.
- Cherry tomato plants can be pulled up and hung in a cool place to ripen the fruit. Pick as needed.

STORE FULLY RIPE TOMATOES IN THE REFRIGERATOR.

INSECTS AND DISEASE

- Protect young plants from cutworms by wrapping the stem with newspaper or by paper collars buried 1 inch in the soil. Or, use an insecticide when planting.
- Plant disease-resistant varieties where possible.

RECOMMENDED VARIETIES

Early:
- New Yorker (64)
- Springset (67)
- Red Pak (71)

Mid-season:
- Jetstar (72)
- Cambell (73)
- Heinz 1350 (75)
- Roma (76) for paste

Late:
- San Marzano (78) for paste
- Supersonic (79)
- Burpee (80)
- Matraucie (86)

RECOMMENDED VARIETIES (Days from transplanting to harvest in)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Days</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
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<td>Mid-season</td>
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<td>Late</td>
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KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Plant recommended varieties.
- Transplant after danger of frost.
- Plant in sunny location.

OTHER BULLETINS IN THIS SERIES PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON VEGETABLE GARDENING.
**TRANSPANTING**

Tomatoes cannot withstand cold temperatures. Plant after the last frost (May 20 - June 1).

1. Set plants 1 inch deeper than they were in containers. If tall and leggy, set deeper and on a slant.

2. Water well, preferably with a starter fertilizer solution.

3. If there are frost warnings, the small plants can be covered at night with boxes, milk cartons, etc. Remove covers during the day when it's warmer.

**BASICS**

Tomatoes need full sun for high yields!

- **soil**: Plant in well-drained soil.
- **fertilizer**: Before planting, mix in 2 pounds (4 cups) of 5-20-20 fertilizer per 100 square feet of soil. Sprinkle a high nitrogen fertilizer 4 inches from plants after fruits begin to form.
- **weeding**: Mulching with a 3 to 5 inch layer of leaves, grass clippings or straw or a sheet of black plastic controls weeds with less work than cultivation. Mulching also keeps soil moist and fruits clean.
- **water**: Provide plenty of water. You can help prevent blossom end rot by keeping the soil evenly moist.

**VARIETIES**

- There are tomatoes for fresh eating and for paste as well as cherry-sized ones, and red and yellow colors.
- Plant an early variety for early harvest. The midseason and late varieties taste better, so save most of your space for them.

**TRAINING TOMATOES**

If you let tomatoes grow naturally along the ground they are less work and produce more fruit. However, plants grown in cages or on stakes produce cleaner fruit and make harvesting easier. More plants can be grown in a limited space if they are trained.

**On ground**

To keep fruits from rotting on ground, spread a mulch (see p. 2) around plants. Set plants 3 feet apart in rows 4 feet apart.

**Caged**

This is less work than staking, and yields are greater.

1. To make a cage, take a 6 x 5 foot section of 6 x 6 inch or 8 x 8 inch mesh wire. (Concrete reinforcement wire works well.)
2. Roll into a cylinder and hook ends together.
3. Remove bottom rung to make prongs that you can push into soil around plants.
4. Let plants grow up inside the cage.
5. Set plants 2 to 3 feet apart with 5 feet between rows.

**Staking**

This is more work than caging, but requires less space to store stakes over winter.

1. Set 6-foot stakes 10 inches deep in the soil, about 3 inches from the plant's base.
2. As the plant grows, tie stem loosely to the stake every 12 inches with pieces of cord or cloth.
3. Remove side shoots so there is one main stem.
4. Set plants 2 to 3 feet apart with 3 feet between rows.

Remove stakes and cages at the end of the season and save for next year.

**CONTAINERS**

Grow tomatoes in containers if you don't have much space (see No. 12 in this series: Space Saving Ideas).