


Tomato Care Sheet



 **Exposure:** Full Sun. Some varieties will grow in some shade. Ask your sale associate for those varieties.

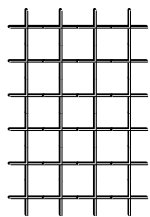


Soil: **In the ground.** Prepare a hole about twice the size of the container and 1-1/2 times deep. We Recommend **Gardner & Bloome Harvest Supreme, or Gardner & Bloome Soil Building Compost.** Save half of the excavated soil and mix in the same amount of mulch thoroughly. I use the planting mulch generously, approximately 1 to 1 ratio of soil and mulch. Place tomato in the center of the hole and back fill with soil/mulch mixture. Pat soil firmly. Make a well about 2 to 3in high and 2 feet in diameter around the tomato plant to help retain excess water.



In Containers: We Recommend **Kellogg Premium Potting Soil** for the best results in containers. When planting “indeterminate varieties” I suggest using a container or pot that is a minimum 18” X 18” or about the sized of a 15 gallon can. If you use a smaller container, you may find during the middle to the end of the season your fruit production will suffer due to the roots in the container becoming root-bound. Root-bound makes it difficult for your plant to maintain enough water or fertilizer to grow properly.

Most determinate varieties will do fine in a 5 gallon container.



Trellis: Indeterminate plants can reach as long as 16 feet or more. This means that some sort of support is necessary to keep your vines and tomatoes off the ground.

A 2”x2” stake 8’ or 10’ foot is very effective. A heavy mesh wire cage can be used for years with great success. If you use a wire cage, buy the largest cage available because your tomato plant will grow large.

Determinate plants grow much smaller. A medium sized wire cage is enough for these plants. Ask your Garden Center Expert as to what size cage to use.

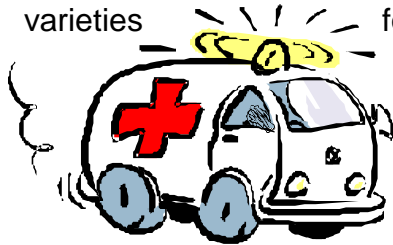


Watering: Depending on the weather, young plants in containers should be watered every 4 to 5 days. As these plants mature, watering should be done every other day to every day on hot summer days. Plants in the ground should be deep watered every 7 to 10 days. Check your humidity and temperature and the soil to determine how much water to apply.



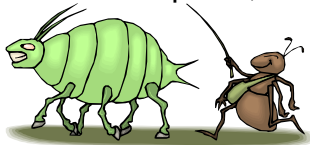
Fertilizing: Fertilize with a complete, soluble fertilizer with HUMIC ACIDS. Keep phosphorous levels high. Over fertilizing will produce a large rangy plant and will delay fruiting. Some favorites are **Gardner & Bloome Natural & Organic Tomato, Vegetable & Herb Fertilizer, or Gro-Power Flower N Bloom 3-12-12.**

DISEASES: Early determinate varieties generally have poor disease resistance; however, disease is not usually a problem until mid-season. Plant disease-resistant varieties for a sustained harvest. Leaf blight diseases such as early blight and alternaria begin to appear about mid-April, and plants are more susceptible once fruit production begins.



To reduce disease problems, use resistant or tolerant varieties and use organic sprays. Fusarium wilt (race 1), a disease caused by a soil fungus is common when soil temperatures approach 60 degrees. Fusarium races 1 and 2 are present in southern areas. Where fusarium wilt is present use of resistant varieties is recommended. Currently there is not an organic solution for complete control of Fusarium wilt. Do not plant eggplants, peppers, or potatoes in wilt-infested soil. Avoid planting tomatoes near walnut trees to avoid "walnut wilt". Late blight is more common in inland regions at higher elevations, especially during the spring and fall. A Favorite fungicide is Green Light Neem Spray. Blossom-end rot is prevented by ensuring an adequate level of soil calcium, and steady moisture.

PESTS: Aphids, White flies, mites and Little Green Worms (Loopers) common invade our plants usually in the early summer through late fall. Spray with a fast jet of water or use an organic spray such as Green Light's Spinosad.



Tomato hornworms can best controlled by just picking them off your plant with a pair of tongs.

