

PLANTING GUIDE FOR TOMATOES

Tomatoes' wild species believed to be originally produced in Peru and Ecuador. Early 16th century, tomato was introduced to Europe by the Spanish. In the beginning, it was treated as an ornamental plant as they believed tomato contains toxins and unfit for human consumption. Now, we all know that tomato contains high nutritional value specifically rich in Vitamin C and phytochemical lycopene. Tomatoes are common ingredients in various cuisines whether eaten raw or served as cooked vegetable. A big percentage of the world's tomato crop is used for processed products such as canned tomatoes, tomato juice, ketchup, "sun-dried" tomatoes and puree.

Choosing a location for your tomatoes:

- A. Plant directly in the ground with a spot that can receive 6-8 hours of sunlight.
- B. Create raised beds to allow for soil to have better drainage and aeration. It solves the problem of bending too often which can cause backaches or leg pain. It keeps away pollutants from mixing into your soil.
- C. Containers are an option. Due to limited yard space, portable containers can also be considered.
- D. Window boxes for high-rise apartments. You can cultivate small varieties such as cherry tomatoes just make sure to anchor it securely to prevent from falling below.



Planting tomatoes

- A. When you purchase tomato plants, check if the appearance is healthy and plant them immediately after purchasing.
- B. Add compost to the soil. You can either put organic compost or buy commercially-available compost.
- C. Evaluate pH level of the soil. Tomatoes grow well in mildly acidic soil. Make sure to maintain soil pH between 6.0 and 6.8.
- D. Find a spot that can receive at least 6-8 hours of sunlight each day.
- E. Proper spacing of tomato plants at least 18-36 inches apart.
- F. Dig the tomato plant deeply into the ground around 50-80% of the plant totally covering the roots.

Tomato Care

A. Prepare stakes for your tomatoes to support the tomato vine during the time of planting. You can consider bamboo, electrical conduit, iron-wrought bars or scrap wood as stakes and secure them using strips of cloth or garden twine or purchase commercially-bought stakes or trellis.

D. Give them warm water every 7-10 days in the morning to prevent mold or fungal diseases.

E. After 1-2 weeks, to keep moisture in during dry weather and prevent weeds from thriving it is best to apply mulch.

F. Apply fertilizer whether organic or chemical fertilizer to enrich the soil.



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