

VEGETABLE FRUIT! TO KNOW: TOMATOES

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Tomatoes originally from the Andes mountains are a popular garden fruit and full of lycopene and antioxidants. They help battle cancer-causing agents and keep you healthy while being very delicious. Some people with a low tolerance for this high acid plant have found they don't enjoy the very low acidity varieties. Tomatoes are a prime species in the garden and need a lot of help with disease prevention, companion plantings to help with pest insects, trellising, and feeding. Still, we consider this the gateway vegetable that most people who would not normally have a garden start out with because they are delicious and versatile. Be sure to visit the Bradford Farm's annual tomato festival to try out hundreds of varieties. The 11th Annual Tomato Festival is a great event for gardeners and foodies alike. This year's fest, held at Bradford Research Center, (4968 S Rangeline Rd, Columbia, MO 65201), September 3rd, will run from 4 to 7 p.m.



SOW & GROW

Start seeds indoors in April (for Missouri) and transplant outdoors after danger of frosts. There are determinate tomatoes (they are ready all at once for that planning project!) and indeterminate tomato varieties (ripening all season). Place tomato plants in a site receiving full sun (7 hours or more daily). Tomatoes need lots of warm sunshine for optimum taste. Prepare the garden bed by adding lots of well-rotted-not green-compost and some Dolomite lime (tomatoes love Calcium and Magnesium). Transplant the tomato deeply. Space tomato plants 18 to 36 inches (45 to 90 cm) apart; space them half the suggested distance in warmer climates especially using tomato cages. You can also plant them in containers or 5-gallon buckets with drainage holes drilled in. With adequate sunlight, water, and patience, you'll be greatly rewarded with a potentially six-foot tall tomato plant with big colorful and juicy tomatoes.

PRESERVATION TIPS

To enjoy tomatoes all year long, you can dry, freeze, or preserve them. To dry tomatoes when they are coming from the garden or at the market, put some of those ultra-ripe tomatoes to excellent use by drying them in the oven. Low-temperature roasting dries them out a bit, intensifying their flavor beautifully. Dried tomatoes can be stored in the fridge or freezer, or coated with olive oil. To freeze tomatoes, drop tomatoes into boiling water for 60-90 seconds and, using a slotted spoon, transfer immediately into a bowl of ice water to cool. Skin will slip easily from the flesh. Transfer into storage bags and store in the freezer. Frozen tomatoes will retain flavor for 12 to 18 months.

NUTRITION

Is it true that tomatoes can actually help in the fight against many cancers? The answer is a resounding "yes." Some of the most exciting studies on tomatoes have focused on their ability to protect against cancer, especially prostate cancer. They contain the antioxidant lycopene, one of the most powerful natural antioxidants. It's important to remember that processed tomatoes—soups and pastes—are more effective than raw tomatoes at reducing cancer risk.

CHOICE SALSA



If you get a lot of tomato "seconds" (the bruised and cracked ones), chop off the bad spots and use them!

Ingredients

- 6 cups peeled, cored, seeded and chopped ripe tomatoes
- 9 cups diced onions and/or peppers of any variety
- 1 and 1/2 cups commercially bottled lemon or lime juice
- 3 teaspoons canning or pickling salt

Yield: About 6 pint jars

Instructions

1. Wash and rinse pint or half-pint canning jars; keep hot until ready to fill. Prepare lids and ring bands according to manufacturer's directions.
2. To prepare tomatoes: Dip washed tomatoes in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds or until the skins split. Submerge immediately in cold water. Peel off loosened skins and remove cores. Remove seeds and chop (¼- to ½-inch pieces).
To prepare onions: Peel, wash, core and dice onions (¼-inch pieces).
To prepare bell peppers: Wash and core bell peppers. Remove the seeds and membranes before dicing (¼-inch pieces).
To prepare hot peppers: Wash and remove stems of hot peppers. Keep or remove as much of the seeds and membranes as you wish,
3. Combine prepared ingredients in a large pot; add lemon juice and salt. Bring to a boil over medium heat while stirring. Reduce heat and simmer salsa for an additional 3 minutes, stirring as needed to prevent scorching.
4. Fill the hot salsa into prepared hot jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. If needed, remove air bubbles and re-adjust headspace to ½-inch. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel. Adjust lids and bands.
5. Process in waterbath canner for 15 minutes. Let cool, undisturbed, 12 to 24 hours and check for seals.
6. Refrigerate any leftover salsa and enjoy!



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Food Is Good!



HARVESTING AND SAVING SUNFLOWER SEEDS

Harvesting sunflower seeds is a fun fall garden activity. In order to harvest the seeds successfully, the heads need to dry out. This can be done on or off of the stem, but for this article, we'll focus on drying on the stem.

1. Wait until the sunflower begins to wilt. Sunflowers are ready to harvest once the heads become brown and at least half of the yellow petals have dropped.
2. Check the seeds. If they're still on the flower head, they should begin to plump up. The seeds should be hard and have the black-and-white striped shell.
3. Tie a paper bag loosely with twine or yarn over the sunflower head. This keeps animals from eating the seeds before you get to them.
4. Change out the paper bag as it gets wet or torn with weather. You may be able to prevent the bag from getting wet during rains by placing a plastic bag over it. Make sure to remove it after the rain to prevent mold from setting in.
5. Once the back of the flower head turns brown, cut them off and prepare to harvest the seeds. Leave about a foot of stem attached to the flower head. Keep the paper bag attached to the flower to keep any seeds lost in transport.
6. Empty any seeds from the paper bag to your storage container. To remove the seeds from the flower, brush them with your hands, a vegetable brush, or another sunflower head.
7. Rinse the seeds in a colander with cold, running water. Allow to completely drain.
8. Dry the seeds on a thick towel or layers of paper towel for several hours. The seeds should be flat and in a single layer.
9. When the seeds are completely dry, transfer seeds to an airtight container and store in the refrigerator or freezer. Unroasted seeds can be kept for several months inside the refrigerator, but last longest inside the freezer.



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Special points of interest:

- Planting & Events Calendar
- Beneficials vs. Pests
- Preserving Your Leafy Greens

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Frozen greens will keep for up to one year in your freezer.

The process includes:

- Trim, chop, and wash

- Blanch

- Dry

- Bag, seal, label, and date

- Place in freezer



The Dirt



CCUA's seasonal growing guide and news

Preserving Your Favorite Leafy Greens



Howdy folks! Summer is in full swing, if a bit too wet this year, and if you're tending your own garden then you're undoubtedly harvesting a lot of your leafy greens. So what do you do when there are simply too many vegetables and not enough mouths? Do you let some go to waste? No! You can preserve that harvest!

You may be surprised to find that any commonly cooked leafy green can be preserved through freezing. You can freeze collard greens, spinach, and mustard greens for prolonged enjoyment.

So first things first, start with trimming, chopping, and washing the greens. Trim off the tough portion of stems. Remove the fibrous stem from kale by simply folding a leaf in half, and cutting along the edge. Then cut or tear the leaves into big pieces, place them in a big bowl of water, and swish them around to remove any dirt. Rinse thoroughly.

Next up: blanching. To blanch your greens, dump the leaves into a big pot of boiling water. Cover the pot, and cook for two and a half minutes (three minutes for collards). Begin timing the moment the greens hit the water. Transfer to a big bowl of ice water, and let them chill for two and a half to three minutes. Drain well.

After your greens are properly blanched, it's on to the drying process. To dry, lay the leaves out on a baking sheet lined with either a cloth towel or several paper towels. Blot the top with more towels. The goal here is to absorb excess water—leaves don't have to be completely dry before you freeze them, but try to get them as dry as possible.

Finally, you can bag, seal, label, and date your greens. To do this, arrange clumps of leaves in serving sizes, and then loosely pack into plastic freezer bags. Label and date accordingly.

Presto! You're now ready to enjoy your greens for up to a year. We hope this guide will better equip you to utilize each and every last bit of your harvest moving forward.

To use, just remove from the freezer, thaw, and cook as usual. These can be fantastic for soups and stir fry, mixed into scrambled eggs or with potatoes.

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Beneficial Garden Bugs



Convergent Lady Beetle



Green Lacewing



Predaceous Ground Beetle



Assassin Bug



Pirate Bug



Soldier Beetle



Spider



Syrphid Fly



Sixspotted Thrip



Western Predatory Mite



Predatory Wasp



Praying Mantis

Planting Calendar for Autumn

Bradford Research Center Organic Field Day
 Thursday, August 6th
 3:00pm - 8:00pm
 @ Bradford Research Center

Summer Member Dinner
 Friday, August 15th
 6:00pm - 8:00pm
 @ the Urban Farm

Bradford Research Center 11th Annual Tomato Festival
 Thursday, September 3rd
 4:00pm - 7:00pm
 @ Bradford Research Center

Harvest Hootenanny
 Saturday, September 12th
 @ The Urban Farm
 3pm - 8pm

Lucky's Work Nites
 5:00pm - 7:00pm
 @ Lucky's Market

Thursday, August 27th
 Thursday, September 10th
 Thursday, October 8th

Kilgore's Community Garden Workdays
 5:00pm - Sunset
 @ 700 N. Providence

Every Wednesday
 April through September

Urban Farm Potlucks
 6:00pm - 7:00pm
 @ the Urban Farm

Friday, September 9th

City of Columbia Events

Composting Workshop
 10 am @ Capen Park
 Composting Demo Site

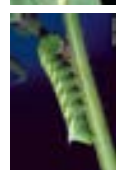
Thursday, August 6th
 Saturday, September 12th
 Saturday, October 24th
 Saturday, November 14th

~ August 2014 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Transplant Outdoors: Beets, Carrots, Leaf Lettuce, Mustard, Radishes, Spinach, Turnips						
Transplant Outdoors: Bush Beans, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Kale, Kohlrabi.						
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Napa Cabbage						
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Member Dinner						
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Lucky's Work Nite						
30	31	~ September 2014 ~				
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Direct Seed/Transplant Outdoors: For Over-wintering - Beets, Carrots, Onions, Radishes.						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Spinach						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Lucky's Work Nite						
27	28	29	30	~ October 2014 ~		
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Lucky's Work Nite						
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Direct Seed/Transplant Outdoors: Garlic, cover crop mixture, winter wheat, rye						
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Compost WS						
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Halloween						

Garden Pests



Aphid



Tomato Hornworm



Cabbage Worm



Spotted Cucumber Beetle



Striped Cucumber Beetle



Cutworm



Flea Beetle



Japanese Beetle



Grasshopper



Potato Beetle



Stinkbug



Squash Bug