

1



2




3

BEGIN WITH
THE
END IN MIND!



4

SO MANY CHOICES!
WHERE TO START?




Questions to ask yourself

How do you plan to use tomatoes?

- Salads-small and cherry types
- Slicers
- Sauce/canning
- Preserving


5


ANATOMY OF A CATALOG ENTRY



SUNGOLD
\$12.00 dozen. Sungold's Fruity or Tropical Flavor is a big hit with everyone who tastes it. The bright apricot-orange round globes are 1/2 to 3/4 inches across and are borne on long, 10-15 fruit, green-leafed trusses. The vigorous indeterminate vines produce equally well in the field and the open spring greenhouse. F-1 SC, TM, JV.

TRASSIC SUNGOLD
\$4.99 100 plants 200 heads
TRASSIC SUNGOLD TRANSPLANT
\$4.99 100 plants 200 heads
\$4.99 500 plants 1000 heads



STUPICE  65 days. This cold-tolerant OP hybrid comes to market, tall, upright, 2-2 1/2 feet tall. Stupice consistently grows high, mature for weeks throughout the season. Purges out fruit over the entire season, indeterminate potato leaf variety.

IMMERS STUPICE
\$4.99 100 plants
IMMERS STUPICE ORGANIC/BIO-DYNAMIC
\$6.99 100 plants
IMMERS STUPICE TRANSPLANT
\$4.99 100 plants
\$4.99 500 plants for more information

- OP vs F1 hybrid
- Days to Maturity 65-75 for PNW
- Determinate vs Indeterminate

Territorial Seed Catalog Spring 2021

6

DAYS TO MATURITY (DTM)

How long does it take for the **first** fruits to ripen once the tomato is planted out? DTM varies by variety.



Optimal for Pacific NW **65-75** DTM
My personal limit is < 85 DTM

7

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Select appropriate varieties
- Avoid disease problems with proper plant care



10

PLANTING TOMATO SEEDS



Why? Much greater selection of varieties, and it's incredibly rewarding.

11

BASICS OF GROWING FROM SEED

- Sow indoors by **early April**
- Plant **¼" deep** in sterile seed starting mix
- New or sanitized containers
- Keep lightly moist
- **Use heat mat to speed up/improve germination**
- Keep under direct light
- Transplant to larger container at ~2 weeks

12

TRANSPLANT AT ~2 WEEKS



- Wait for first true leaves to appear
- Plant deeply so that stem is buried

13

STRIVE FOR STURDY SEEDLINGS

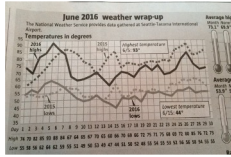
- Proper lighting keeps seedlings from becoming leggy
- This seedling is three weeks old



14

SITE SELECTION AND PREP

- Warmest, sunniest spot available. **South or west** facing is optimal
- **Preheat soil with plastic**
- Prepare for potential cold snaps



15

50 IS THE MAGIC NUMBER

Soil temp
 Consistent
overnight temps



16

PLANTING OUT — MID-MAY

- **Harden off plants:** gradually introduce them to the real world
- Plant **deep or trenched**
- Give them space! **4 square feet** per plant



17

FERTILIZERS

- Balanced fertilizer
- Avoid high nitrogen



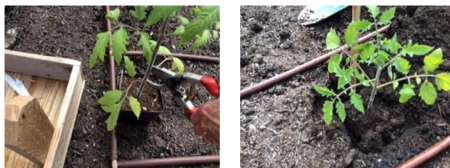
18

PLANTING PROCESS



19

PLANTING PROCESS

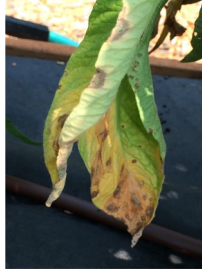


Remove lowest leaves and plant deeply

20

PROPER PLANT CARE FOR BEST RESULTS

- Watering
- Plant maintenance, pruning
- Disease control, other problems
- Fruiting and ripening



21




WATERING

If you remember nothing else, avoid overhead watering!

- Deep **even** watering helps promote root growth
- **Don't allow soil to completely dry out**

22

MAINTENANCE

Stake/cage	Prune	Mulch
		
Keep plants off the ground	Remove lower axillary shoots Prune for better airflow	Mulch bare soil

23

Support plants to keep the foliage healthy



24

Cattle panels



25

SETTING FRUIT

- Tomatoes are self-pollinating and do not **require** insects, although bumblebees can enhance pollination
- Movement and wind are adequate; can be assisted with pollinator devices
- Optimal temps **65-80°F**



26

DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

- Early season issues
- Physiological disorders
- Diseases
- Pests
- Ripening



27

FLEA BEETLE

- Holes in lower leaves
- Small jumping bugs
- Cosmetic damage, can be ignored



28

PHYSIOLOGICAL LEAF ROLL

Looks bad, but no impact to health of plant or to fruiting

Response to heat, drought, pruning, and over-fertilization

Some varieties are more susceptible



29

BLOSSOM-END ROT



Calcium uptake disorder related to **inconsistent watering**

Roma-types are especially prone

Check soil pH and calcium level with soil test
— tomatoes prefer a pH of 6.0–6.8

30

SUNSCALD

South-facing and exposed fruit

Do not overprune foliage

Shield with lightweight shade cloth if needed



31

CATFACING



More common in early season

Fruit set during cool, wet weather

Heirlooms more prone

Modern hybrids have bred this trait out

32

HERBICIDE DRIFT

- Herbicide drift damage
- Twisted, deformed new growth



33

FUNGAL DISEASES



Target-board lesions
Early Blight (Alternaria)

Small yellow-brown spots
Septoria Leaf Spot

Remove affected leaves and preventively treat plant with **fungicide**

34

FUNGICIDAL PRODUCTS

Products are used preventively

Copper-based products are easy to use and have low toxicity

Always read the directions: is it safe to use on tomatoes, how long before harvest, and is it effective for the disease?



35

LATE BLIGHT

Airborne fungal-like organism, infects wet foliage
Highly contagious
Remove plants, don't home compost
Proactive pruning helps, but doesn't eliminate risk



36

Practice good garden sanitation-
clean your hands and pruners



37

PESTS OF THE 4-LEGGED VARIETY

Stolen tomatoes? Bites out of tomatoes?
Entire plant eaten?

Squirrels, rodents, and deer can be a challenge in the garden

- Motion-detecting sprinklers
- Harvest fruit before it's fully ripe



38

ENCOURAGING RIPENING

- Remove flowers and small fruit in late summer
- Reduce watering
- Harvest in advance of rain to minimize the chance of cracked fruit
- Fruit with color development will ripen indoors



39

Varieties



40

SMALL TOMATOES

- **Cherry/grape types**
Sungold
Sweet Million
Sparky XLS
- **Saladette/julienne**
Copper Beauty
Bronze Torch
- **Small/early**
Bloody Butcher
Moskvich



41

LARGE AND SAUCE TOMATOES

- **Roma (sauce) types**
San Marzano Redorta
Work Release Paste
- **Large (slicer) types**
Big Beef
Sweet Tangerine
- **Oxheart types (pictured)**
Midnight Sun
Rebel Starfighter Prime



42


BLACK TOMATOES

- **Purple/brown/black**
- **Cherry size to slicers**
Black Cherry
Chocolate Sprinkles
Black Krim
Black Sea Man
- **Unique sweet-savory quality**



43

GREEN-WHEN-RIPE (GWR)

- **Outstanding flavor**
- **Ripening signs—softening, slight yellow tinge in most**
- **Slicer types**
Aunt Ruby's German Green 
Green Giant
- **Small to medium types**
Green Tiger
Green Zebra



44

BLUE (ANTHO) TOMATOES

- Same pigments as blueberries
- Natural sunscreen for plant; extended shelf life on vine and off
- Ripe when bottom turns red
- Wide range of types:
Indigo Blueberries
Blue Beauty (shown)
Rebel Starfighter Prime



45

TRIAL GARDEN STANDOUTS 2023



Hearts Seeds

Cowboy



Turner's Seed

Purple Zebra



Hearts Seeds

Midnight Sun



Hearts Seeds

Bronze Torch

46

Roasted Tomatoes



47

BE BOLD-TRY SOMETHING NEW!



48

Resources

- Diagnosing Problems and Diseases: Hortsense <https://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/>
- Master Gardeners of King County Gardening Tip Sheet #7: *Growing Tomatoes* <https://extension.wsu.edu/king/tip-sheet-7-tomatoes/>
- WSU publications: *Growing Tomatoes in Home Gardens* <https://pubs.extension.wsu.edu/growing-tomatoes-in-home-gardens-home-garden-series>


Photos Credits: All photos are thanks to Marcia Dillon unless otherwise noted.

49

Questions?



50




Spring Series Presentations

2024 Growing Groceries Classes and BDG Garden Workshops

Date	Class
Wed, March 27	Grow Kale, Broccoli, and Related Cole Crops
Wed, April 10	Grow Tomatoes, Peppers, and Other Edible Nightshades
Wed, April 24	What Loves Heat? Cucumbers, Squash, Beans and Melons
Sat, May 4	BDG Workshop – Irrigation and Effective Water Management
Wed, May 8	Savoring What You Sow: Roots and Herbs
Sat, May 18	BDG Workshop – Beneficial Insects

More info: <https://kingcounty.mastergardenerfoundation.org/education/gg/>

51



Master Gardener Resources

Ask a Master Gardener

Send a messages with questions and photos to: ask-a-mastergardener@live.com

Or use the online form at <https://extension.wsu.edu/king/ask-a-master-gardener>

Become a Master Gardener


For information on King County Master Gardener training, visit <https://extension.wsu.edu/king/gardening/become-a-master-gardener>

Applications for the 2025 class will open in September 2024

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. Please report violations through your local Extension office.

52

Thank you!



is brought to you by



King County Master Gardener Program
<https://extension.wsu.edu/king/gardening>

- Demonstration Gardens
- Plant Clinics
- Education Outreach
- Science-based Publications



Master Gardener Foundation of King County
<http://www.mgfkc.org>

- Fundraising for these programs

More information about growing groceries:
<https://kingcounty.mastergardenerfoundation.org/education/gg/>

53
