



# Newsletter

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## What do you know?

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Tomatoes and tobacco are in the same plant family  
True or False



Tomatoes require full sun  
True or False



Tomatoes grow best when the soil pH is more alkaline  
(above 7.0)  
True or False

*"It's difficult to think anything but pleasant thoughts while eating a homegrown tomato."  
- Lewis Grizzard*



Tomatoes are a cooler weather crop  
True or False



Tomatoes are the most popular vegetable grown in the home garden  
True or False

## Tomato contest

CONGRATULATIONS!

*Patricia Hibschman*

*You are our tomato contest winner!!*

“Tomato juice is the official state beverage of Ohio, USA.”

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*What do you know?* Continued from page 1



The tomato is native to China  
True or False



The USA is the world's largest grower of tomatoes  
True or False



*Always Fresh...  
Always Homemade!*



There are about 7,500 varieties of tomatoes  
True or False



Tomatoes were once thought to be poisonous  
True or False



The leaves, stems and green unripe fruit of the tomato plant contain the poisonous alkaloid tomatine  
True or False

# Grow Fall Tomatoes to Get Fresh Produce Until Frost

The purpose of tomato growing in the fall is a bit different than spring/summer tomato gardening. In the spring and summer, you may be planting in order to get a significant crop to use for eating, canning, freezing, and drying. In the fall, the idea is simply to have fresh tomatoes to enjoy through that first freeze.

Late tomatoes are most commonly grown in warmer climates where frost dates are later.

But gardeners can grow fall (late) tomatoes in many areas by simply planting early enough in summer to allow enough time for tomatoes to mature in the fall.

There are three important keys to growing late tomatoes successfully:

## 1. Plant appropriate varieties

In more temperate and sub-tropical areas, nurseries and garden centers provide a selection of tomato seedlings beginning in midsummer. Choices may be limited especially when compared with first crop tomatoes. When you grow tomatoes in the fall, you're on an unpredictable calendar and at the mercy of a looming Jack Frost. Choose early-producing varieties, smaller tomatoes, and certain heirlooms. They set fruit and mature in the shortest time, making them easiest to grow on a limited time frame.

## 2. Plant strong seedlings

Late tomatoes are set in the ground at the height of summer heat. They need strong root systems in order to get established. Dense roots help them survive the remaining weeks of a hot summer. By the time the heat passes, tomato plants should be ready to blossom.

There are several sources for strong fall tomato seedlings.

- **Start your own seeds:** Start seeds indoors in early summer, about 6-8 weeks before setting them in the garden. Follow regular seed starting procedure used in the spring.
- **Take cuttings from your current crop:** Prune suckers from planted tomatoes in early summer, root them, and transplant them when the time is right.
- **Clone your existing tomato plants while they're in the ground:** Root tomato branches or suckers right into the ground next to the growing mother tomato plant.
- **Buy late tomato plants** at local garden centers (available regionally).
- **Buy leftover tomato plants:** Occasionally you can get lucky and find tomato seedlings left over from the spring/summer planting seasons. Check a home improvement centers and nurseries for these special deals.

*Grow Fall Tomatoes to Get Fresh Produce until Frost* continued from page 3

### 3. Plant at the right time

Conventional wisdom says to determine a fall tomato planting window by counting back 60-85 days from the first frost date. As you select a planting date, pick one early enough so that your variety has plenty of time to put out fruit before frost. Allow at least 3-4 weeks padding to a tomato variety's estimated days to maturity, giving fruit plenty of time to mature.

#### Another way to grow a late tomato crop

Some gardeners grow late tomatoes by simply cutting back their summer tomato plants to force a flush of new growth and new fruit. Keep pruned plants watered well and fertilize them with a balanced tomato fertilizer.

A word of caution: if plants have been plagued by diseases during the summer season, it's best to discard them and start again with new tomato plants for the fall.

## Quiz Answer Key

1. True
2. True
3. False
4. False
5. True
6. False
7. False
8. True
9. True
10. True



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