

## *Suggested care for these tomato seedlings at this time...*

These seedlings could be put into the ground (maybe using the trench method) if you think you have a warm, sheltered place with appropriate soil, i.e. well drained, sheltered from frosts, ground temperature are above 50°F and increasing (we are barely there); nights are preferably minimum of 55°F air temperature (plants will grow but won't set blossoms); and 6 hours/day minimum sunshine. As this isn't a likely scenario for most of us right now, especially with all the wet weather we've been having, waiting till late April or early May to plant the seedlings in the ground is the more likely scenario to get the plants going.

So, while awaiting planting in the ground, you will have to coax these seedlings along in containers in a sheltered location (e.g. under eaves, against south-west walls, maybe inside next to a sunny window, and/or maximize as much sun as possible – but remember the seedlings will need to be watered: sheltered locations often don't get much rain). However, these particular seedlings also need to be repotted now to a bigger container so that the plant can develop more roots and be ready for the big day when it goes into the ground. Transplant to containers allowing at least 4 inches diameter and 6 inches depth and **relabel them**. Most of the taller seedlings could go into gallon size containers with a good soil mix by removing the bottom leaves and burying the current root ball all the way up to just below the top set of leaves. Tomatoes will produce adventitious roots all along the buried stem. They also need some fertilizer; your choice, but tomatoes respond well to fertilizer applications, especially phosphorus. They still need to be hardened off somewhat, but they have been outside (for better or worse) in a sheltered location for almost a week.

When ready to plant, picking the correct position within the garden is key. Tomato plants prefer soil that is well drained and high in organic matter and nutrients and lots of sun the better (i.e. think of the tomato fields in the Central Valley with no shade). If possible, a new location every several years is desirable too. The pH of the soil should be around 6-7 (neutral to slightly acidic). The soil should be dug to around 8 inches deep to provide good drainage and allow a good root structure. You should normally separate plants by at least 2 feet and plant in rows 3 feet apart followed by mulching around the plants. Support the plants by providing a frame (or cage) or at least tie them securely but not constrictively to a stake. As the plants grow, pinch the lower, younger, side shoots off (this will not be necessary if the tomato plant you are growing is of a bush variety). Keep the plants well watered (well watered depends upon your location and soil) and mulched ...and in around 2 months (depending on variety and weather) you should start getting a good crop of tomatoes ready for harvesting all summer long.

CHEERS... and happy tomato growing in 2006  
Steve Morse

**P.S.** There are lots of places to find "tips" on tomato growing... in fact it seems that everybody has "tips"... and I always like to refresh my information...and maybe I missed something... and maybe there is something "new" (like the use of red plastic film as mulch?) ...an excellent new (or maybe updated) source from summer 2005 is a UC Coop Extension Publication, ANR 8159, "Growing Tomatoes in the Home Gardening", available free for downloading at <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/pdf/8159.pdf> Check it out!!!

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# Tomatoes 2006

(Pre-Plant Sale)

## Seedling Sale

at

**Pleasant Hill Garden Study Club**

for

**Members and Guests**

**April 4, 2005**



**Pleasant Hill  
Recreation & Park District**

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People, Parks, and Programs Since 1951

**IND**-Indeterminate **DET**-Determinate

**V**-Verticillium **F**-Fusarium **N**-Nematode **T**-Tobacco Mosaic

Tomato Variety	Variety Description
Better Boy	IND. 75 days. A midseason variety with plump, juicy, deep red tomatoes that often weigh more than one pound. Fruits are extremely flavorful, with flesh that's juicy, yet firm. Heavy foliage protects fruits from sun-scald. A highly adaptable variety; excellent disease resistance, too.
Big Beef	IND. 73 days. Productive beefsteak type fruits are multiple disease resistance. Large fruits are exceptionally attractive, smooth and round. Flavor is mild. Hybrid AAS 94.
Bloody Butcher	IND. 55 days. Heirloom. General use fruits have a rich heirloom flavor and a deep red color, inside and out. Plants will yield five to nine 2" fruits per cluster. Plants require staking and will produce until frost.
Brandy Boy	IND. Hybrid 75-78 days. A huge pink beefsteak with heirloom flavor and very high yields. It's parent, Brandywine, has its drawbacks. The tomatoes are often misshapen with uneven shoulder ripening, grow wildly, set fruit late in the late summer and often yield a sparse crop at best. Hybrid Brandy Boy produces loads of large pink fruits, up to 5½ inches across, that ripen evenly, with soft heirloom texture, thin skin and Brandywine flavor.
Brandywine	IND. 85 days. Amish heirloom with famous distinct flavor, grown since 1885. Fruits are 10 to 14 oz., dark reddish pink, tender and juicy. Give vigorous potato-foliaged vines room to grow. Open pollinated heirloom.
Burpee Big Boy	DET. Hybrid 71 days. Especially for small-space gardeners. You get the same number of tasty, big red tomatoes (10 to 11 oz. each) as the original Big Boy. The compact plants are only half the size. Disease-resistant, easy to grow, ideal for short stakes, cages and tubs.
Burpee Supersteak	IND. Hybrid. 80 days. A favorite super size tomato - most fruits weigh 2 lbs. Original "beefsteak" flavor and meaty texture.
Delicious	IND. 77 days. Record setting sizes. Plump fruits--most over a pound—resists cracking. Store for weeks.
Fourth of July	IND. Hybrid. 49 days. Often the first tomato to ripen by Independence Day! Competitor to Early Girl. Indeterminate plants produce fruits that average 4 ounces all season long.
Gardener's Delight	IND. 65 days. Cherry. Bright red, bite-size, extra sweet fruits are full of flavor. Many clusters of 6-12 tomatoes all summer long. Noted for performance, flavor and wide adaptability.

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Tomato Variety	Variety Description
Heatwave	DET. Hybrid. 68 days. Great tasting tomatoes in the most intense summer heat. 68 days. Round, 6-7 oz. fruits on compact plants are extremely disease resistant.
Jelly Bean	IND. 70 days. A delicious, sugar-sweet grape tomato from your garden. Indeterminate plants produce clusters of 15-30 of sweet, bite-sized fruits.
Mortgage Lifter	IND. 80 days. Large heirloom beefsteak (up to 4 pounds; average 2 1/2 pounds) that consistently wins taste-tests. Developed in the 1930's by a gardener, he sold the plants for \$1 apiece and paid off his mortgage in six years.
Patio	DET. 70 days. For those with limited garden space, you can grow this delicious dwarf tomato nicely in a pot or container. Patio is a compact and early tomato. The dark green rugose foliage is quite attractive. Deep oblate, green shouldered fruit weigh approximately 4 ounces. These plants do not require staking.
Red Cherry	DET. (Old Fashioned Red Cherry??) 75 days. [Introduced before 1840.] This is the small 'Red Cherry', not the 'Large Red Cherry' commonly used as a salad tomato. Very dependable, full-flavored salad tomato. Resistant to high temperatures.
Roma VFN	DET. VFN 85-90 days Disease resistant, compact plants bears a heavy crop of bright red, plum shaped tomatoes. Exceptionally solid and meaty with few seeds. Ideal as whole canned tomatoes and makes a high quality tomato paste. Open pollinated.
San Marzano	IND. Classic Italian plum tomato for sauce, canning, and salad. Large (5-6 ounce) fruit and large plant. Probably the best tasting of the plum types. This is the tomato Italians "can" or use to make sauce in Italy.
Super Sweet 100	IND. VF 65 days. Hardy vines, overflowing with thick clusters of round, plump, 1 in. red fruits. Bursting with terrific sweetness and plenty of juice. Superb for salads and the ultimate in fresh snacking. Outstanding favorite in a cherry tomato.
Yellow Pear	IND. 70 days. Open pollinated heirloom. The small pear-shaped fruits measuring 1½ to 2" long and 1" across are borne in clusters. Their mild pleasing flavor makes them a real treat. They add interest to salads and make delicious preserves. Children love them for snacks. Introduced in 1865.

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