

TOMATOES MADE EASY FROM ACORN

SOIL

Tomatoes like a rich, well drained soil or a top quality potting mix. We recommend that the soil be improved with **Zoo Gro compost or cow manure** at planting. A little lime in the soil at planting prevents blossom end rot and mulching with a good quality straw mulch after planting is very beneficial. Extra water storage crystals mixed into the soil at planting improve the water supply/storage. A sunny position is important. Rotate your crops – do not grow tomatoes in the same soil/position next year or the year after.

FEEDING

Apart from good soil preparation we don't recommend that you feed your tomatoes until it is flowering well and the first pea sized fruit has formed. Water new seedlings in with **Seasol** to stimulate root growth and establishment and follow up with fortnightly doses. Then we use **Tomato Food or our All Purpose Plant Food** monthly (high potash, organic – slow release nitrogen). Too much feeding or the wrong fertilizer promotes growth instead of fruit. Water regularly not infrequently.

PEST AND DISEASES

Just as we love tomatoes so too do the bugs and diseases. Most are easily prevented but once started are hard to stop. Start using **tomato dust** every fortnight from soon after planting. In this case “an ounce of prevention beats a pound of cure” The correct fertilizer and good air drainage from using tomato trainers will reduce disease problems.

STAKING/TRAINING

I find the best way to grow tomatoes is in a tomato frame. This better supports the bushier tomato that we are trying to grow now. I don't remove laterals but I do pinch out the tips to encourage a bushier, chunkier plant. Stakes are good if you keep tying up the plant. Grafted tomatoes are much more vigorous and need to be grown on a fence or a trellis or a frame as they are too big for a single stake. Plants that are staked up/trained up get less fungal disease because of improved air movement. Fungal problems increase where air drainage is poor.

FLAVOUR

A fat and happy plant produces wonderful fruit. All of our tomatoes are soft-fruit, flavoursome varieties rather than hard fruit varieties grown for the supermarkets. Pick your fruit when the colour is good and the fruit starts to "give" when squeezed. This fruit will have maximum sugar development (tastes best). Remember; tomatoes have the best productivity per square meter of any vegetable. Lastly I always grow a number of different varieties because each season is different and some varieties will do better than others. Have fun.



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Our expertise and experience is at your service.