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TOMATOES IN YOUR GARDEN

By Arleen M. Kaptur

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Not having at least one tomato plant in your garden is like a day without sunshine. The choices are unbelievable but taste – it can't be beat. Warm, fresh off the vine, washed in cool water and sliced – whether on a hamburger, a sandwich, or in a salad, a tomato adds that "something special" to any meal. A vine-ripened tomato is not only good-tasting, but to see these red globes on a plant that you started from seed or from a tiny purchased plant, is satisfying all by itself.

There is an on-going debate between gardeners as whether to stake or not to, whether to prune or not to, or to let nature decide. Regardless of where you stand on these issues, you will product tomatoes. Staking has the advantage of using less space, it is easier to pick your harvest, and the fruit will be much cleaner and have a lot less bruises. Your choice – either way they are well-worth the time and effort.

If you buy your plants, don't choose one with fruit already on it. You might think that this will bring you to harvest that much faster. The truth is that an older plant will be "shocked" a lot more than a younger plantling when they are transplanted in your garden. In choosing your plant, let your excitement get the better of you. There are literally thousands of varieties, shapes, and colors. Try new ones, or keep to the old stand-bys. Experiment and you might be delightfully surprised. A tomato is basically a very simple plant to grow. It does not need a lot of attention and seems to get along by itself when left alone for periods.

What is a perfect tomato? Here too opinions vary but most gardeners do conclude that it should be solid, red, and weight between 12–14 ozs. It is not cracked and it has no blemishes. Hybrids seem to produce the best in this category and are more disease-resistant.

The soil tomato plants are placed in should be well aerated, clumpy and loose. The health of your tomato plant is very dependent on root health and growth. The harder it is for the roots to push through the more difficult your plant will find it togrow. They need water, and more water. Use peat moss, compost or manure as the main food for your plants.

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What about insects? An occasional spraying with a mild soap solution takes care of a lot of these unwanted guests. Check your plants and catch any infestation early and if you deal with it immediately, you will have very healthy plants.

When you water your tomato plants, aim the flow at the ground, not the plant. The best time to water is in the early morning, especially if the day's temperatures will be on the high side.

Enjoy growing tomatoes, experiment with varieties, but most importantly, enjoy the taste of just-off-the-vine flavor. Summertime and tomatoes were a match made in heaven – ENJOY!

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Arleen Kaptur has written numerous articles, cookbooks, and the novel: **SEARCHING FOR AUSTIN JAMES** Websites: <http://www.arleensite.com> <http://www.Arleens-RusticLiving.com> <http://www.webspawner.com/users/rusticliving/http://topica.com/lists/simpleliving>

Tomatoes Fight Cancer Best When Used With Broccoli

By Dr. John Roberts

A recent study suggested that eating tomatoes and broccoli together can enhance the anti-cancer potency possessed by tomatoes and broccoli.

In the study, rats were injected with human prostate tumors. And they were fed powdered tomato and dried broccoli. Used also in the study was finasteride, a drug that shows to slow the benign growth of the prostate.

The study found that the rats use diets with tomatoes and or broccoli get the smaller tumors. The diet with both tomatoes and broccoli is most effective and finasteride is least effective in slowing the tumor growth.

Tomatoes are known for its anti-cancer properties. Lycopene is believed to be the major active component in tomatoes that is responsible for the anti-cancer activity.

Anti-cancer bioactivity has been reported in broccoli. It's believed that glucosinolates may be responsible.

The study was conducted by Dr. John Erdman and colleagues at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

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John Roberts is a freelance writer for

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Why Do You Need To Eat Tomatoes?

A Beginners Guide To Garden Bridges

Sicily's Great Eggplant–Tomato Stew

Reliable Lawn Mowers For Healthy Gardens

Organic Secrets

The Ultimate Rose Garden– Neighbors envy, owners pride!

Home Vegetable Garden

111 Egg Recipes

101 Recipes For The Deep Fryer



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