

The Village Garden Center's April 2009 Garden Club Newsletter



Nothing tastes better than vegetables picked fresh from your own garden. There's a certain satisfaction to serving and eating food that you yourself have grown and harvested. Although they typically demand a good bit of space, vegetables can even be grown in window boxes. While typically a fruit, most people consider tomatoes to be an essential part of the vegetable garden. Tomatoes are the most commonly grown vegetable in the United States.

First determine what kind of space you want to put your tomatoes in. Tomatoes come in two different types: determinate and indeterminate. Determinate have vines that grow to a determined point and stop, making them more compact and bushy. Indeterminates are more viney and their vines continue to grow and need support. Determinates tend to be early, and indeterminates are a good bet for later fruit. Tomatoes are easy to grow from seed, or you can save yourself the time and the trouble and purchase the plants.

As far as varieties go, plant the ones that interest you the most. Picking your variety should be based on how and when you use them. Varieties like Early Girl will give you tomatoes first, yet there are great slicing varieties like Beefmaster, that are worth the wait. My favorite is Pink Girl. It gives me tomatoes early on, and pink varieties are the sweetest tomatoes you can grow.

Did you know....

Every plant in Tomorrowland at Disneyland in Anaheim, California is edible.

Tomatoes require plenty of sun. Uniform watering is the key to nice fruit. Even watering can prevent leaf-end roll, blossom end-rot, and cat facing (those misshapen cracks on the stem end of the fruit). I can't stress enough how important the watering is on tomatoes. If you skipped everything else (amendments, fertilizer, etc.), you could still have a wonderful tomato if you watered correctly.

It's okay to plant tomatoes in the garden when the temperature is a consistent 50 degrees, but a tomato plant will not set fruit until the overnight low is regularly above 55 degrees. Put plants three feet apart in the garden. As your plants get larger, they will need to be staked in order to support the weight of the fruits as they begin to grow. Cages are quick and easy and work great, or you can use bamboo tripods and trellises which are more pleasing aesthetically.

GARDEN CLUB SPECIALS - May

30% off to garden club members only
Miracle Grow General Purpose Fertilizer (limit 1)
Gardening Gloves (limit 2)
12 Specialty Annuals (3.5 Container)

Tomatoes should be harvested when fully ripened and just starting to soften. Once picked they should be stored in dark, warm conditions. Never refrigerate a tomato. They start to lose their flavor when stored in temperatures below 55 degrees. They are fun to grow, and even more fun to eat. Enjoy the fruits of your labor!

Did you know....

Back in the late 19th century some towns in England had laws that reduced a persons taxes if he planted flowers and shrubbery in his yard to beautify it. If the person next to him did not do the same, his taxes were raised. With these laws, the towns became attractive for visitors and towns folk alike.

Did you know....

Europeans who found the tomato considered it poisonous and it was not eaten on the Continent until a century after it's introduction there!

The Spring Garden Club Luncheon is April 18th at eleven a.m. We will have a herb seminar and great give-aways. Don't miss the good food, flowers, and friendship. (Remember you must call in your reservation)

**REMINDER* Remember to show your garden club membership card when you make your purchases. This is needed to receive your discount and also to add up your points to receive free labor. If you purchase \$500 dollars worth of product, you will receive one hour of free labor in your yard! Worth keeping track of!*