

## Training and Staking

Support of the growing plant and the tomatoes it will produce is required. This can be achieved by planting against a trellis fence or putting stakes next to the plant. Ensure you put your stakes in at planting time to avoid damaging the roots later on. For grafted tomatoes you can stake several of the laterals, so you may like to use 2 or 3 stakes per plant. Use 2m tall stakes to provide plenty of room for them to grow.

## Pruning and Laterals

Tomato plants need pruning to aid air circulation, let light in and prevent disease.

As the plant grows remove all laterals. Laterals shoot from between where a side shoot joins the main stem. These should be removed (not necessary on grafted tomatoes) as soon as they appear.



When the plant has about 6 or 7 fruit trusses, pinch out the growing tip – this encourages the plant to put its energy into developing fruit. This is not necessary with dwarf/tumbling varieties.

## Pests and Diseases

Many problems with tomatoes are associated with temperature, watering and feeding.

We recommend using:

**Grosafe Free Flo Copper** – for a wide range of fungal diseases.

**Grosafe Enspray 99** - mineral oil for sucking insects plus Powdery Mildew.

**Mavrik** – for the control of insects and Tomato/Potato Physlid.

**Success Ultra** – for Shield Bug and Caterpillars.

Ask for a copy of our **Vegetable Plants Health Care Programme** for more detailed information.

## Harvesting

To get the best flavour, allow the tomatoes to fully ripen on the plant before picking and enjoy!



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Decor Gardenworld

165 Moffat Rd

Bethlehem

Tauranga

Ph: 07 576 4777

Email: [decorgardenworld@gmail.com](mailto:decorgardenworld@gmail.com)

[www.decorgardenworld.co.nz](http://www.decorgardenworld.co.nz)

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# Tomatoes

## How to Grow Tasty Tomatoes



There is nothing quite like the taste of home grown tomatoes.



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## At a Glance

- Plant out after last frosts
- Warm, sunny site
- Free draining soil
- Fertiliser and water

## When to Plant

Tomatoes generally need 3 months of warm, frost free weather to produce well. Labour weekend is the traditional time for planting but they can be planted outside after the last frosts.

## Where to Plant

Tomatoes need plenty of sunshine and ideally protected from the wind. They can be grown straight in the ground or in containers.

## Soil Preparation

If planting in the ground ensure the soil is free draining.

Tomatoes require lots of nutrients for good growth. Before planting work well through the soil: 'Magic' compost and Tui Tomato Mix or iCan Organic Vegetable Food.

## Growing in Containers - easy as!

Tomatoes grow very well in containers on the verandah or patio and our 35L big plastic tubs are ideal for this – just fill the tubs with a 30L bag of Tui Tomato Mix, which is a specially formulated tomato potting mix containing water storage granules and a slow release fertiliser, and plant your tomato of choice.



Tomatoes growing in a container will require staking and training just like tomatoes grown in the vege garden.

Hanging baskets are ideal for tumbling tomatoes such as 'Tumbling Toms'.

Ensure the soil does not dry out during the season and liquid feed weekly with **iCan Fast Food** or **iCan Ocean Grow** for top results.

## Planting Seeds and Plants

There are many tomato varieties varying in size, shape, taste, colour, acidity, as well as their growing habit.

### Seeds:

Tomatoes can be grown easily from seed. For best taste and yield sow **iCan Chef's Best "Tomato Flavoursome"** seed

Sow seeds in punnets, small pots or jiffy pots and place in a covered cloche in a warm spot. Plant out when 12-20cm high, or sow directly into the garden in warm conditions.

### Seedling Plants:

When purchasing as seedling plants we recommend planting '**Grafted Tomato**' plants. These plants have been grafted onto a rootstock which has been bred for vigour and resilience. They are the most reliable, vigorous, best yielding and most disease resistant tomato plants.

Plant seedling tomatoes into prepared soil about 40cm apart and water in.

If planting grafted tomatoes, ensure that the graft is at least 1cm above the soil line and don't touch the grafting tape (it will 'pop' off on its own).



We stock a wide variety of '**Supertom**' grafted tomato plants, including big juicy ones to bite size ones, Italian Roma types, cherry tomatoes and low acid.

These are just a few of our favourites:

**Moneymaker** – very popular for size, colour, flavour, crop and hardiness. Matures mid season.

**Big Beef** – this award winning tomato produces early, big tasty fruit and is high yielding.

**Early Girl** – Mild flavour. Requires staking. Vigorous plant with low acid tomatoes.

**Russian Red**– High yielding with sweet, juicy and flavourful fruit. Perfect for salads and slicing.

**Grosse Lisse** – Large, round, red fruit. Abundant fruit over a long period. Needs staking.

**Dr Walter** – low acid – medium to large very meaty fruit with great flavour.

**Roma** – low acid – pear shaped fruit.

Of the older varieties (non grafted) the most popular and from good reliable tomato stock are: Moneymaker, Big Beef, Sweet 100, Russian Red, Grosse Lisse.

## Feeding and Watering

Tomatoes will yield much more if they are well fed and watered regularly.

Hence, in addition to the fertiliser added to the soil prior to planting, liquid feed weekly with **iCan Fast Food** or **iCan Ocean Grow**. Use Tui Tomato fertiliser once the tomatoes have set on plants and are growing.

Tomato plants must not be allowed to dry out as this drastically reduces yield. It is best to water the soil around the plant rather than the foliage to prevent blight and water in the morning to allow the soil to dry out during the day to avoid fungal problems.