

Tomatoes



Tomatoes

- Most popular garden vegetable crop in Texas
- Good source of vitamin A and fair source of vitamin C
- Grow well in most Texas areas if planted in soil that drains well
- Need at least 6 hours of sunlight each day
- Not all tomatoes are red – some are yellow, purple, brown, and orange

Tomatoes - Varieties

Small fruit

- Baxter's Early Bush
- Cherry Grande
- Red Cherry
- Juliet
- Small Fry

Large fruit

- Better Boy
- Big Box
- Carnival
- Homestead
- Big Beef
- Bush Beefsteak
- Celebrity

Tomatoes - Planting

- Best to buy transplants 6 to 8 inches tall rather than planting seed
- Do not set out tomato plants until all danger of frost has passed
- Transplant fall tomatoes about 100 days before first frost is expected
- Plant 2 to 4 feet apart in rows
- For staked or caged plants, space rows about 3 feet apart
- For unsupported plants, leave 4 to 5 feet between rows

Tomatoes - Planting

- Plant each transplant deeper than it has been growing

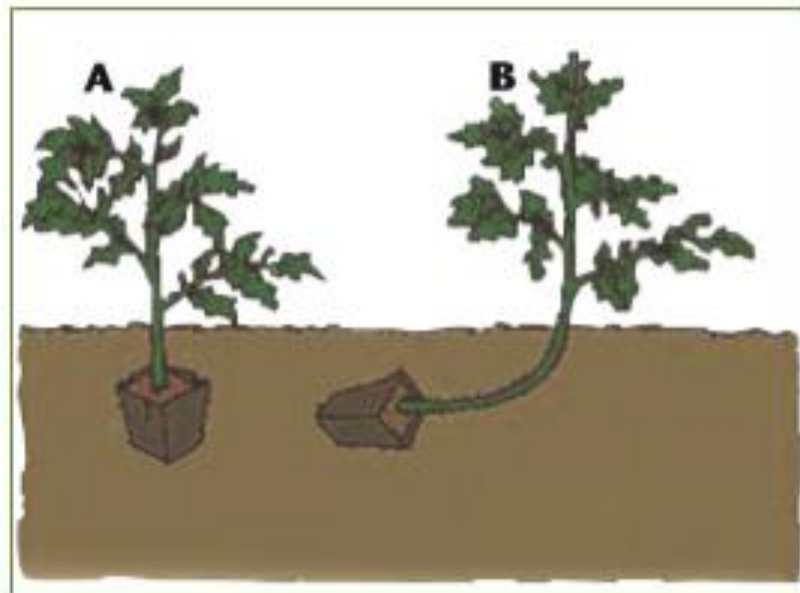


Figure 2. Plant tomatoes slightly deeper than they were first growing (A). If the plants are leggy, set them as shown (B).





Tomatoes – Fertilizing and Watering

- Add 2 to 3 pounds of fertilizer such as 10-10-10 for every 100 square feet of garden area when planting
- Fertilize when first fruits are about 1 inch in diameter, scattering 1 tablespoon of fertilizer around each plant
- Fertilize plants every 3 to 4 weeks with 1 to 2 tablespoons of fertilizer
- Water plants slowly and deeply to help them develop a strong root system
- Do not let tomatoes wilt severely or yields and fruit quality will be low

Tomatoes – Care During The Season

- Mulch around the plants to increase yields
- If tomatoes are staked, place stake in ground shortly after transplanting to lessen root damage; as plant grows taller, tie it loosely to the stake every 12 inches with pieces of rag or twine; might need to be pruned
- If tomatoes are caged, place over young plant and push cages down into the soil to keep them from blowing over; do not have to tie or prune plants

Tomatoes - Insects

Name and description	Control
 <p data-bbox="556 575 720 611">Flea beetle</p>	<p data-bbox="807 404 1078 611">1/16 inch long; bronze-black, blue, or green, with light markings; jumps quickly; eats holes in leaves</p> <p data-bbox="1116 418 1193 446">Sevin</p>
 <p data-bbox="556 818 730 853">Hornworm</p>	<p data-bbox="807 654 1078 818">A 3-inch-long caterpillar with a horn on the back end; green with stripes on the side</p> <p data-bbox="1116 654 1290 789">Bacillus thuringiensis (Dipel, Thuricide, Biotrol)</p>
 <p data-bbox="595 1061 691 1096">Psyllid</p>	<p data-bbox="807 896 1049 1032">1/8 inch long; pale green or yellow; adults are banded black and white</p> <p data-bbox="1116 896 1280 1032">Sulfur dusts, permethrin, insecticidal soaps</p>
 <p data-bbox="575 1353 710 1389">Whitefly</p>	<p data-bbox="807 1139 1029 1239">Adults are white; nymphs do not move</p> <p data-bbox="1116 1139 1261 1275">Pyrethrin, malathion, insecticidal soaps</p>

Tomatoes - Harvesting

- For best quality, pick at full color
- If picked when pink, let them ripen at room temperature
- May be stored in refrigerator after they reach full color