

# Heirloom Tomatoes: You Can't Grow Just One



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# Getting a Good Start on Life

- 60 or 72 count inserts work fine
  - Damp soil mix
- One or two seeds per cell
  - Light soil coverage
  - Heat from below
  - Good light above
  - Even moisture



# Teach Them Life is “Hard”

- Remove “luxuries” one at a time if possible
- Remove heat mat
- Fan while in confined space
- Move to cold frame or sheltered outdoor location
- Transplant to 3”-4” pots
- Continue to harden until transplant



# What Makes a Good Transplant?

- Typically plants in pots (not “6-packs”) will be better buys
- Stocky and sturdy
- Root touching edges of soil as you remove plant from pot, but not “wrapped”
- Younger plants often better
- Flowers now do not = production later



# Graduation Day

- Water one last time in the pots
- Prepare planting area
- Pinch off lower leaves
- Bury plant up to its “neck”



## Mulch

Grass or Hay

Don't apply in heat of the day and burn plants

“Living Mulches” possible







# Flower Companions

- Marigolds and Zinnias
- Borage, Bee's Friend, Calendula
- NO – nicotiana (including cigarettes!)



# Food Crop Companions

YES

Basil, Carrots, Onions,  
Garlic, most Spices,  
Asparagus



NO

Potato, Corn, Brassicae,  
Fennel

Remember Pepper, Potato,  
Eggplant & Tomato are  
same family.



# Trellising Methods





- Which tomato training system best keeps disease pressure at bay in an heirloom tomato planting?
- Which promotes best production levels?



# Method

Cultivar – Cherokee Purple

Three trellis methods

Twenty plants per trellis style

Fifty to sixty foot rows

Three participating CSA/Market farms

All plants started on respective farms

No spray

Mulch assumed, irrigation as needed



# Trellis Methods

## Cattle Panel

- 3 to 4 t-posts wired per panel
- Tomatoes clipped or tied to panel

## Stake & Weave

- Post Every three tomatoes
- Twine weaved through tomatoes each foot in height
- Hedge posts on ends, t-posts every third post, rebar others

## Cage

- Single cage per plant
- Supported with two posts



# Conclusions

- No statistical support for any method
- Atypical growing season resulted in atypical yields
- Prior experience with each trellis method may lead to success
- Labor and resource benefits may provide best reasons for trellis style choices



	<b>Cattle Panel</b>	<b>Stake &amp; Weave</b>	<b>Cage</b>
<b>Pro</b>	Easy Harvest Moderate in-season work	Easy storage Minimal clean up Minimal investment	Easy set up Minimal in-season work
<b>Con</b>	Sizable initial investment Set up & tear down takes 2 people	Highest in-season effort Wind problems reported (1 farm)	Storage difficult Fall clean up difficult

# Heirloom Variety Review

## What Do Our Recommendations Mean?

- Nearly Always Given Two Years of Trial
- Minimum Four Plants In a Trial Year
- Zone 4b, Loamy Soil
- Minimal to No Irrigation
- No Synthesized Mulch, No Sprays
- Picking Convenience Can Trump Other Characteristics

# OVERALL WINNERS



Amish Paste  
Golden Sunray  
Italian Heirloom  
Tommy Toe



# Reasons for Winning/Losing

- Taste!
  - Production Levels
  - Disease Resistance
    - Ease of Harvest
- Ability to Get Tomatoes to Market
- Different Enough or Too Much Like Another
- Weather Tolerance Characteristics

# Overall “Losers”



Purple Russian

Roman Candle

Lemon Drop

Black Sea Man

# Paste Tomatoes



Polish Types: Polish Linguisa, Opalka, Federle

Amish Style: Amish Paste, Speckled Roman, Long Tom, Powers Heirloom

Other: Roman Candle, Purple Russian

# Paste per Plant Production

	2006 per	2007 per	2008 per	2009 per
Amish Paste	29.8	23.4	38.3	12.8
Federle			25.6	10.9
Long Tom			28.1	
Opalka			50.3	12.9
Polish Linguisa	24	29.9	26.8	
Purple Russian	39	0.6	5.5	
Roman Candle			97.6	46.0
Speckled Roman	18.7	36.6	38.5	20.2
<b>Average</b>	<b>27.9</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>38.8</b>	<b>20.5</b>

# BIG Tomatoes

German Pink, Gold Medal, Hungarian Heart, Italian Heirloom

Others:

Soldacki, Aunt Ruby's German Green, Hillbilly Potato Leaf



# Big Tomato Yields

	2006 per	2007 per	2008 per	2009 per
<b>Brandywine</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>6</b>		
<b>Dr Wyche</b>		<b>18.7</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>8.5</b>
<b>German Pink</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>4.1</b>
<b>Gold Medal</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>5.0</b>
<b>Hillbilly Potatoleaf</b>		<b>3.3</b>		
<b>Hungarian Heart</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>2.6</b>
<b>Italian Heirloom</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>13.8</b>

# Snack Tomatoes



Top Notch:

Wapsipinicon Peach,  
Jaune Flamme,  
Tommy Toe, Green  
Zebra



More:

Siberian, Stupice, Lemon  
Drop, Reisentraube, Isis  
Candy, Nyagous, Christmas  
Grapes, Blondkopfchen



# Black/Purple Varieties

## Preferences:

- Dryer/Warmer Seasons + Well Mulched/Even Water
- Kept OFF of the ground
- Picked Slightly Early
- Avoid any Overmature Fruit on Vines



Cherokee Purple



Black Krim

Black Sea Man, Nyagous,  
Japanese Black Trifele

# Production Levels Black/Purple

	<b>2006 per</b>	<b>2007 per</b>	<b>2008 per</b>	<b>2009 per</b>
<b>Black Krim</b>			<b>19.6</b>	<b>6.8</b>
<b>Black Sea Man</b>				<b>7.0</b>
<b>Cherokee Purple</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>Nyagous</b>		<b>16.8</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>21.6</b>

# Yellow Varieties

Golden Sunray

Dr Wyche's Yellow

Moonglow

Nebraska Wedding



- Often hold longer on the vine
  - Often thicker skins
- Typically lower acid content

# Yellow Tomato Production

	2006 per	2007 per	2008 per	2009 per
Dr Wyche		18.7	28.2	8.5
Golden Sunray		30.3	32.5	19.8
Moonglow			44.1	12.4
Nebraska Wedding		10.5	13.1	12.4

# More Tomatoes!



## **Standard Reds:**

Trophy

Wisconsin 55

Rutgers

John Baer

Druzba

Greens:

Aunt Ruby's German  
Green

Tasty Evergreen

Green Zebra



# Standard Red Slicers

	2006 per	2007 per	2008 per	2009 per
Trophy	16.7	24.5	32.8	15.5
Wisconsin 55	26.6	21.1	33.2	16.8
Rutgers	20.7	4.9	37.5	17.4
John Baer				21.0
Druzba				16.5

# The Earlier the Better?

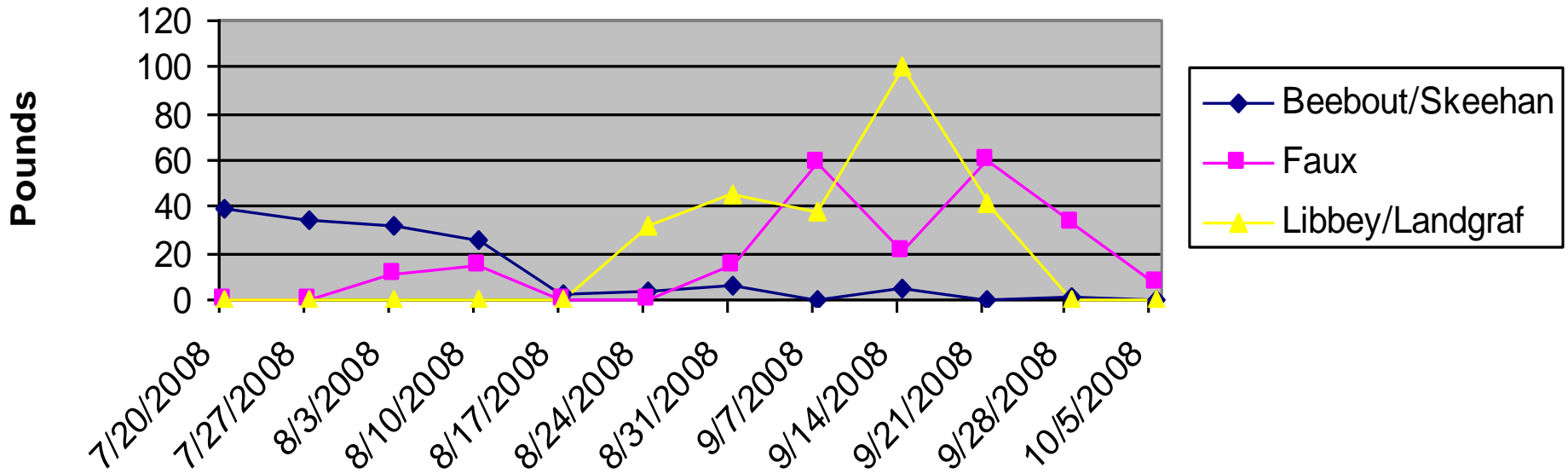
Variety	Days
Stupice	55
Silvery Fir Tree	58
Siberian	60
John Baer	70
Italian Heirloom	70
Tommy Toe	70
Beam's Yellow Pear	70

Variety	Days
Gold Medal	90
Powers Heirloom	90
Speckled Roman	85
Amish Paste	85
German Pink	85
Golden Sunray	85



# Picking and Grinning

**Marketable Tomatoes in Pounds  
All Trellising Methods**



**Late July through Early October**

# Resources

- <http://www.genuinefauxfarm.com/variety/tomatoes.htm>
- Seed Savers, Decorah Iowa (most variety pictures come from their site)
- Carrots Love Tomatoes, Louise Riotte

QUESTIONS?

