

**ASTARTE FARM 2008 TOMATO VARIETIES**  
**THE DAN PRATT FAMILY, 123 WEST STREET, HADLEY, MA 01035 (413) 586-8923**  
**Certified Organic by Baystate Organic Certifiers**

**. EARLY TOMATOES**

**FOURTH OF JULY – Hybrid Slicing Tomato** 50 days  
Produces full flavor and decent size in a very short time frame. Indeterminate.

**NEW GIRL – Hybrid Slicing Tomato** 62 days  
Grow this for quantities of medium-sized red fruits with rich, full flavor for sandwiches and salads early in the summer. Better tasting, more disease resistant than Early Girl. Indeterminate.

**MOSKVITCH – Early Heirloom Slicing** 60 days  
**One of the most appealing early tomatoes we have grown.**  
The deep red tomatoes have a smooth texture and rich taste that belie its earliness. Medium-sized fruits and are smooth and globe-shaped. Indeterminate.

**BEEFSTEAK AND LARGE TOMATOES**

**AMANA ORANGE –Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 85 days  
Orange version of a Brandywine? Flavor packed, low acid meaty fruits make a statement on the plate. Indeterminate.

**ARKANSAS TRAVELER –Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 80 days  
Incredibly delicious, classic pink heirloom has traveled widely due to its solid dependability and distinct flavor. Indeterminate.

**AUNT RUBY'S GERMAN GREEN – Heirloom** 85 days  
Large. fruits blush lightly yellow and develop an amber-pink tinge on the blossom end when ripe. The green flesh of this beefsteak is faintly marbled with pink. Indeterminate.

**AUSSIE – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 85 days  
One of the big ones, up to two pounds apiece! Somewhat ribbed fruit with a bold, delicious flavor. Indeterminate.

**BIG BEEF – Hybrid Slicing Tomato** 70 days  
Large, blemish-free, red fruit. They have full flavor and ripen early for their size. Broad disease tolerance. Arguably the best beefsteak tomato for a home garden. Indeterminate.

**BLACK PRINCE – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 74 days  
Unusual mahogany brown shoulders, becoming orange-red at the blossom end. Distinctively rich, fruity, tomato flavor. Relatively smooth, 3-5 oz., 3" globes. Indeterminate.

**BRANDYWINE – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 78 days  
Very large fruits have a deep pink skin and red flesh, and mature mid-season. Brandywine's luscious flavor is described as "very rich, loud, and distinctively spicy." Indeterminate.

**BRANDY BOY – Hybrid Slicing Tomato** 78 days  
This Burpee cross of Brandywine and Big Boy reproduces flavor, disease resistance and yield. Indeterminate.

**CHEROKEE CHOCOLATE – Slicing Tomato** 80 days  
A rogue from the popular old Cherokee Purple, this variety has developed a great following because of its exceptionally rich flavor and wonderful chocolate color. Indeterminate

**CLINT EASTWOOD ROWDY RED – Slicing Tomato** 78 days  
Disease resistant plants produce medium-sized fruit with intense, robust flavor. Not for sissies! Indeterminate.

**COPIA – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 78 days  
Brilliant red and yellow stripes on 14 oz. fruit with full, complex tomato flavor. Indeterminate.

**DRUZBA – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 80 days  
Heavy set of smooth red fruits, classic European taste. Indeterminate.

**GERMAN PINK – Heirloom Slicing** 85 days  
A gorgeous slicing tomato. Sweet juicy 4-6" flattened fruits about 1 pound each. Beautiful pink fruits. Indeterminate.

**GOLD MEDAL – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 85 days  
Prizewinning taste in a low acid tomato. Indeterminate.

**GOLDEN SUNRAY – Slicing Tomato**  
Outstanding "new" heirloom. Skin and flesh are bright yellow with an orange glow at maturity. Extra firm flesh and smooth, fruity flavor make it a great slicer. Indeterminate.

**MORTGAGE LIFTER – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 85 days  
Tall plants produce a good crop of 3"fruit. Skin is dark red with exceptionally firm red flesh. Tremendous taste, with nice old-time tomato flavor, holds well for slicing. Indeterminate.

**MOON GLOW – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 85 days  
Pale yellow fruit with sweet tomato flavor. Indeterminate.

**NEPAL – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 78 days  
Medium-large red fruits are meaty and loaded with plenty of old-fashioned flavor. Indeterminate.

**NYAGOUS – Black Heirloom Slicing** 80 days  
Great black tomato that is blemish-free! Baseball-sized fruits are borne in clusters of up to six fruits, very productive. Excellent full flavor, an all-time favorite.

**PAUL ROBESON – Black Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 74 days  
Deep, rich colors stand this apart from others...a dusky, dark-red, with dark-green shoulders, and red flesh in its center. Luscious, earthy taste and good acid/sweet balance.

**PIERCE'S PRIDE – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 85 days  
Deep, dark fruit with rich, earthy tomato flavor. Indeterminate.

**PIRIFORM – European Style Tomato** 78 days  
Pear shaped fruits with ribbed shoulders from Italy. Distinctive sweet yet acidic flavor is great stuffed, grilled or sliced. Indeterminate

**PRUDEN'S PURPLE – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 67 days  
Remarkably large size for its earliness, with a delicious taste and creamy texture. The skin color is dark pink and the flesh crimson. The very large tomatoes are flattened and smooth.

**RAZZLE DAZZLE – Hybrid Slicing Tomato** 80 days  
Gorgeous color and great taste! Juicy 10-16 oz. fruit. Indeterminate.

**ROSE – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 78 days  
Rose is a deep rose-red color, usually smoother than Brandywine, and every bit as large and meaty. Normal leaf plants out-yield Brandywine. Indeterminate.

**STRIPED GERMAN – Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 78 days  
Flat, medium to large, ribbed shoulder tomatoes are equally shaded yellow and red. Many rate the complex, fruity flavor and smooth texture "best of all." Indeterminate.

**SUNKIST – Hybrid Slicing Tomato** 85 days  
An orange tomato that combines low acid with full tomato flavor. A new organic hybrid. Determinate.

**VALENCIA– Heirloom Slicing Tomato** 75 days  
This large, round, juicy fruit looks like a navel orange on the vine. Rich, full tomato taste, very few seeds.. Indeterminate.

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## THREE WAYS TO PLANT TOMATOES

Gardening is an art, and there are more than three ways to do almost everything, but here are three ways that have worked very well for me in the past.

### 1) For Early Tomatoes, or Where Soil Moisture is Abundant:

Dig a shallow trench only slightly deeper than the thickness of the root ball. If you are planting from a 4" pot, your trench should be about six inches deep, from a six pack it should be just a few inches deep. Your trench can be slightly deeper at one end. Pop the plant out of its container and place it **horizontally** in the trench with the roots at the deepest end. Clip or break off all but the top two branches, or leaves. Fill the trench and cover the stem with nice black compost, gently bending up the very tip of the plant so that just the top leaves are clear of the soil. Water-in gently with warm water. You can add seaweed or fish emulsion concentrates to your water if you like, but don't overdo it. If you don't have compost on hand you can buy composted cow manure or other bagged compost at a garden center. What you want is that nice black layer to soak up the heat of the sun. All along the buried stem of your plant abundant lateral roots will develop which will speed your plant's development and hasten fruit set and ripening. This method is NOT recommended for dry locations or in dry years unless supplemental water or a heavy mulch is readily available. Figure your plant spacing from plant tip to plant tip, prune and stake as usual.

### 2) For Late Tomatoes, or Where Soil Moisture May Be Scant:

Get the tallest plants you can find. If six packs are all that is available, "pot them on" into larger containers. Strip off all lower leaves and braches. Put the root ball at the bottom of your larger container and fill with a compost based potting soil. Half gallon milk containers with the tops cut off and holes punched in the bottom can work very well, and 6" or larger plastic pots will work, as well. Grow your plants on for a few more weeks, pampering them with abundant sunshine, warmth and adequate moisture. Watch your plants carefully at the growing tips, because you would like to get them in the ground just before they begin to flower. Don't worry if you have some buds showing, but you might want to clip off any fully opened flowers. Once again strip or cut off all lower branches and leaves, leaving about 6" of foliage at the top. Measure your plants and use a post-hole digger or shovel to dig a hole 6-8" shallower than the plant is tall. Carefully remove the plant from its pot (cutting or slitting the pot can help) and place in the bottom of the hole. Gently fill the hole evenly around the stem with a 50/50 blend of compost and top soil. Water-in as above and prune and stake as usual. This method works because you are putting a large root ball deep into the ground where moisture and nutrients are readily available in all but extreme droughts.

### 3) Food from Food Method – where animals in the garden are not a problem:

Tomatoes like raw compost. They may even prefer it to finished compost, and they have a special liking for partially composted tomato plants! Take advantage of this by planting two tomatoes on either side of a sturdy wire cage filled with food scraps, manure, garden or grass clippings, weeds, last year's tomato stems etc. You can fill the cage to the top before you plant, or secure it to a couple of sturdy stakes and fill it as the season progresses. You can use soil, hay, straw, leaves or shredded paper to cover the food scraps and minimize insects, but be prepared for vigorous growth that can overwhelm a weak cage. You need to weave the plant through the wire or tie it to the outside with soft string or strips of cloth. Prune if you like, or let the plants go wild. Yields can be heavy and you need to watch that fruit clusters don't get trapped in the wire mesh. Or you can just let those trapped tomatoes explode and keep feeding the plant! I've had this work well in both rainy and dry years, but if animals are a problem in your yard or garden you might want to skip this method.

## JOIN THE FUN - Seed Saving Instructions for Tomatoes

Tomatoes are self-pollinating, so almost anyone can save tomato seed successfully. The seed is mature when the tomato itself is ripe. Scoop the seeds and gel into a jar and add about the same amount of water. Allow this liquid to ferment in a warm place for 3-5 days, stirring daily, until the seeds have sunk to the bottom. Don't worry if a scum forms on top and a cheese cloth cover will help to discourage fruit flies. Rinse the seeds under running water and then spread them to dry on a paper plate or cloth. Coffee filters work very well, and you can write the variety name on them. When they are thoroughly dry, rub the seed around in a strainer to break up clumps and remove the fuzz. Tomato seeds remain viable for 4-10 years under cool and dry storage conditions. Zip lock bags with the little packets from a vitamin bottle work well.

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**Additional Varieties:**

## PASTE and PLUM TOMATOES

**AMISH PASTE – Heirloom Paste and Slicing** 80 days  
This indeterminate produces an abundance of thick-fleshed, acorn-shaped fruits weighing up to 8 oz. One of the preferred varieties for fresh and home-canned sauce.

**AUNT LUCY'S PASTE – Heirloom Sauce Tomato**  
Incredible buttery taste! This is a superior paste type because of its high solids content, meaning less cooking down. Fruit are highly crack resistant. Indeterminate vines keep the fruit coming.

**DEBARAO – Heirloom Plum Tomato** 70 days  
**Smooth, firm plums.**  
A beautiful deep red plum tomato. Medium size, very smooth oval fruit are borne heavily on healthy vines. The texture is firm and crack-free, and the quality is excellent for all uses.

**MANKIN – Heirloom Plum** 78 days  
Large meaty plum that is becoming a local favorite.

**SPECKLED ROMAN – 85 days**  
A stabilized cross of Antique Roman and Banana Legs. Gorgeous 3" wide by 5" long fruits with jagged orange and yellow stripes. Meaty, with great tomato taste, ideal for processing.

## CHERRY and SMALL TOMATOES

**BLACK CHERRY – 70-80 days.**  
Dark fruits are loaded with flavor. A small version of some of the famous blacks with rich earthy flavor. Indeterminate.

**GOLD GRAPE – Hybrid Yellow Grape Shape** 65 days  
Very prolific, meaty gold fruits are borne in clusters. A companion to RED GRAPE, with sweeter, low-acid flavor. Holds well after picking, with very little cracking.

**GREEN GRAPE – Heirloom Large Grape** 60 days  
This old-fashioned bush tomato is from a cross of the Yellow Pear and Evergreen. The distinctive, 1", yellowish green fruits are borne in clusters of 6-12 that resemble large muscat grapes.

**GREEN SAUSAGE – Heirloom Oddball** 75-80 days  
Unique, beautiful elongated 4" fruits that are green with yellow stripes. Rich, sweet flavor. Short, bushy plants need only a small stake, and produce fruit in great abundance. Determinate.

**GREEN ZEBRA – Heirloom Tomato?** 72 days  
A delicious tangy salad tomato, ripens just as the green fruit develops a yellow blush. Use Green Zebra in recipes alone, or mixed with other varieties for a beautiful presentation.

**INDIAN MOON – Small Yellow Heirloom**  
Won our hearts and mouths at a Hampshire College tomato fest several years back. Huge taste for a small tomato, yields well in a variety of conditions.

**JAPANESE BLACK TRIFELE – 90 days.**  
Yields prolific quantities of 6 oz. fruit that look like a beautiful mahogany-colored Bartlett pear with greenish shoulders. Very tasty flesh with a meaty core. A work of art sliced out on a plate. Indeterminate

**MATT'S WILD – Red Cherry** 35-40 days  
Heavy yields. One of the legendary small cherry tomatoes. More taste is packed into these small fruits than you can believe! Indeterminate.

**PEACEVINE CHERRY – Sweet Red Cherry** 35-40 days  
Heavy yields. Packed with vitamin C and high in gamma-amino butyric acid - a natural nervous system sedative (hence the name). Selected from the hybrid variety "Sweet 100." Indeterminate.

**PINK GRAPE – Heirloom Grape**  
Another family favorite this little tomato is about the size of large grape, but pinkish purple in color. When we have a bowl of these on the table the kids snack on them all day long.

**RED GRAPE – Hybrid Red Grape Shape** 65 days  
Very prolific, meaty red fruits are borne in clusters. A customer request from '05, this has been an impressive performer in our fields. Holds well after picking, with very little cracking.

**STRIPED CAVERN - Striped Stuffing Tomato** 80 days  
A striking, unique variety. Small, bell pepper-like tomatoes, red with gold stripes, avg. 8 oz. Hollow inside except for a small cluster of seeds. Perfect for stuffing, cooked or raw.

**SUN GOLD – Orange Cherry** 57 days  
Exceptionally sweet, bright tangerine-orange cherry tomatoes leave customers begging for more. Vigorous plants start yielding early and bear right through the season.

**SWEET MILLION – 60-65 days**  
An old time favorite, red cherry. If you can only grow one cherry tomato, this should be the one! Indeterminate.

**TOMA VERDE – Tomatillo** 70-80 days  
Not really a tomato, but an almost indispensable ingredient for salsas. Grows in a husk, fruity yet spicy. Indeterminate.

## PATIO TOMATOES

**For those without a garden spot or those that wish to "beat the season" by a month or two!**

**PATIO PRINCESS – High Yields from a Small Pot**  
A dwarf hybrid that produces an amazing amount of small beefsteak type tomatoes. Only minimal staking is required, and a mild weekly feeding of organic liquid fertilizer keeps the fruit coming. Fun for the kids, easy on the old folks, these make a pretty addition to any patio or sunny porch.

**BUSH STEAK – Larger Fruits from a Small Pot**  
Another dwarf hybrid that produces a slightly larger beefsteak type tomato, perfect for sandwich slices. Requires a more robust stake, and a mild weekly feeding of organic liquid fertilizer keeps the fruit coming. No relation to "W."

## FOUR WAYS TO STAKE and TIE UP TOMATOES

Tomato vines and fruit, being mostly water, are HEAVY! Even a cherry tomato plant can be surprisingly heavy when bearing fruit, so don't skimp on string or stakes!

### 1) Cages:

You can buy pre-made cages at most garden centers. They will work OK for smaller framed or "determinate" tomato plants, but a vigorous heirloom plant can easily overwhelm them. In most cases you will need one or two sturdy stakes to keep the cage anchored down securely through the whole season, otherwise they are prone to toppling over. You can make your own cages from welded wire fence or even concrete reinforcing mesh, just make sure that the holes are big enough to get your hand and that prize tomato back out of the hole! You can grow caged tomatoes without any pruning. One downside of cages is the necessity to disinfect them in between seasons in order to kill any blight spores that might get on them. A 10% bleach/water solution, hydrogen peroxide or really hot water can accomplish this, but you need a pretty big container to hold the solution.

### 2) Top Wire:

Bury a sturdy post at each end of your tomato row, so that it stands about six feet high. Cedar or locust are both naturally rot resistant, but you can even use 2 X 4's if you are willing to replace them every few years. Fasten a stout wire across the top of the posts, and guy the posts to stakes set firmly in the ground. These posts and wires must bear the combined weight of all your tomatoes, so consider angling the posts outward or otherwise engineering a sturdy system. Tie a string loosely to the main stem on each tomato plant and then attach the other end of the string to the wire with a slip knot, allowing a little extra string at the top. As your plants grow, loosen the string at the wire end and wrap it around the stem once or twice and re-tie it to the wire. See pruning tips below to keep your plants to one main stem.

### 3) Individual Stake:

Thick bamboo or pointed hard wood stakes can be driven into the ground next to your newly transplanted tomato plants. As the plant grows, tie the main stem with soft twine, foam covered wire or strips of old pantyhose, t-shirts, etc. See pruning tips below to keep your plants to one main stem.

### 4) Florida Weave:

This is my preferred method for field tomatoes, and is quite adaptable for home use. After transplanting your tomatoes, drive a sturdy hardwood, bamboo or metal stake between every other plant. The length of the stake depends on your varieties. Many paste and determinate varieties can be supported by a four foot stake, most heirlooms and beefsteak varieties require at least a six foot stake. As your plants grow, tie a string to the first stake in the row. Pass the string between the two plants and wrap it tightly on the second stake. Continue down the row until you reach the last stake. Your string should be making an "S" pattern going down the row, passing to the left of one plant and the right of the next. Wrap the string a few times around the last stake and start back down the row the other way. Your string should pass on the opposite side of each plant so that it makes an "8" pattern, with a tomato plant caught in each loop of the "8." Make a tight wrap around each stake and tie off your string on the starting stake. The goal of this method is to create an almost two-dimensional fan shape for each plant. Used with a "Modified Y" pruning method (see below) you should end up with a healthy, productive tomato hedge.

## A Few Words on Pruning Tomatoes

Depending on the tomato variety and your staking method, you may not need to prune at all. Any of the small tomatoes, from the smallest cherry to almost cue ball sized probably don't really benefit from pruning. However, If you choose the Top Wire or Individual Stake method above, you will need to train your plants to a single stem. "Suckers" form all along the main stem everywhere a leaf branch is attached. They can be snapped or clipped off weekly, or when you get to it. This will leave you with a single main stem. You should end up with fewer but bigger fruits with this method, and a single stem that can be tied to the stake or twisted around a single string. Benefits include lower water needs, better air circulation, and the maximum size fruit your plants can bear. You must be careful to use clean clippers or fingers, because you do not want to spread disease into the little open wounds. For Cages or the Florida Weave you only have to prune once (if at all). A few weeks after transplanting, look for the first fruit cluster on the main stem, and remove all but one sucker below that cluster. Sometimes called the "Modified Y" pruning method, you have essentially removed much of the lowest foliage from your plant. You are still allowing the plant to produce stems freely, so you will get a lot of foliage higher up. Foliage is the factory that produces the sugars to energize your plants and foliage can also protect the fruit from sunscald. In some cases a plant with a good foliar crown can out-grow pest or disease problems. The end result should be more fruit of a smaller size over a longer harvest period.