

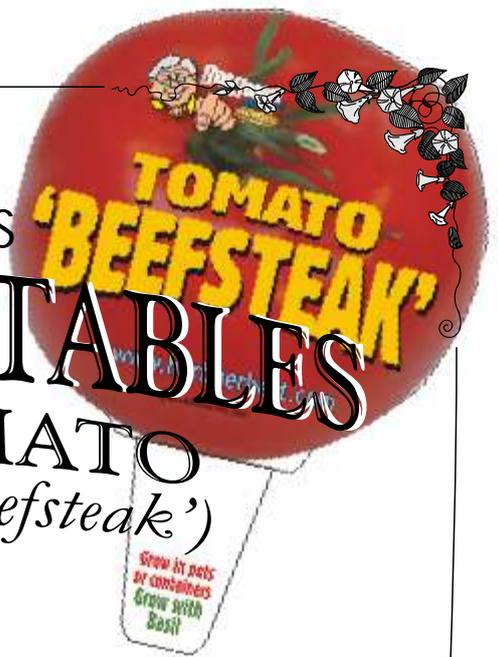
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GOURMET VEGETABLES

BEEFSTEAK TOMATO

(*Solanum lycopersicum* 'Beefsteak')



DESCRIPTION

Quite literally the beef steak of the tomato world, this productive variety produces huge, delicious fruit on vigorous vines – often weighing over 300 g/1lb and up to 450 g/1.5lb. An excellent stake type, the fruit reaches maturity after approximately 12 weeks. Also known as 'Red Ponderosa' or 'Crimson Cushion' the fruit is slightly ribbed and a brilliant crimson colour with meaty deep red flesh, nearly seedless with a 'real' tomato flavour.



USES

The Beefsteak is ideal for slicing and the ultimate sandwich tomato.



GROWTH

As an indeterminate variety, the Beefsteak requires staking and should be pruned to a few leaders, depending on plant vigour, and then have its laterals removed from the major leaf axis. Overly harsh pruning weakens the plant, delays fruiting and reduces yield. You only need to shape the staking varieties to one or two leaders and prune laterals. Minimal leaf removal for sunlight penetration is required in outdoor crops.

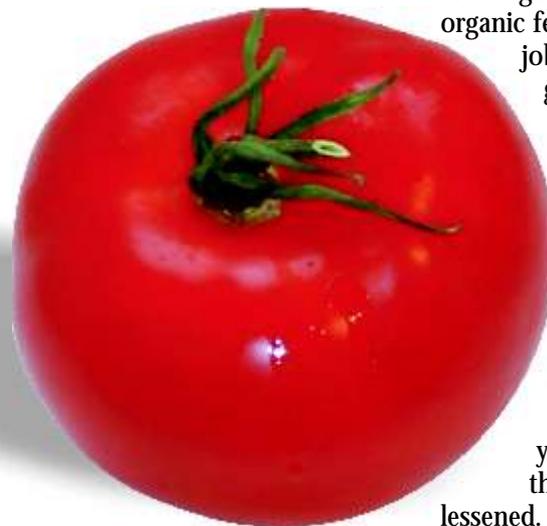
Companion plant tomato with

basil – the basil will improve growth and flavour and attract bees and ladybirds and deters some pests. Parsley, asparagus, celery, chives, onions and cucumber will improve also tomato growth and flavour and marigold and nasturtium will deter nematodes and insect pests. Do not plant in close proximity to corn or potato.



CULTIVATION

Tomatoes do best in hot climates, with extra water in spring while the plant is growing and drier sunny conditions while the fruits are ripening. Tomatoes do best to have a full eight hours of sunlight. Grow in rich, moist soil climates.



Plants may be grown in a green house but usually the flavor is better when grown outside, provided that they ripen properly on the vine before harvesting. The advantages of green house cultivation are earlier and heavier crops, a longer period of fruit production in autumn/fall and a wider choice of suitable varieties. Soil preparation is the key to successful tomato practice. Soils that are suitable for tomatoes need to be fertile, well drained and moisture retentive. If your current garden bed is not suitable, blood and bone is an ideal fertiliser for tomatoes and can be used safely at planting time, but you will need a potassium source too. A good general purpose organic fertiliser will also do the

job. After your first crop, grow tomatoes in the same soil each year with the old stems and leaves dug into the soil for compost.

Tomatoes can suffer from a few problems, such as Wilt, virus, moulds and Red Spider to name a few.

However, if you keep your plant in good health the diseases risk is lessened. For more information on your vegetables healthy see our organic gardening fact sheet on the HerbHerbert website.

Any enquiries can be directed to:

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