

Calling All Gardeners!

Its time to show off your skills!

We are looking for those big bad tomato beasts you brag about every summer. Do they look delicious? Are you growing an heirloom variety? Did your kids give you a hand in the garden? If so, bring your tomatoes down to the Tomato Fest and show us what you've got! We've got the perfect contest for you.

Do you have children or grandchildren helping you in the garden? Or are you looking for a good summer project to start now with a child? Youngsters are so very fascinated by gardening! Our contest is a perfect opportunity to show off that young green thumb and to teach them the pleasure of picking their own produce and growing their own goodies..

The Best Homegrown Tomato contest is a part of the Jacksonville Tomato Fest and is sponsored by East Texas Medical Center. Entries will be accepted at the Norman Activity Center between 9 and 11 a.m on June 12th. \$100 will be awarded to the winner of each of 6 categories.

The Categories are:

1. Largest Tomato
2. Best Plate of 3
3. Best Plate of 3 Heirloom Variety
4. Best Plate of 3 Grown by Parent and Child 12 Years or Younger
5. Best Plate of 3 Grown by Grandparent and Child 12 Years or Younger
6. Best Plate of 3 Peoples Choice Selection

Entries in the two family categories must be accompanied by a photograph showing the family members working on a tomato growing chore. Photos of planting, weeding, watering, staking or harvesting are some examples that might be used. Entries and photos will be exhibited during the Tomato Fest in the Norman Center.



Judging will take place between 11 and noon, but voting on the peoples choice will take place between 9 and 11am so bring you entry in early. One vote per person will be accepted. Entries must be grown within the boundaries of Cherokee County. Judges' decisions are final.

Young and old find rewards in gardening together. The flavor of garden fresh tomatoes cannot be beaten. Diets of most young and older folks benefit from increased vegetables. The antioxidant effect of the tomato's lycopene show additional health benefits. Many find gardening a delightful form of exercise but perhaps the greatest reward of family gardening is learning that lasting joys often only come after weeks of effort. Gratification will often not be instant but the joy of gardening can last a lifetime.



Special thanks go to
East Texas Medical Center
for their sponsorship of the 2010 event.

5 Tips for Tomato Growing Success

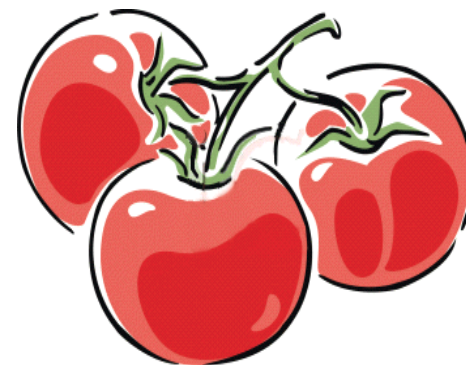
1. Plant tomatoes in full sun locations. Sunlight is the energy source for growth.
2. Time plantings to have plants flowering when night temperatures are between 55 and 68 degrees Fahrenheit.
3. Keep soil uniformly moist. Excess water kills roots and promotes fruit cracking. Inadequate water promotes blossom end rot.
4. Select varieties with disease resistance. The more resistance the better. Varieties with the letters VFNT beside their name carry resistance to Verticillium wilt, Fusarium wilt, root-knot nematodes and tobacco mosaic virus.
5. Do not allow nutrient deficiencies to develop. Nitrogen, potassium, calcium and magnesium deficiency can become problems.



Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin

The Texas A&M University System, U.S.
Department of Agriculture, and the County
Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

2010 BEST HOMEGROWN TOMATO CONTEST



\$600 To Be Awarded

A savory
part of the
Jacksonville Tomato Fest

June 12, 2010
Cherokee County Texas