

TOMATO SHOPPING LIST!

What to Buy to Start Tomatoes

15 gallon to 20 gallon pots: These hold one indeterminate type of tomato at maturity, or possibly two smaller, determinate, patio types.

Cage or trellis: Tomatoes are vines and most need support, especially indeterminate varieties.

Quality Soil: Choose products that contain quality organic ingredients like mycorrhizal fungi and earthworm castings, etc... (FoxFarm soil products are a great start.)

Frost protection or web fabric: Not only is this helpful against a late, errant freeze, it also works great to protect young tomato transplants from damaging winds.

Compost: Apply a 3" layer on top of beds and work into soil before planting.

Rock Phosphate: Put a generous handful into planting hole and plant tomato right into it.

Extra Soil Amendments: Lava sand, Expanded Shale, etc... These improve quality and efficiency of soil, making stronger, healthier plants.

Horticultural Cornmeal: Sprinkle a couple of handfuls around base of plants to prevent fungal diseases. (You can also make a 'tea' to spray as a disease preventative.)

Mulch: Living mulches, pine bark mulch help deter weeds, prevent water evaporation, keep soil cool in summer, and breakdown to improve soil.

Products for Feeding and Maintenance

Fertilizer: Your fertilizer is for feeding the soil. All natural is best. FoxFarm, Espoma, Medina, Rose Glo, are all great choices for dry fertilizer options. Earthworm castings are a huge boost to your soil. Container plants need more fertilizer as their roots are confined.

Mycorrhizal inoculants: These greatly enhance the ability of a plant to absorb water and nutrients. Try FoxFarm system: Cultivation Nation.

Horticultural Cornmeal: Again, you can use this as a 'tea' to spray plants to ward of powdery mildew and other disease. Soak half a cup in a gallon of water overnight, strain and then spray as needed after long periods of rainy/cloudy weather.

Seaweed or Fish Emulsion mixed w/Molasses for Foliar Sprays: These don't smell that great, but they work wonders! Spraying at night, when the spores under your tomato leaves open for a short period of time, can help to ward off spider mites and improve the health of your tomato plant tenfold!

BT, or Bacillus thuringiensis: A control for tomato hornworms.

