

Learn More

Wild tomatoes are native to the Andean states of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru in South America. It is believed that the tomato was first domesticated by the native populations of Mesoamerica around 7,000 years ago. The tomato was introduced to Europe by Spanish explorers in the 16th century and then to North America by European settlers. The English word tomato and the Spanish word "tomate" are derived from the Náhuatl (Aztec) word "tomatl."

The tomato has not always been cultivated as a food, however. When the tomato first arrived in Europe it was commonly grown as an ornamental plant. The tomato plant was considered to be unsafe for human consumption due to its close relation to the poisonous *Belladonna* (Deadly Nightshade). While the leaves and roots of the tomato plant *do* contain a neurotoxin called Solanine, fully ripe tomatoes *do not* contain dangerous levels of the neurotoxin and are safe to eat. Public acceptance of tomatoes as a safe food developed slowly. While tomatoes were being cultivated as food in North America as early as the 19th century, but did not see widespread popularity until the 20th century.

The slow adoption of tomatoes as a food led to the creation of many apocryphal tales about tomato advocates who campaigned to raise public awareness and acceptance of the vegetable. In one such story Colonel Robert Gibbon Johnson made a public display atop the courthouse steps in Salem, eating tomatoes before a massive crowd to prove that they were safe for consumption. Today, the tomato is one of the most popular vegetables, with thousands of varieties grown around the world.

The Marglobe tomato was developed by Fred J. Pritchard and the United States Department of Agriculture in 1917 by crossing the Marvel tomato with the Globe tomato. The Marglobe tomato is a hardy variety which can endure unfavorable climate conditions, matures quickly, and is disease resistant.

Craft: Nature Suncatcher Wind Chimes

Supplies:

- Clear contact paper
- Scissors
- Marker or pen
- Ring from a Mason jar
- String/ribbon/cord
- Stick
- Flowers, leaves, and other natural materials
- Cut two 12"x12" squares from the contact paper roll. Trace the mason jar lid rings onto the contact paper side (not the backing that peels off). Peel the backing off the contact paper and tape to a table with the sticky side up.
- Time to get creative! Lay out your natural materials inside the drawn circles. Examples could be removing petals from flowers and laying them out flat or fanning out pine needles.
- Remove the backing of the 2nd sheet of contact paper and lay on top the first contact paper square, sticky side down. Press down on the sheets so that the materials are flat as possible.
- Using scissors, cut out the circles. Tie string to the mason jar lids. Press the contact paper circles into the mason jar lids (use a bit of tape to secure it to the lid, if necessary).
- Use some string to hang the rings from a stick and hang the stick on your balcony, deck, or windowsill!

Marglobe Tomatoes (*Solanum lycopersicum*)



Grab & Grow Seed Kits



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An heirloom variety with deep red color and superb flavor. This variety is determinate, meaning that the fruit tends to ripens all at once.

Seed Package Instructions:

Culture: In the Bay Area, tomato seeds are best started indoors in March then transplanted 6-8 weeks later (mid- to late-May) to a garden or large outdoor pot

To start, fill small containers with potting or seed starting soil. Moisten completely and then place 2 to 3 seeds ¼-inch deep into each container. Place in a sunny, warm area (such as a west facing windowsill) or under grow lights.

Keep soil moist, but not saturated, until seedlings emerge (5–10 days). Thereafter, provide even moisture on a regular basis to prevent over drying of soil. As plants grow, carefully snip off or remove all but one plant per container.

Acclimate (or harden) the plants to outdoor weather before transplanting to garden or permanent outdoor location. Start hardening plants by placing them outside in a shady, protected area for an hour and then bringing them in. Increase the time outside by an hour or more each day over the next week or two, gradually moving them into the sun and closer to the area where they will spend the summer.

Harvest: Reaches maturity in 70-80 days. Fruit is best when picked fully ripe, but will ripen off the vine if picked early.

Growing tips: Small yogurt containers with drainage holes in the bottom make excellent seed starting pots. Water with a spray bottle to prevent overwhelming the seeds and seedlings.

If your indoor growing area is on the cool side, a clear plastic cover can help keep the warmth in. A heating pad could also be used.

PLANTING LOG

PLANT NAME _____

LATIN NAME _____

EXPECTED DAYS TO GERMINATION _____

EXPECTED DAYS TO MATURITY _____

Location of Planting:	Watering Log:
Date Seed Planted:	Date
Number of Seeds Planted:	
Germination Date:	
Date of First Harvest:	
Date of Last Harvest:	
Pests/Problems:	
Notes:	

Shakshuka

Yield: 4 Prep time: 15 minutes Cook Time: 40 minutes

Ingredients

4 c. fresh tomatoes diced or 28 oz. canned	½ c. onions diced
1 red bell pepper	3 cloves garlic minced
4 large eggs	1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive
1 Tbsp. tomato paste	1 tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp. paprika	¼ tsp. red chili flakes
1/2 tsp. kosher salt	1/4 tsp. ground black pepper

1. Heat oil in a large saute pan over medium heat. Add onions, garlic and bell peppers and cook until onions are translucent (about 10 minutes).
2. Add the tomato paste, ground cumin, paprika, and red pepper flakes and cook for 1 minute until fragrant.
3. Add the diced tomatoes and stir to combine with vegetables. Reduce heat to a low simmer. Cook for 15 -20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Use the back of a spoon to make four wells in the tomato vegetable mixture. Crack an egg into each well. Cover and cook over low to medium heat until the eggs are set (about 5 - 8 minutes) The timing will depend on how you like your egg yolks. Season with salt to taste.
Serve with bread or pita.

