

# Tomato

## Arkansas Grown

### History

The tomato is native to western South America and Central America. In 1519, Cortez discovered tomatoes growing in Montezuma's gardens and brought seeds back to Europe where they were planted as ornamental curiosities, but not eaten. A member of the deadly nightshade family, tomatoes were erroneously thought to be poisonous by Europeans.

### Storage Tips

- Wash and dry your tomatoes before storing.
- Unless you're planning to store your tomatoes for over a week, a windowsill, counter-top or bowl works fine.
- Contrary to our common practice in the United States, storing in a refrigerator is not otherwise recommended, as the cooler temperatures can reduce flavor and cause mushiness.
- Canning tomatoes will preserve your tomatoes for a year or more.
- Freezing tomatoes can be used for up to 8 months.

### Nutrition Information

Tomatoes are excellent sources of antioxidants, dietary fiber, minerals, and vitamins. Because of their all-round qualities, dieticians and nutritionists often recommend them to be included in cholesterol controlling and weight reduction programs.

### 1 cup, chopped tomatoes

Calories: 26.8	Vitamin A: 25%
Fat: 0.3 g	Vitamin C: 32%
Carbohydrates: 5.8 g	Potassium: 353 mg
Sugars: 3.9 g	Sodium: 7.5 mg

### Fresh Tomato Soup

- 2 large tomatoes chopped and crushed
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can chicken or vegetable broth
- 18 fresh basil leaves, minced
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 cup whipping cream
- 1/2 cup butter

In a large saucepan, bring the tomatoes and broth to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Add basil and sugar. Reduce heat to low; stir in cream and butter. Cook until butter is melted.



Cut out this recipe and glue it to a note card for future reference!

### How to Pick Them

The best tomatoes are completely free of blemishes and bruises and should be a deep, bright red. Any tomato that looks dull or pale is going to be lackluster. Steer clear of any discolorations -- even a small black spot can mean hidden rot on the inside. A good tomato is firm enough to resist pressure, but not so hard that it doesn't react to your touch. Last, smell the tomato up by the stem; it should have a strong, sweet, earthy odor. The more fragrant a tomato is, the more flavorful it will be, so be wary of tomatoes that don't smell like anything.



This item and others like it can be purchased with your EBT card at your local farmer's market or grocery store.