

HARVEST of the MONTH TOMATOES



Harvest of the Month promotes a different MA-grown crop from local farms each month in school cafeterias across the state.

To learn more, visit:
massfarmtoschool.org/hotm

Fresh tomatoes are a wonderful treat this time of year! Pick them after they turn red for the best flavor.

Healthy Serving Ideas

Salsa: Make a salsa with chopped tomatoes, diced red onion, a seeded chopped jalapeño, and a splash of lime juice.

Stuffed Tomatoes: Slice tomatoes in half and remove seeds. Stuff with cooked brown rice, corn, chopped garlic, salt and pepper. Sprinkle with a cheese of your choice and broil for 3-5 minutes until cheese melts.

Roasted Tomatoes: Toss whole or sliced tomatoes in olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Bake at 450°F for 10-20 minutes.

Fun Facts

- Tomatoes come from Peru. Their Aztec name means “plump thing with a navel (belly-button!).”
- In the U.S. people eat 20 pounds of tomatoes every year.
- In Massachusetts, over 500 farms produce 6.5 million pounds of tomatoes every year.

At-Home Activity

Tomato Taste Test & Seed Counting Activity

1. Gather 2-3 different types of tomatoes (small, medium, large or different colors).
2. Guess how many seeds are in each tomato.
3. Cut the tomatoes, remove the seeds and count them.
4. Compare guesses to the actual seed count.
5. Taste each type of tomato and talk about flavor, color, and size differences. What was your favorite?

Adapted from Green Mountain Farm to School

Where to Find Local Tomatoes

MassGrown Map (MDAR)

<https://massnrc.org/farmlocator>

Harvest of the Month Book Club

Gr. K-5: Strega Nona & Her Tomatoes by Tomie dePaola

Gr. 6-8: Seedfolks by Paul Fleishman

Gr. 9-12: The Color of Food: Stories of Race, Resilience, and Farming by Natasha Bowen



MASSACHUSETTS



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Tomato Purchasing Pointers

- Look for tomatoes that are firm and smooth.
- Store tomatoes at room temperature, out of direct sunlight.
- Buy tomatoes when they are in season. They cost less and taste best!

October Preview: Pears!