

August Fruit/Vegetable

TOMATOES



Did you know a tomato is both a fruit, a berry and a vegetable? At One time it was thought to be poisonous and was grown as an ornamental. (It is a member of the nightshade family) Today it is the most popular garden vegetable in America. They come in different sizes and colors and can be eaten raw or cooked, whole ed or unpeeled, juiced or pureed. Tomatoes are a good source of antioxidants. They have been shown to help lower cholesterol levels and are a good source of Vitamin C and Beta Carotene.

Tomatoes are eaten many different ways and are a part of the diet of several cultures.

Fresh Garden Salsa (from the University of Illinois Extension)

This coarse textured salsa is more of a relish or Pico de Gallo. The ingredients can be finely diced or use a medium for chunky salsa. Serve with traditional tortilla chips or use as a side dish with grilled meat, squash cakes (see Summer Squash) or anywhere you want a bright, tart, savory accompaniment.

2 large ripe, red slicing tomatoes, cored and chopped
1 small white onion, chopped
1 green onion, top included, chopped
1 to 3 jalapeno peppers, finely chopped
1/4 cup cilantro leaves, minced
Juice of lime
teaspoon salt

1. Using a serrated knife, chop tomatoes. If using plum tomatoes, add 2 tablespoons water.
2. In a medium bowl, toss together the tomatoes, onions, peppers, and cilantro. Squeeze lime juice over the mixture and sprinkle on the salt. Allow to rest 30 minutes before serving to allow salt to draw juice from the tomatoes. Stir again just before serving. Makes about 2 cups.

Tomato Caprese

Mozzarella cheese goes well with tomatoes, olive oil and basil. You can skewer a piece between two halves of a plum tomato (can eat like this or cook on grill or under broiler) or melt some on top of a slice of tomato. Either way brush with olive oil and sprinkle with some basil.