

# Growing UP ...in Ontario!

**THE TASTY  
TOMATO!**

## Do tomatoes grow in Ontario?

Yes! In 2006, 18,126 acres of land in Ontario was used to harvest tomatoes. There are more than 300 different varieties of tomatoes commercially grown in Ontario. Our province also leads all of North America in greenhouse vegetable production, with almost 1500 acres used to grow greenhouse produce. That's the same as 1,210 football fields full of great tasting veggies!

## How are tomatoes grown?

Your tomatoes were grown on vines in greenhouses. Greenhouse tomatoes are red when ripe. A fine star-shaped marking on the bottom of a greenhouse tomato will tell you that the tomato has already begun its final ripening process and is a good one to select.

## When are tomatoes available?

Look for Ontario grown field tomatoes in the grocery store from July-October. Greenhouse tomatoes are available March to November.



**PICTURE THIS!**

Hoop houses are sometimes used to grow tomatoes during seasons when they cannot be grown outside, such as in fall and winter months. Plastic sheeting is placed over an arc-shaped frame to create this structure. The picture above shows a grower in a hoop house, inspecting our delicious tomatoes!



**Don't forget to  
wash your hands  
before you eat!**

Handwashing is one of the easiest and best ways to stay healthy and prevent spreading germs.

Source: Foodland Ontario (2008); Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers (2006)

## **SNACK FACTS!**

- Bees play an important role in growing plants by pollinating.
- You can tell which plants need to be pollinated by whether or not they have seeds. Tomatoes have seeds so they must be pollinated.
- To stop bugs from eating their growing crops, growers add good bugs that will eat the bad bugs. When farmers do this, they do not use as much pesticide.

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## PRODUCE POINTERS

- To ripen tomatoes, store in a plain brown paper bag with apples or pears. Both release a natural ethylene gas that speeds up ripening.

Source: Foodland Ontario (2008)

## SNACK SEARCH!

S	R	D	O	G	S	R	E	A	P	TOMATO
D	E	T	P	G	W	O	S	G	E	POLLINATE
E	S	U	O	H	N	E	E	R	G	HOOP
E	P	E	L	M	E	T	T	O	I	SEEDS
S	I	T	L	B	A	P	P	W	R	GREENHOUSE
I	R	E	I	E	H	T	O	E	O	GROWER
T	E	T	N	O	E	O	O	R	E	STAR
S	E	I	A	S	R	E	H	O	O	BEES
N	U	S	T	A	R	O	E	R	B	
W	R	D	E	O	R	E	O	L	R	



### Students:

Have you completed the Snack Search? How many servings of vegetables and fruits have you eaten today?

Record your number here: \_\_\_\_\_

### Parents:

Pack vegetables and fruit in your child's lunch to help them paint their plate at school. Watch for handouts like "Paint Your Plate! ... at Lunch" for great ideas!

### Teachers:

Looking for an easy tomato recipe to send home with your students? Refer to the "Salsa" recipe in section 2.8 of *Paint Your Plate! Create a Masterpiece* Vegetables and Fruit Action Guide for Schools.



For recipes and more information, visit:

- [www.eatrightontario.ca](http://www.eatrightontario.ca)
- [www.foodlandontario.ca](http://www.foodlandontario.ca)
- [www.ontariogreenhouse.com](http://www.ontariogreenhouse.com)
- [www.vhfoods.ca](http://www.vhfoods.ca)

## Keep your balance!

Try to make healthy eating and physical activity a part of your daily routine. Have a Classroom Triathlon! Sit in your chair and have someone call out names of activities. Do the actions while staying seated in your chair. For example, dance, climb, skate, swim, or run.

Adapted from Everybody Move! Daily Vigorous Physical Activity resource (CIRA Ontario)

