



# Kitchen Tips for Tomatoes

## MO Grown Produce

<b>In Season in Missouri:</b>	July - October
<b>Quality:</b>	Tomatoes should be slightly soft and free from skin damage such as punctures or cracks. Heirloom tomatoes come in a variety of colors and shapes and are known for their superior flavor.
<b>Storage:</b>	Store whole tomatoes at room temperature for best taste. Tomatoes that are not fully ripe will continue to ripen if kept at room temperature and out of the sun.
<b>Food Safety:</b>	Wash under running water that is ten degrees warmer than the tomato to prevent infusion of bacteria. Do not soak in water. Do not keep cut tomatoes more than 4 hours at room temperature or 7 days in refrigerator.
<b>Yield:</b>	For 50, ¼ cup servings of raw tomato you need 3-4 pounds.
<b>Preparation Tips:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove core and slice with a sharp or serrated knife.</li> <li>• To peel, drop in boiling water 30 seconds and then plunge in ice water. Use a paring knife to pull away skin.</li> <li>• Add sliced tomatoes to salads and sandwiches at the last minute to avoid sogginess.</li> </ul>
<b>Kid-Friendly Serving Ideas:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May remove seeds if desired by cutting in half and gently squeezing out the jelly like juice and seeds.</li> <li>• Tomatoes are delicious with Italian seasonings such as basil, oregano, garlic and olive oil.</li> <li>• They are great with Mexican/Southwest flavors such as cilantro, onion and peppers as a fresh “Pico de Gallo” salsa.</li> </ul>
<b>Nutrition:</b>	Tomatoes are a red/orange vegetable and are rich in vitamins A and C. They are also rich in lycopene, an antioxidant, which may help prevent disease. Cooking enhances the lycopene in tomatoes.

### Fun Fact # 1:

According to the USDA, Americans eat 22-24 pounds of tomatoes per person, per year. About half of that comes in the form of ketchup and tomato sauce.

### Fun Fact #2:

Colonial American gardeners grew tomatoes for their looks, but didn't eat them because they thought they were poisonous.

