



TOMATOES

Eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables every day!

FARMERS' MARKET SEASON

Mid July to October

BUYING TIPS

Look for tomatoes which are well formed, smooth and reasonably free from blemishes. A perfectly ripe tomato will be completely red, have a sweet subtle aroma and are firm but not hard. Imperfect tomatoes can be used in cooking. Before using these tomatoes, check carefully and cut off:

- Bruised areas
- Green or yellow areas
- Growth cracks
- Water-soaked spots

STORAGE

Keep tomatoes at room temperature, away from dust and sunlight. Refrigerate only when overripe and can't be used immediately. Green tomatoes can be ripened by holding at room temperature, away from sunlight. To ripen more quickly, put them into a paper bag. Can be frozen-call your county Extension office for information.

PREPARATION

Wash tomatoes in cold water and then cut out stem ends (do not cut out stem of cherry tomatoes). Tomatoes can be peeled if desired. The most common way of slicing tomatoes is crosswise. However, slicing vertically from the stem end to the blossom end also makes nice slices, with less loss of seeds and juice.

To Peel: Cut shallow crosses in the blossom ends. Lower tomatoes into boiling water for 15-30 seconds. Remove from hot water, and cool in cold water. The skin should peel off-easily with a knife from the cut area.

SERVING IDEAS

Tomatoes are delicious served fresh in salads, on sandwiches, or eaten "as is." But, they're so versatile that they can be stuffed, stewed, fried, baked and used in sauces, dressing, casseroles and soups.

KEY NUTRIENTS

Vitamin C for healthy gums, skin and blood.
Potassium to maintain normal blood pressure.

RECIPES

Stuffed Tomato Salad

- 1 tomato
- 1 rounded tbs. low fat cottage cheese
- 1 tbs. green pepper, chopped

Cut off top of tomato (stem end) and remove seeds. Cut from top halfway down as to make wedges. Chop green peppers and mix with cottage cheese. Place mixture in tomato. Place on lettuce leaf. Chill and serve. Serves 1

Salsa

- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 4 oz. can green chiles, chopped
- 1 cup corn
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- ½ tsp. chili powder
- ½ tsp. sugar
- ¼ tsp. oregano
- ⅓ tsp. cayenne pepper
- ¼ tsp. salt

Combine all ingredients. Cover tightly. Cook on stovetop (about 20 minutes) or (use microwave safe dish) in microwave (about 5 minutes) until boiling. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before serving. Serve with any Mexican food.

Department of Health & Family Services
Division of Public Health PPH 40009 (04/99)