

TOMATO

Hawaiian Name: 'Ōhi'a

Common Names: Tomato, grape tomato, cherry tomato

Scientific Name: *Solanum lycopersicum*

Origin: Central America

Plant Part Eaten: Fruit



Locally Grown...

- Approximately 80% of the tomatoes eaten in Hawai'i are locally grown.
- Made with tomato, onion, and salmon, lomi lomi salmon was introduced by early western sailors. Today it is a staple food in Hawaiian lū'au.
- The grape tomato is a hybrid between a roma and a beefsteak tomato from Southeast Asia. It made its US debut in the 1990's, appearing in Hawai'i soon after.
- While grape tomatoes are grown mainly in Florida, California, and Mexico, you can find some of the best in the world just a few miles away at numerous local farms, or even your backyard.

Where else it's grown in the world...

In the US, California and Florida grow the most tomatoes. China, India, Turkey, and Egypt are also major producers of tomatoes.



Nutrition Info...

- A good source of Vitamins A and C.
- A good source of fiber, folate, and potassium.
- Provides lycopene, a powerful antioxidant.
- Provides Vitamin K, which is important for blood clotting and bone health.
- Combining tomatoes with healthy fats like avocado and olive oil helps make the vitamins in tomatoes more available to our bodies.



Meet a Farmer...

Farm: Ho Farms

Farmer: Le Xieng, Wei Chong, Shin, and Neal Ho

Location: Kahuku, O'ahu



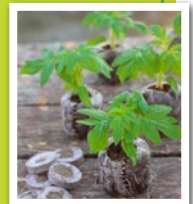
Natural Resource
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Ho Farms is a family operation. The family is originally from Laos and moved to Hawai'i in 1987. Father Wei Chong was new to farming then and educated himself in growing techniques. After finishing college, siblings Shin and Neal returned to Hawai'i to work on the farm. The farm has invested in technology to enable quality production without heavy spraying of pesticides. Ho Farms grows several varieties of specialty tomatoes as well as Japanese cucumbers, and long beans. Their produce is available in several O'ahu grocery stores and farmers' markets.

In the Garden...

- Tomatoes can grow in many Hawai'i locations year-round. Varieties developed by the University of Hawai'i are well adapted to growing conditions here. Cherry and grape tomatoes grow well in containers and would be a good choice if you don't have garden space. Vining (indeterminate) varieties take up less space and will grow and produce for a longer period of time than bush (determinate) varieties.

- Seedlings of vine varieties should be spaced 18" apart and bush varieties 3 feet apart. If planting seeds directly in the ground, plant 3-4 seeds about one inch apart at the same spacing described for seedlings.
- Set up a metal cage to support plants. Vining plants should be staked and pruned to encourage fruit production.
- Water seedlings 1-2 times a week.
- Rotate the location of your tomato plants regularly to avoid spreading plant diseases.



Let's Get Cooking... Quinoa-Tomato Pita Pocket

Ingredients

- Whole wheat pita pockets
- Cooked and cooled quinoa
- Local grape tomatoes
- Hummus
- Local baby greens
- Local avocado
- Vinaigrette salad dressing (optional)

Directions

1. If not using leftover quinoa, prepare quinoa as directed on package. Allow it to cool.
2. Slice grape tomatoes.
3. Spread hummus into each pita.
4. Cut avocado into small cubes, or mash into a paste.
5. Add quinoa, baby greens, grape tomatoes, and avocado into pita.
6. *Optional: drizzle with a small amount of salad dressing.*



Reminder: Please compost your food waste.



What can you make with tomato?

Tomatoes are very versatile. They can be eaten raw by themselves or sprinkled with salt, pepper, and other herbs. They can also be used to make lomi salmon, salsa, spaghetti sauce, pizza, tomato bruschetta, tomato soup, salads, and more. Tomatoes can also be fried, pickled, and sundried.

Did you know?



1. The word "tomato" comes from the Spanish *tomate*, which in turn comes from the Nahuatl word *xitomatl*.
2. There are about 7,500 tomato varieties.
3. For best flavor, store and eat tomatoes at room temperature.
4. Tomato is botanically a fruit, but is used in cooking more often as a vegetable due to its less sweet, more savory flavor. In an 1893 Supreme Court case, it was decided tomato is legally classified as a vegetable for commerce purposes.
5. According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, the heaviest tomato grown weighed in at 7 pounds 12 ounces!
6. Determinate varieties of tomato plants stop growing at a certain size. They give a lot of fruit in a short amount of time. Indeterminate varieties of tomato plants keep growing and produce less fruit over a longer period of time. Most heirlooms are indeterminate.

Fresh Choice Hawaiian Harvest celebrates the diverse, nutritious, and delicious bounty grown in Hawai'i, encouraging children and their families to eat more locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables. The Fresh Choice Hawaiian Harvest Toolkit includes educational resource sheets, family take-home letters, produce preparation sheets, and a poster showcasing Hawai'i-grown crops. For downloads and more information, visit www.kokuahawaiifoundation.org/HawaiianHarvest.

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