



Cherry/Grape Tomato Information Sheet

Purchasing Specifications

Specifications should state grade, type, size, and quantity. Select an appropriate grade for the intended use. They should have bright to dark red color, natural shine, firm, smooth-skinned and be at least pink in color. Yellow/orange fleshed tomatoes may be specified and should have a solid yellow characteristic color throughout the tomato. Cherry and grape tomatoes should be received with more than 90% of the tomatoes showing specified color. No more than 15% should have defects that make the tomatoes unusable, and no more than 5% should be affected by decay.

U.S. Grades

- U.S. No. 1* - Most common grade used to ship cherry and grape tomatoes.
- U.S. Combination - at least 60% of the tomatoes are U.S. No. 1 quality.
- U.S. No. 2 - Severity of defects are more than in a U.S. No. 1.

*U.S. No. 1 consists of tomatoes that have similar varietal characteristics. U.S. No. 1 tomatoes are mature, not overripe or soft, clean, well developed, fairly well formed, fairly smooth, and free from decay, freezing, sunscald, or damage by any other cause.

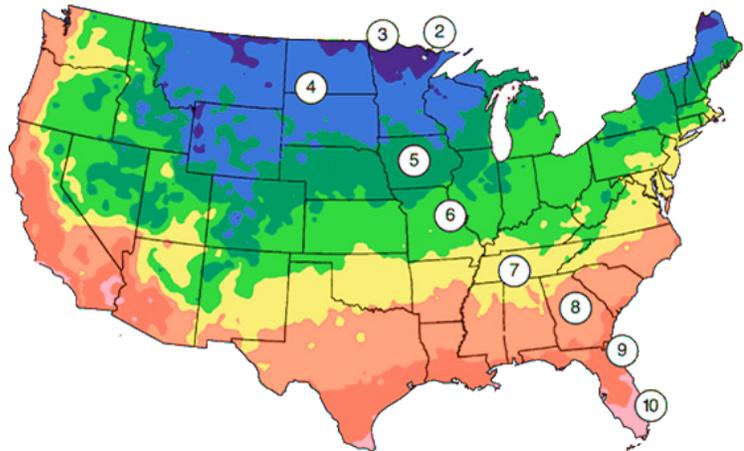
Domestic Harvest

2, 3, 4: July - August

5, 6: June - July

7, 8: April - May

9, 10: December - April



Tomatoes are grown locally year around either outside or in greenhouses in most of the United States. Greenhouse/hothouse and hydroponic tomatoes are growing steadily in popularity and available nearly year-round. The peak commercial production states are Florida and California. Between these two states there is virtually no gap in domestic production of tomatoes. Check with your county or state Cooperative Extension Office for specific information regarding tomato production in your area.



Cherry/Grape Tomato Information Sheet, continued

Receiving Guidelines

Desirable Characteristics



- Acceptable color and shape.
- Shape should return to round when squeezed between fingers slightly.

Product Defects



Insect



Discolored Areas



Poorly Colored



Scars



Decay

- Cut product should not be discolored or have off odors.

Storing and Handling Guidelines

- Store ripe cherry or grape tomatoes ideally at 45 to 60 °F with a relative humidity of 95%. Under these conditions, tomatoes will be acceptable for up to 10 days. Tomatoes stored at refrigeration temperatures below 41 °F will have approximate shelf life of 5 days. Tomatoes stored at temperatures under 75 °F will have approximate shelf life of 1 to 2 days. Storing tomatoes above 75° F is not recommended.
- Store tomatoes at room temperature for best taste. If tomatoes are refrigerated, remove them from refrigeration about 30 minutes prior to serving to regain some of their original flavor.
- Store tomatoes away from ethylene gas sensitive produce such as lettuce and other leafy greens. Tomatoes are ethylene producers and may cause damage and reduce shelf life.
- Wash tomatoes under running water that is ten degrees warmer than the tomatoes to prevent infusion of potential bacterial contaminants.
- Cover, date, and refrigerate cut tomatoes. Use by the following day for best quality.
- Hold and serve cut tomatoes at 41 °F. Do not store cut tomatoes at room temperature. Take and record serving line temperatures of cut tomatoes.
- Discard cut tomatoes after 2 hours in the temperature danger zone (41 °F to 135 °F).