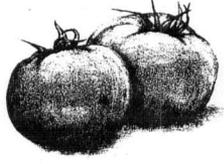


Tomato Cultivars



by D.N. Maynard

Cultivar selection is one of the most important management decisions made by the grower, and should be done several months before planting. Failure to select the most suitable cultivar or cultivars may lead to loss of yield or market acceptability.

The following characteristics should be considered in selection of tomato cultivars for use in Florida:

Yield — The cultivar selected should have the potential to produce yields at least equivalent to cultivars already grown. The average yield in Florida is currently about 1100 25-pound cartons per acre. The potential yield of cultivars in use should be higher than the average yield, or have other desirable characteristics such as earlier harvests, and/or fruit size.

Disease Resistance — Cultivars selected for use in Florida must have resistance to Fusarium wilt (Race 1 and 2), Verticillium wilt, gray leaf spot, and some tolerance to bacterial soft rot. Available resistance to other diseases may be important in certain situations.

Horticultural Quality — Plant habit, jointlessness and fruit size, shape, color, firmness, smoothness, and resistance to defects should all be considered in cultivar selection.

Adaptability — Successful tomato cultivars must perform well under the range of environmental conditions usually encountered in the district or on the individual farm.

Market Acceptability — The tomato produced must have characteristics acceptable to the packer, shipper, wholesaler, retailer, and consumer. Included among these qualities are pack out, fruit size, fruit shape, ripening ability, firmness, and flavor.

Standard cultivars

Recommended tomato cultivars for various production regions are listed in Table 2. A description of these and other cultivars follows.

Duke is an early, determinate, jointless hybrid developed by Petoseed. Fruit are large (5.5-6.5 ounces), green shouldered, and moderately flat-round shaped. Plants are resistant to Verticillium wilt, Fusarium wilt (Race 1 and 2), gray leaf spot, and Alternaria stem canker.

Flora-Dade is a midseason to late, jointless, determinate, open-pollinated cultivar developed by IFAS. Fruit are medium-large (4.5-5.5 ounces), green shouldered, and round. Plants are resistant to Verticillium wilt, Fusarium wilt (Race 1 and 2), and gray leaf spot.

Table 2. Tomato cultivars for Florida.

Dade County	East Coast	Southwest	Palmetto-Ruskin	North Central	North and West Florida
Duke FTE 12	Duke Sunny	Duke FET 12 Summer Flavor Brand 5000 Pacific Sunny	Duke FTE 12 Hayslip Pacific Sunny	Flora-Dade Pacific Sunny	Pacific Sunny
FOR TRIAL*					
Horizon	Horizon	Horizon Independence	Freedom Harizon	All Star Freedom Horizon	All Star Horizon

* IFAS, seed industry, and grower trial results indicate good potential. Small plot evaluation should be made to determine local adaptation.