



# TOMATO FAQs

Sponsored by Marshfield Agricultural Commission  
Adopt-a-Seedling, May 17, 2014

**When Should I Plant My Tomatoes?** Harden off one week before planting – provide protected, partial sun each day. Memorial Day weekend or early June is the best time for planting. Just remember, tomato seedlings do not like cold weather and will not tolerate a frost.

**Do Tomatoes Need Full Sun?** Yes, they prefer 6-8 hours of sunlight a day. However, you may have success with 4 hours a day with some varieties – for instance, those with a shorter maturity of ~65 days. With less sun, soil preparation and care is even more important.

**How Should I Prepare My Soil?** Add organic matter such as compost and leaves. Work the soil to twice the depth of your planting hole. For more information, ask a member of the Agricultural Commission.

**How Should I Plant My Tomatoes?** Place up to 2/3 of the stem underground (6-8" maximum), keeping the first true set of leaves above ground. This allows the stem to send out more roots, resulting in a stronger plant. Plant 24-30" apart.

**General Care** Use a chemical-free mulch such as salt marsh hay or compost. As your tomatoes grow, trim the lower branches so they don't touch the ground.

**What's Special About Heirloom Tomatoes?** They are known for their distinctive flavor, colors, shapes, size, and texture. Unlike hybrids, they produce "true seeds" which can be saved to produce the same tomato the following year. Typically, heirlooms are not found in grocery stores, as they are tender and don't keep very long. They are also more difficult to grow than many hybrid tomatoes.



**Community Garden at Mounce Meadows**

## The Marshfield Agricultural Commission

Appointed by the Board of Selectmen in 2007, the Marshfield Agricultural Commission (AgCom) drafted a Right-To-Farm by-law that was approved at town meeting. AgCom serves as a facilitator for encouraging agriculture in Marshfield. Our mission includes education, promotion, advocacy, and mediation. Our outreach includes:

- Community Gardens
- The annual "Backyard Farm & Garden" Spring Lectures
- The annual "Adopt-a-Seedling" program at the Farmers' Market
- Judging the tomato contest at the Farmers' Market

If you would like more information, please visit our page on the Town of Marshfield website, or visit us on Facebook.

And please ask to join our email list.

**Your donations, the only funding source for our programs, are greatly appreciated.**

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