

Yoderbilt
EST GREENHOUSES 2011

Starting Tomato Cuttings

IN A GREENHOUSE

A few summers back, we started tomato seeds in our Yoderbilt Greenhouse because there were certain varieties we couldn't find the seeds to order as they were sold out. A few months later, we took fall cuttings from our favorite tomato plants in the garden to grow and overwinter.

These fresh cuttings would grow into a plant and provide tomatoes for winter. But even more exciting, they would also provide cuttings for new spring plants and be transplanted out for our summer garden! What we found, and what we hope you find, is that growing from cuttings is such a fun way to expand your gardening. With that being said, let's get into it!



What is Plant Propagation?

Plant propagation is the process of reproducing a plant from a parent plant, whether it be by seeds, cuttings, or other plant parts. You do need to check the plant tag or the seed packet to determine if there are any propagation restrictions implemented by the company selling the seeds or plant.

The Benefits of Propagating

QUICK TRANSPLANTING TIME

When we plant seeds, even in the ideal greenhouse environment, it will take at least 6-8 weeks to have them ready for transplant. If we take a cutting from an established plant, however, it will be ready to transplant in about 10-14 days, but really closer to a week. It's a fast process!

IDENTICAL TO PARENT

Another fantastic benefit of going the cutting route is that it's an exact clone of the parent plant. So, if you have a healthy, prolific plant, your new plant will contain those same exact characteristics. It's pretty incredible.



Fun Facts

There are more than 10,000 tomato varieties.

Choosing which one is the best for your garden can all come down to how plan to use it in your kitchen!

Tomatoes can't stand the chill!

Skip the fridge when it comes to your fresh garden tomatoes. The cold can altar that beautiful texture and flavor we love.

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PROPAGATING TOMATO PLANTS BY CUTTINGS



Our preferred method is to cut starts from our favorite garden plants in the fall. From there, we root them, pot them up and overwinter for new spring cuttings. You can get plenty of new plants from a single parent. And, you can do this successively as well. Tomato plants are the most productive in their first year. So having a continual supply of new plants increases your harvest ability. This also saves our greenhouse space by avoiding carrying in huge plants to overwinter. They will also produce tomatoes throughout the winter in our greenhouse envirnoment. As we prune them closer to spring, we get new batches of tomato plants for our summer garden.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Clean glass jars
- Clean sharp shears
- A healthy tomato plant
- Water

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How to Propagate

Get ready to propagate your tomato plants with this easy three-step method!

1 Choose which plants you want to use

Once you decide which plant(s) you want to use, take cuttings of about 6-7 inches from the tip of a branch. We choose straight suckers, and prefer those that don't contain blooms. If they have blooms, we will remove them.

2 Remove any bottom leaves, branches and blooms

It's as simple as it sounds, we remove all leaves, branches, suckers and blooms with the exception of 3-5 leaves at the top of the plant. This allows them to focus all of the energy into root development instead of fruit and foliage.

3 Place them in water

Keep them in a warm and well-lit space, such as your greenhouse, and you will have a tremendously strong root system in about a week. We place them into clear glass jars filled with clean water. It is ideal to change out the water daily, but we have been extremely successful when we don't follow that timeline. Do make sure you have plenty of water in the glass jar at all times. Once the root system is strong, we will pot them up into at least a 6 inch pot filled with a good potting soil mix. Then, we will transplant them out to our garden once the danger of the last frost is gone.

You can also propagate directly into the soil. To do this, you'll follow the above steps, minus placing them into water after you remove excess leaves and blooms. Instead of placing them into water, you'll place them directly into your potting mix. They will take root directly in the soil. One advantage to this method is that saves you a step in the process, as you'll be transplanting the plants either way.

Whatever tomato plant you choose, as well as method, you're sure to enjoy the excitement that comes with propagating.

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