

Tomatoes

The tomato is from South America. When the tomato came to Europe, people did not eat it. Doctors said it would make them sick. So people just grew tomatoes because they looked nice.



Now people from all over the world eat tomatoes. Tomatoes are used in sauce, soup, juice, salsa, and ketchup. The tomato is very good for you. Only a tomato leaf or stem will make you sick.

People do odd things with tomatoes. People grow tomatoes in space. There is a big tomato fight every year in Spain. A long time ago, people would toss a bad tomato when they saw a show they did not like.

In Canada, many tomatoes are grown on big farms. The farms bring in poor people from far away to help grow tomatoes. Without these workers, the farms could not run. But the workers do not get much money. Canada does not let the workers stay here. Many people say this is not fair.

Most farms pick tomatoes before they are ripe. They last longer this way. But these tomatoes do not taste as good. So lots of people grow their own tomatoes.

Grow Your Own Tomatoes

Tomatoes that you grow are better than tomatoes that you buy. You can grow tomatoes inside if you do not have a garden.

You need:

- Tomato seeds
- A big pot (50 cm deep)
- Potting soil (many big food shops sell this)
- A window

Fill the pot with potting soil. Pack the soil down a little bit. Put a seed on top of the soil. Add a bit more soil on top.



Add water. The soil must always be a bit wet. Seeds like to be warm. Put your pot in a warm place. It does not need sun yet.

The plant will grow above the soil. Put the plant by a window. The plant needs four hours of sun a day. You can tie the stem to a stick to help the plant stay up. Always keep the soil a bit wet.

Pick the tomatoes when they are the same red colour top to bottom. Enjoy!

Choose the correct answer.

1. What happened when the tomato first came to Europe?
 - A. ? It was welcomed.
 - B. ? People did not like it.
 - C. ? Doctors suggested people eat tomatoes for good health.
 - D. ? People grew it for food.

2. What is something tomatoes are NOT used for?
 - A. ? ketchup
 - B. ? juice
 - C. ? pastries
 - D. ? soup

3. What helps control the price of tomatoes in Canada?
 - A. ? The government passes laws to lower vegetable prices.

- B. ? Big farming companies use cheap workers from other countries.
 - C. ? Consumer demand keeps prices down.
 - D. ? Many people don't like tomatoes.
4. According to the reading, how are the tomato workers treated unfairly.
- A. ? They work in unsafe conditions.
 - B. ? Canadians are not polite to them.
 - C. ? They are paid good wages.
 - D. ? They are not allowed to stay in Canada.
5. When you are growing your own tomatoes, where should you put the plant and how much sunlight will it need?
- A. ? You should put it in the kitchen and it will not need any direct sunlight.
 - B. ? You should put it by a window and it will need 4 hours of sunlight per day.
 - C. ? It needs to be outside.
 - D. ? It needs to be in the garage with sunlight all day.

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