

## 2020 Rodeo Tomato



### **Red Snapper** **(Hybrid) Tomato**

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**Red Snapper** is a versatile and adaptable salad variety tomato. Fruits are an attractive red color, firm and have a good shelf-life. The plants are medium tall, have good cover (less sunscald), and benefit from pruning.

Fruit shape - Deep oblate; globe	Exterior characteristics - Smooth
Fruit size - Large; Extra-large	Interior characteristics - Firm
Exterior color - Scarlet red	Plant Habit - Good cover
Interior color - Deep red	Plant Height - Med; Medium tall

Days to Maturity from Transplant: 70-75 days



<https://sakatavegetables.com/vegetable/tomato/tomato-salad-determinate/red-snapper/>

### High resistance to:

- Alternaria stem canker (*Alternaria alternata* f. sp. Lycopersici)
- Fusarium wilt (*Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. Lycopersici)
- Fusarium crown & root rot (*Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. radicis-lycopersici)
- Verticillium wilt (*Verticillium albo-atrum*)
- Verticillium wilt (*Verticillium dahlia*)

### Intermediate resistance to:

- Gray leaf spot (*Stemphylium solani*)
- Tomato spotted wilt (Tomato spotted wilt *tomspovirus*)
- Tomato yellow leaf curl (Tomato yellow leaf curl *bigeminivirus* (Israel strain))

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**Bexar County AgriLife Extension Service** website:

[bexar-tx.tamu.edu](http://bexar-tx.tamu.edu)

# Getting a Head Start on Growing Your Own Tomatoes

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Have you ever wondered how some gardeners always harvest the first tomatoes of the season?

In most cases these “early bird” winners are “potting-up” their plants in one-gallon containers prior to setting them out in the garden for spring, when the soil and air temperatures have warmed up enough to support tomato plant growth and fruit setting (early March through the first week of April).

To “**pot up**” your transplants, fill your gallon black plastic nursery containers with a pre-moistened peat based potting mix. Enrich the potting mix with copious amounts of a slow release fertilizer made especially for containers, such as an 18-6-12 Osmocote Plus analysis. If an organic fertilizer formulation is preferred, consider a 4-2-3 or similar analysis.

The **key plant nutrient will be nitrogen**. If adequate plant fertility is not maintained, the tomato bush will be small, yellow in color and produce much less fruit. Upgrade the transplants in the container. They can be planted deeply; tomatoes are one of the few plants that can tolerate deep planting. Adventitious roots will form along the whole stem. This is especially important if your transplants are leggy or top heavy. Start with healthy, dark green, well established transplants. They should **acclimatize to the wind and sun**.

The goal of the “potting-up” activity is to maintain the fast growth rate established at the nursery. Place the potted-up tomato in a full sun

location out of the wind. The wind can injure foliage and reduce overall plant growth, so a small plant stake might be needed anchored to the main stem. A greenhouse is ideal, but many locations on the patio or the south side of the house also work well.

It is important to **keep the tomatoes adequately watered**, BUT NOT OVER-WATERED. That is why we start out with a Premium peat based potting mix. Watering frequency will depend on the water-holding capacity of the potting mix used and the plant size. Check the mix moisture by digging around in the pot—if you feel moisture—DO NOT WATER. Too much watering of young plants can cause roots to rot and you will have to get replacement plants. Also, you should apply a diluted water-soluble fertilizer, such as 20-20-20 or Hasta-Gro, at least once a week when watering. The high-quality potting mixes are very well drained so they usually will not become soggy. Reduce watering when the weather is overcast and/or cool. If the plant is subjected to more than a few hours of sub 40° F temperature it will stop growing. You will recognize this when the plant stops growing, and you see purplish coloring on the leaves. This condition often happens if you plant the tomatoes directly into the garden in early March and are not **covered with a plant cover like N-Sulate until mid to late April**.

To maintain the tomato transplant in a growing state, move it to **shelter** when temperatures below 40 degrees F. are forecasted, and winds are over 15 miles per hour. That may mean, moving the containers into the house on cold, windy evenings.

If you do everything as described above, your “potted up” plants will become quite large and may even begin blooming by **late March or early April**. The plants can then be **transplanted to the vegetable garden** or a much larger 20-inch diameter container. DO NOT let plants set fruit

before moving to a permanent location. If fruit are allowed on transplants, the plants will be stunted when establishing them in the garden location. So, remove these early fruits for ample plant establishment! **DO NOT** apply organic **mulch around tomato plants** until **early May**, when soil temperatures have warmed. Then mulch two inches with an organic double shredded hardwood mulch that has some finished compost. If the plant is grown in a container, be sure to water and continue feeding every week with a water-soluble fertilizer as recommended on the label.

A tomato plant will **produce a higher quality fruit if caged**. Cages should be at least 4-5 feet tall with a 16-20-inch diameter. Anchoring the cages will minimize the wind from turning over the cages. Drip irrigation is the best method to water. In six-to-eight weeks, you should be potentially harvesting up to 20 plus pounds of tomatoes and you'll be the talk of your neighborhood!

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This information and more can be found at

**[bexarmg.org](http://bexarmg.org)**

Select Gardening Library

**Email: [info@bexarmg.org](mailto:info@bexarmg.org)**

Or call **210-631-0400**, ask to speak to a Master Gardener

