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# QUAIL HILL FARM

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Quail Hill Farm is a stewardship project of Peconic Land Trust – [www.PeconicLandTrust.org/quail\\_hill\\_farm](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org/quail_hill_farm)

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## TOMATOES – 2010

The tomatoes – 58 varieties in all – are now ripening on the vine and it looks like a great harvest. Quail Hill Farm grows cherry, paste and standard tomatoes of all shapes, sizes and colors: red, pink, orange, yellow, purple and green. Tomatoes require hot sunny days and warm nights in addition to good irrigation. This season's harvest is clearly thriving in what has been a hot sunny summer. Frequent light rainfall in late spring when the seedlings were transplanted gave them a good start. While the lack of rain from mid-June to mid-July created additional work for farmers – they spent hours lugging hoses from one bed to another – it did allow them to control irrigation. Since then, the tomatoes have benefitted from frequent, even rainfalls intermixed with plenty of sun and heat. Come August dry weather is desired so tomatoes can ripen and develop deep, rich flavor. Tomatoes come from a dry climate and, at a certain point, too much rain can cause disease to set in.

Except for Sun Gold and a few other early varieties, tomatoes grown at Quail Hill Farm are open pollinated varieties, and many are heirlooms. Open-pollinated tomatoes have the ability, unlike hybrids, to reproduce seed true to type. Heirloom tomatoes are open-pollinated varieties developed before 1940.

Our favorite tomatoes are back, and there are many new ones to try. This year, the farm is testing out 30 new varieties, indicated with an \*. Several varieties come from seed saved from tomatoes previously grown at Quail Hill. These are indicated with a ‡. Come try them all!

**CHERRY / GRAPE TOMATOES:** Appearing a bit later in the season, **Black Cherry** has the dusky color and complex, juicy flavor of the best black tomatoes. The golden yellow 1-inch fruits of **Blondkopfchen\*** (translated as *little blond girl*) has an excellent sweet taste. A pale yellow cherry that grows in clusters of six, **Dr. Carolyn ‡** has an excellent balance of sugar, tartness and depth of flavor. Red and small, **Matt's Wild Cherry ‡** is an early ripener, packed with sweet full flavor. **Red Pearl\*** is a larger than usual "grape" variety with tender skin and great flavor. Grown by Pennsylvania Dutch as early as 1856, the European heirloom **Riesentraube\*** (translated as *giant bunches of grapes*) produces tasty, round 1-inch fruits in clusters of 20-50. Botanist breeders have crossed currant tomatoes with cherry tomatoes and one outstanding result is **Sungold**, one of the first tomatoes to ripen; a bright tangerine orange, it is sweet with just a hint of acid tartness. The pale yellow fruit of **White Cherry\*** is just over 1" in diameter and has a good mild taste. The zebra-streaked skin of **Zebra Cherry\*** surrounds a dark pinkish interior that bursts with robust, full-bodied flavor.

**PASTE TOMATOES:** The heart-shaped **Amish Paste** with thick, bright red, sweet flesh is meaty, has few seeds, and is good for eating fresh or making sauce. A Russian variety, **Black Plum ‡** has oval 2-inch fruits that ripen from deep mahogany to black brown and is great for sauce. **Heinz 2653** is early maturing and has very firm and flavorful 3-4 oz. fruits that are great for canning. Slightly ribbed and bottle shaped, the pink **Japanese Plum\*** has enormous fruits, few seeds and mild taste. The 4-6 oz. fruit of **Mariana\*** are uniform in shape, firm with thick walls, and filled with flavor. The original seed for the medium to large sized **Myona\*** comes from an Italian market gardener who, when asked what variety it was, said "It's-a my-own-a." The large, slightly rectangular fruits of **San Marzano** have great flavor and are perfect for canning (when buying them in the store, this is the variety to look for). Grown since the early 1900s by Lithuanian immigrants in Wisconsin, the pink **Sheboygan\*** produce tasty 4-6 oz. fruit that makes great sauce. Red with yellow and orange iridescent streaks down its side, the gorgeous **Speckled Roman** produces a meaty fruit and makes great sauce.

### STANDARD TOMATOES:

**RED:** **Beaver Lodge\*** is a red early ripener and has rich, balanced flavor. **Brandywine**, with deep pink skin and red flesh, has a luscious flavor and can reach one pound in size. The real **Cosmonaut Volkov**, who died in a landing accident, is honored by this Russian favorite with its round, slightly flattened fruits and full flavor, nicely balanced between acid and sweet. The smooth textured, 6-7 oz. fruit of **Dafel\*** has a rich full flavor and can be harvested when its shoulders are still green. The Bulgarian **Druzba** (translated as *friendship*) has round 4-inch fruit that are slightly flattened and have a sweet yet tart flavor. A classic tomato shape, **Fireworks** ripens early and produces 5-7 oz. fruit which, having been bred with a yellow, sometimes produces yellow fruit equal to the red in size and taste. The 3-4½ inch fruit of **Gill's All Purpose\*** are full flavored, an all around tomato great for sauce and canning as well as fresh eating. Though small, the early ripening **Glacier** is rich in flavor. **(OVER)**

An early ripener, the Tuscan **Maremano\*** has small round fruit that ripen in clusters and are excellent for canning and sauce. The perfectly round **Medford\*** has fruit averaging 10-16 oz. and its solid flesh makes it perfect for both slicing and canning. **Moskvich** hails from eastern Siberia and has deep red skin. The 4 oz. fruit of **Porter\*** are deep red and are known for their excellent keeping quality. Producing one-pound fruit, **Rose**, an Amish heirloom, has amazing flavor that some prefer to Brandywine.

**PINK:** **Amagansett Pink ‡** comes from seed saved from one of the 2007 pink varieties (it was too late in the season to be sure which one it was). This tasty heirloom from Calabria, **Belmonte\*** produces very large pink fruit that are ruffled at the stem end. From the Black Forest region of Germany, **Eva Purple Ball** has smooth, uniform deep pink globes with luscious sweet flavor. Growing in clusters of 4-6 fruits, the rosy **June Pink\*** was first offered in 1900, the result of intense competition to bring the earliest tomato to market. The medium sized, flattened globes of **Pink Beauty\*** have a full rich tomato flavor. **Pruden's Purple** has vivid, dark pink skin with crimson flesh. With smooth translucent pink skin, the perfectly round, medium-sized **Rose de Berne** has both robust flavor and rich sweetness.

**ORANGE/ YELLOW:** Hailing from Kentucky, **Barnes Mountain Orange\*** grows up to 1 pound and has a outstanding flavor. Its size, color and shape inspired the name of the bright yellow **Egg Yolk\*** which bursts with rich fruity flavor. Low in acid and sweet in flavor, the large yellow **Gold Medal\*** has beautiful red streaks and is a gourmet's delight when sliced. The lemon yellow, heart-shaped fruit of **Golden King of Siberia\*** can grow up to 1 pound and have a nicely balanced sweet taste. The beautiful apricot-shaped fruit of **Jaune Flammée ‡** grow in clusters and have a deep orange color and excellent bitey flavor. The medium sized **Jubilee\*** has smooth-textured, orange fruit and a sweet sprightly flavor. **Orange Blossom\*** is an early tomato with medium firm, globe shaped fruits and mild flavor balanced with a little acidity. The hefty, pleated fruit of the brilliantly colored **Orange King\*** grow 2½-3 inches across and are good slicers. A Virginia family heirloom, the very large orange-yellow **Orange Oxheart\*** bears heart-shaped fruit that, weighing up to 1 pound, have a rich aroma when sliced and are wonderful for sauces and cooking. Its flesh marbled with red, the very large fruit of **Pineapple\*** can grow to 2 pounds and have a sweet, fruity flavor. The flat, yellow-red **Striped German ‡** has ribbed shoulders and a red and yellow interior whose complex fruity flavor is well worth waiting for. The large, bright orange **Valencia ‡** has a meaty interior with few seeds and weighs 8-10 oz. The 2" fruit of the fuzzy, pale yellow-skinned **Wapsinicon Peach\*** has a blush tint when ripe and a sweet fruity flavor.

**PURPLE:** A Russian variety, the globe-shaped **Black Prince\*** is iridescent garnet in color and its 5-7 oz fruit have outstanding flavor. **Bobby Joe ‡**, was given its name by Amagansett fourth graders who saved seeds from one of the 2007 purple varieties (it was too late in the season to be sure which one it was). The fruit of **Cherokee Purple**, originally cultivated by the Cherokee people and thought to be more than 100 years old, have a dusky pink skin and wonderfully sweet, purplish-pinkish-brownish flesh. A Russian variety, the delicious **Paul Robeson** honors the great operatic singer and civil rights advocate. Hailing from China, the jewel-like **Violet Jasper\*** (or *Tzi Bi U*) has violet-purple fruit with iridescent green streaks and great tasting dark purple-red flesh.

**GREEN:** **Green Zebra ‡** with its various shades of yellow-green stripes has a sweet zingy flavor. Russian for *Malachite Box*, **Malakhitovaya Shkatulka** ripens early and has light olive green skin and bright green flesh that is flavorful and tasty.

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## the 12th annual GREAT TOMATO TASTE-OFF SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2010 – from 9 AM to Noon – in the Apple Orchard

The Great Tomato Taste-Off is a unique opportunity to sample at one time the 58 varieties of tomatoes grown at Quail Hill Farm and to vote for your favorites.

The top rated tomatoes in 2008\* were (in descending order) **Matt's Wild Cherry** beating out **Sungold** by just a few points, **San Marzano** (as sauce), **Dr. Carolyn**, **Sweet Olive**, **Persimmon**, **Malakhitovaya Shkatulka**, **Amagansett Pink**, **Green Zebra**, **Speckled Roman** (as sauce), **Speckled Roman** (as sauce), **Rose de Berne**, **Brandywine**, **Amish Paste** (as sauce), **Paul Robeson**, and **Be My Baby**.

\* The 2009 Taste Off was canceled due to tomato blight which virtually destroyed the season's output.