



WHAT IT'S LIKE TO...

GROW AUSTRALIA'S BEST-TASTING TOMATO!

Homegrown fruit and veg trumps anything you'll find at the store, but what does it take to produce a prize-winning heirloom variety?

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There's a great satisfaction that comes with growing food, and gardeners know just how rewarding it is to see their first tomatoes of the season blush on the vine. Then comes the pleasure of picking, and devouring, a ripe tomato at its fresh and juicy best.

But what if your prized crop is Australia's best-tasting heirloom tomato? More than 65 varieties were grown by gardening charity The Diggers Club and Foundation in preparation for the 30th anniversary of the Diggers Great Tomato Taste Test this year (above left). The best from three categories (cherry, salad, and

beefsteak and saucing) were put to a stellar line-up of garden gurus and food experts, who rated each on flavour, texture and colour.

The winner was Black Cherry (above right), known for its dark colouring and flavour-packed fruit resembling cherries. Diggers CEO Tim Sansom says the best-tasting tomatoes are often the smallest and Black Cherry is a standout.

"They are highly productive, easy to grow and work in salads, lunchboxes and as garden snacks straight from the vine," he says.

Growing tomatoes, or any other culinary favourites, also puts you in touch with the processes in

nature that produce food, bringing a sense of connection. "There's nothing quite like presenting homegrown produce on a plate to someone who can appreciate it – that's a really wonderful feeling."

To grow top tomatoes at home, ensure plants have plenty of sun, Tim explains, and choose a good quality potting mix if you're planting in a pot, or ensure garden soil is weed-free and well composted. Then, keep your plants well-watered.

"If someone is starting out and they can deal with those three elements, they're going to have healthy plants. And if you've got a healthy plant, then you can progress to providing support."

Whether you're an avid produce gardener or beginner, Black Cherries will bring quick rewards. And you get the bonus of knowing you've grown an award-winning crop.



For tips on sustainable gardening, go to seniors.com.au and search 'gardening'.