



FYN Garden Q & A Series

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FYN Topic: Heirloom Tomatoes

Question: Why don't tomatoes from a supermarket taste more like heirloom tomatoes from a garden? via email

Answer: Few, if any, named heirloom tomato types ever make it onto supermarket shelves because they lack the advantages of high yield and disease resistance needed for commercial success. Gardeners swear their prized heirloom tomatoes with names such as Brandywine Red Landis Valley, Abraham Lincoln, Big Raspberry, Red Plum or Boxcar Willie have 'true tomato taste'.

However, thanks to discoveries by researchers at the University of Florida, a better tasting supermarket tomato may be closer to a reality. During tests with more than 100 taste testers of 100's of heirloom tomatoes, researchers discovered surprising new chemistry that produced superior tomato taste. Researchers are now focused on finding ways to transfer these 'flavor' chemicals into commercially grown Florida tomatoes.



Useful Links

- <http://www.floridayards.org>
- <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>
- <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>
- <http://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu>

Common heirloom varieties growing in South Florida, Monica Ozores-hampton, from fact sheet EDIS HS921, Title: Growing Heirloom Tomato Varieties in Southwest Florida. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/HS/HS17400.pdf>



Tasti-Lee™ A tomato grown commercially under Florida summer weather conditions and available in local Supermarkets in Southwest Florida, (A tomato resulting from years of test-

Thomas Becker is an extension agent for the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) program at the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the Horticulture Help Desk at 533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. or by emailing Extgardener@leegov.com. Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>

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