



Growing Tomatoes & Peppers - 2020 Santa Clara County Master Gardener Handout By Jeff Jenks, MG 2013

Sun - Tomatoes and peppers need direct sun, as much as possible. South facing is best.

Soil - Tomato / pepper plants need well composted and fertilized soil that offers calcium.

Soil Amendments & Fertilizer - Compost up to 30% of soil volume.

In the planting hole itself add the following:

- Bone meal, fish meal, alfalfa pellets
- NPK fertilizer (tomato specific or 16-16-16 with calcium)
- Worm castings
- Mycorrhizal fungi

Peppers need additional monthly organic fertilizer applied side dressed to the soil.

Planting – Soak root ball and the planting hole before transplant.

- Plant tomato seedlings so half the stem is buried in the hole.
- Plant pepper seedlings at soil level to avoid stem rot. Plant doublets.

Irrigation (watering),

- Timed drip irrigation in early morning is best.
- Water the roots not the foliage.
- For tomatoes, reduce watering later in the season (July 1).

Pollination – self-pollinating. Buzz pollinating is helpful, but not necessary.

Staking, Caging – needed to support tomato and pepper plants. Keep the fruit off the soil.

Insects, Diseases and Pests

- Tomato hornworm – pluck off & feed to birds
- Tomato russet mite affects stems and leaves
- Rats – trap, don't poison
- What to do? Call MG Help Desk
M-F 9:30 am–12:30 pm 408-282-3105
- Or Contact Us:
<http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/contact-us/ask-a-gardening-question/>

More information

UC Master Gardener Santa Clara County website: <http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu>

- <http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/garden-help/vegetables/tomatoes/>
- <http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/garden-help/vegetables/peppers/>

MG Spring Garden Market, April 18, 2020

<http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/events/spring-garden-market/>