

HUTCHINS FARM PLANT CATALOG 2018

The following list represents our expected offerings for the coming season, complete with brief variety descriptions, notes on cultivation, expected price and season of availability. We are unlikely to successfully produce everything on the list, for a variety of reasons, so bear in mind that not all items may be available during the specified season (or at all), and supplies are limited for all items. Because of logistical difficulties experienced in past seasons, we will no longer be taking orders for plants

All our vegetable and herb plants are grown from seed or cuttings taken from our own ‘mother’ plants and are certified organic by Baystate Organic Certifiers. The varieties and species we sell are all farm-tested (unless specified) for best flavor, reliability, yield and/or other traits that we find important. Many of these ‘professional grower’ varieties are not to be found at typical garden centers because of the high seed cost.

New varieties for 2018 are in *ITALICS*.

ARTICHOKE—‘Emerald’—3” pots @ \$3.75

AVAILABILITY: May-June

SPACING: About 1 square yard per plant.

CULTURAL NOTES: Artichokes are half-hardy perennials usually propagated by division. Plants usually begin to produce in their second season, but for those of us who live in a climate where they don’t survive the winter, this seed propagated variety (if started early enough—we seeded in early February) will produce buds the first season. Beautiful thistle-like plants grow quite large and productive with enough space and fertility.

HARVEST: Buds usually begin to arise in July and continue to form through the fall. Cut when they have achieved maximum size but before they begin to open. You can leave a few buds to open up into giant, gorgeous, long-lasting neon purple thistle-like blooms.

ARUGULA—‘Astro’—small peat pots with multiple plants @ \$1

SPACING: Pots can be set quite close together, almost side by side.

AVAILABILITY: May-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Arugula does best in the cooler weather of the early and late season—in hot weather it tends to ‘bolt’ (go to flower and seed) before it has made much leaf growth. We recommend that gardeners buy seed for this vegetable—seeds germinate readily and rapidly and the plants are ready for harvest in a month or less. We will be offering pregerminated seeds in peat pots, which should be planted whole. Do not try to divide up the seedlings in an individual pot as the disturbance can cause the plants to bolt more quickly. Plants do best under cover to keep out flea beetles, which chew holes in the leaves. We seed throughout the season, but will have plants for sale primarily in May and June. Because Arugula is cold-tolerant and fast growing, seedlings can be made until about mid-September or later if protected.

HARVEST: Because the harvest window for Arugula is so brief, we usually pull up the entire plants by their roots, and just keep seeding for continued harvest. Home gardeners may prefer to pick individual leaves to get the most from each plant, particularly during cool weather when the plants bolt more slowly.

BASIL—6-pack inserts @ \$4, 3” pots @ \$2

SPACING: We set Basil plants 6” apart in rows about 12” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Among the most tender (least tolerant to cold) of common garden plants, Basil suffers anytime temperatures go below 50 for an extended period. Row covers can be of great assistance for early and late season, and because Basil thrives in tropical heat, they can be left on all summer to exclude pests like Japanese Beetles. Basil seed germinates and grows readily in warm, moist soil, but can be prone to fungal disease in less than ideal conditions. A single planting, frequently cut back, well watered and fertilized, can produce over the entire season. We usually make several plantings to ensure top quality. A new disease, Basil downy mildew, has become a perennial scourge and has shortened our basil season significantly the last several years.

HARVEST: Plants can and should be cut back frequently and quite severely, making sure to leave some active growth to replace the harvested material. Plants that have begun to flower can be made to resume leaf growth by cutting back. Cold temperatures and moisture (and the new Downy Mildew disease) can cause Basil leaves to turn black. We never refrigerate Basil, but rather store it at room temperature with the cut stems in fresh water, the leaves covered by a plastic bag. Cooking diminishes the fresh, full flavor, so basil is best added to dishes just before serving. At the end of the season, or when disease begins to threaten, you can cut all your basil, make a big batch of pesto (minus the cheese, which should be added just before using), and freeze it in small bags for use throughout the winter.

VARIETIES: Genovese—68 days—‘the’ pesto basil, also wonderful paired with tomatoes. Our most popular basil by far.

Spicy Bush—70 days—Of a type common in Greece, this charming, small-leaved, bushy variety grows into an attractive mound. Flavor is reminiscent of Genovese, but leaves are small enough to use whole and do not require cutting (which can result in discoloration). Restaurants in Greece often have a plant on each table so diners can season their food as they wish.

Sweet Thai—64 days—Strong growing variety of ‘Thai’ basil--ornamental purple tinged plants have a strong anise-clove flavor, widely used in Southeast Asian cuisine. Tolerates Downy Mildew better than our other basil.

Eleanora—65 days—Breeders’ first attempt at a Downy Mildew tolerant Genovese-type basil, Eleanora has intermediate resistance, mostly due to more open plant habit and flatter leaves. Said to have a ‘spicier’ flavor than traditional pesto basil varieties.

BROCCOLI—6-pack inserts, some with multiple varieties @ \$3.50

SPACING: We plant broccoli 18” apart in rows three feet apart, but home gardeners can tighten up the spacing to about half.

AVAILABILITY: Because summer heat adversely affects the quality of broccoli, we tend to concentrate on July seedings to mature in the late summer and fall. Plants will be available in May, and possibly in July and August. We sometimes offer packs with multiple varieties for extended harvest.

CULTURAL NOTES: Broccoli does best in soils with a near neutral pH and high fertility. Heads that mature in hot weather are often strong flavored and loose or ‘ricey’, and the individual yellow flowers can begin to open prematurely. Heads that mature under relatively cool conditions are better flavored (those that undergo several light frosts are the sweetest) and they hold longer in the field.

We cover our spring planting to protect from flea beetles and root maggots. All plantings need protection from a number of caterpillars: Imported Cabbageworm (the bright green, fat caterpillars), the smaller Diamondback Moth and Cabbage Looper, and the newly arrived Cross-striped Cabbageworm, which hatches and feeds in groups, so can do a lot of damage in a brief period of time. These can all be effectively and safely controlled with row covers, or with one of two biological insecticides: *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) var *kurstaki* (trade name Dipel et al.) which affects only Lepidopterans (caterpillars) which ingest the substance, and Spinosad (trade name Monterey Garden Spray) which can control caterpillars and is also effective on flea beetles, thrips, leaf miners, and Colorado Potato Beetles. Both materials are most effective on larvae (caterpillars in this case) and have very short period of activity before sunlight begins to break them down—spray in the evening for maximum effectiveness.

HARVEST: Broccoli should be cut when heads are fully formed, but before they begin to loosen up (which can happen rapidly in hot weather). We check broccoli every other day when it begins to mature and cut those heads whose florets separate readily when moderate pressure is applied. A week or two after the main head is cut, a number of side shoots will begin to appear which can be cut and used like the main head. Keeping them cut will encourage extended production.

VARIETIES: Gypsy—66 days—Reliably large and well-formed, with excellent tolerance to adverse conditions and disease, and consistent good size and flavor. Gypsy is often our most productive variety by weight.

Blue Wind—49 days—Newer variety heads up very quickly. Doesn't hold well, so plan to cut promptly. Heads can grow quite large, but tend to be lightweight. Sideshoot production is ample.

Emerald Crown—60 days—Early and resilient, this large, well-domed variety has been a standout over the last several years

Green Magic—62 days—Our new standard variety has impressed us with its uniformity, quality and unsurpassed production of secondary shoots.

Imperial—71 days—Newer variety that produces very large, uniform heads under a wide variety of conditions—more reliable during hot weather than most others.

Lieutenant—58 days— Its strong performance for two seasons has made 'Lieutenant' one of our new favorites. Uniform, productive and heat-tolerant.

CABBAGE—6-pack inserts, some with multiple varieties, @ \$3.50

SPACING: We plant cabbage 18" apart in rows 3 ft apart, but home gardeners can plant more closely than this, recognizing that spacing directly affects the size of the head.

AVAILABILITY: Like broccoli, we plant one time in the spring, then resume planting in July as the cabbages that mature in the cooler fall weather have much better flavor.

We will have plants available in May and June, and possibly in July and August as well.

CULTURAL NOTES: Cabbage is closely related to Broccoli and almost identical in culture. Cabbage is relatively more tolerant to heat stress than Broccoli.

HARVEST: Cabbage can be harvested anytime the heads have become firm. Allowing heads to stand too long in the field after they are mature can cause them to split.

VARIETIES:

Tiara—68 days—New green 'mini-cabbage' variety responds to close planting by forming small heads. Very tender and sweet for salads, slaw or braising.

Alcosa—72 days—Savoy-type, especially popular in Italy. Heads are not as dense as typical varieties. Harvest promptly to avoid splitting and internal browning.

Omero—73 days—Our new choice for early, small red cabbage. Easy to grow, size can be controlled by spacing.

Storage #4—95 days—The best green cabbage for long-term storage with wide adaptability. Can be harvested early for fresh use, or allowed to enlarge for storage. Stands well in the field.

Ruby Perfection—85 days—Very uniform and high quality red cabbage with good storage characteristics. Requires a long season.

CELERY/CELERIAC—6-pack inserts @ \$3

SPACING: We set celery plants 9” apart in rows 3 feet apart, though the distance between rows could be reduced by as much as half.

AVAILABILITY: Mid-May through Mid-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Descended from wetland plants, Celery requires uniformly moist soil throughout the season for best results. High fertility and ample moisture help to produce succulent, juicy stalks. Although celery plants are fairly hardy, extended exposure to cool temperatures can cause the plants to go to seed (as biennials, they ‘think’ they have gone through a winter) so we postpone planting until the weather has warmed sufficiently.

HARVEST: We cut the entire plant at ground level, but home gardeners may choose to harvest individual leaf stalks as required. Mature celery tolerates light frost.

VARIETIES:

Tango—82 days—Early, robust and delicious—a definite improvement over varieties we have grown in the past.

Victoria—73 days—Hybrid celery from Britain—performed well for us last year.

Brilliant—110 days—Celeriac or Root Celery. This is the same species as common celery, but selected over many generations for a large, tender root (leaves are edible, but best used as a flavoring). Roots are large, with white interiors, and have real celery flavor in a more versatile form—they can be eaten raw, shredded, fried, pureed, roasted, etc.

CHARD—6-pack inserts @ \$3.50

SPACING: We plant Chard a foot apart in rows a foot apart, but plants can be spaced more closely.

AVAILABILITY: May-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Like Celery, Chard is a hardy plant that can respond to extended cold temperatures by flowering prematurely—therefore we hold off planting until early to mid-May. Chard is relatively trouble free, and much more tolerant of heat than spinach (which it can replace during the summer). One pest that has become more problematic in recent years is the leafminer, which also feeds on closely related beets and spinach.

Covering plants with row cover will keep flies from laying eggs on the leaves. If you do get leafminer, cut off any affected leaves and allow to regrow—usually infestations are very temporary. A single planting can produce all season (up until heavy frosts) with ample water and fertility.

HARVEST: We snap individual leaves off a little above ground level—take care not to dislodge the plants. Plants can also be completely trimmed a couple inches above the growing point. Chard continues to regrow as long as it isn’t cut below the growing point from which the leaves emerge.

VARIETIES:

Bright Lights—55 days—AKA ‘Rainbow Chard’, this variety is highly ornamental as well as delicious. Stems can be gold, pink, orange, purple, red or white. Somewhat less cold-tolerant than other varieties.

CILANTRO—Small peat pots with multiple plants @ \$1

SPACING: Plant pots 4-6” apart in rows 8-12” apart.

AVAILABILITY: We seed Cilantro about every other week all season to ensure a consistent supply—we will have a good supply of plants from late April through June.

CULTURAL NOTES: We recommend that people plant seed directly in the garden, but because seed can take up to three weeks to germinate, we offer customers the convenience of pre-germinated seeds in peat pots—the whole pot should be planted without separating the individual plants, which can stress them and cause premature bolting. Cilantro bolts relatively quickly in hot weather—don’t expect to harvest all summer from one planting.

HARVEST: We pull plants up with their roots (which are also edible) when leaves are large enough, but late summer plantings can be leaf-picked without worrying about bolting. Cilantro seeds are the Coriander of the spice trade and can be allowed to form and used as such, or saved and planted.

Calypso—50 days—This variety is by far the best we have tried, over a week later to bolt than other leaf varieties with equally good flavor and vigor.

CUCUMBERS—4-pack inserts @ \$3

SPACING: Set plants 8-12” apart in rows 4 or more feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: We plant Cucumbers five times during the season to ensure a consistent supply of high quality fruit. Plants will begin to be available in May and June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Many growers direct seed Cucumbers in the garden or field as they are notoriously resentful of root disturbance. We have had success using transplants and do so exclusively now for the following reasons:

1. More control over conditions of germination means less work thinning and less wasted seed (which has become increasingly expensive)
2. Transplants have a significant jump on weeds.
3. Transplants can more easily outgrow insect damage which might decimate newly germinated seedlings.

Cucumbers are very sensitive to cold—it is best to wait until the weather and soil have warmed to plant them. They are also quite sensitive to root disturbance which can cause significant stunting—plants should be removed from their containers with care to maintain the root ball. If there is more than one plant in a cell, they shouldn’t be separated—they can be planted together, or one can be clipped off at soil level. We cover our cucumber plantings with row covers to provide an extra measure of warmth and protection from pests, particularly Cucumber Beetles. Row covers should be removed when the plants begin to flower to allow pollinators access to flowers—parthenocarpic varieties can set fruit without pollination, so can be left covered. Fruit from parthenocarpic varieties that don’t get pollinated will be seedless.

For best production, plants need consistent moisture and ample fertility. On the farm, our plants usually succumb to disease/pest pressure after a couple weeks of good picking—home gardeners may have better results. Rather than resorting to time-consuming, expensive, and often ineffective sprays, we simply continue planting new fields as long as time remains to mature a crop.

HARVEST: Cucumbers size up rapidly. Cucumbers should be picked regularly to promote extended production—we try to pick every other day, although we can wait a little longer under cool conditions. We usually clip Cucumbers from the vine to avoid damaging them.

VARIETIES: Anya—47 days—This ‘cornichon’ type is a replacement for our usual choice ‘Harmonie’ which is unavailable this year. Reportedly quite early, with copious yields. Parthenocarpic, so can produce without pollination.

Cobra—60 days—One of our favorite slicers—handles weather stress and disease well throughout the season.

Cross Country—55 days—Highly productive ‘pickler’ or ‘Kirby’ variety, these are usually picked between 2-4” long. Although bred for pickling, these cucumbers are quite good eaten out of hand and are a good size for snacking. This variety is named for its adaptability to lots of different growing environments.

Diamondback—54 days—This early slicing cucumber is reported to have one of the most complete disease resistance packages available combined with early maturity and high yield.

Excelsior—52 days—Traditional pickler, but parthenocarpic for higher yields.

SV4719CS—56 days—Slicing cuke with improved disease resistance, especially for late in the season.

Tasty Jade—62 days—This Asian variety is smooth-skinned, slender and long. Mild and crisp, ‘Tasty Jade’ is parthenocarpic so will produce seedless fruit if pollination is prevented.

DILL—peat pots with multiple plants @ \$1

SPACING: pots 4-6” apart in rows 8-12” apart

AVAILABILITY: Late April-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: We treat Dill exactly the same as Cilantro, planting them together in the same bed at the same time and harvesting them in an identical way.

HARVEST: As Cilantro, except that Dill flowers and immature seeds are also cut as they arise to be used like the leaves or, especially, for pickling.

EGGPLANT—3” pots @ \$3.50

SPACING: We plant Eggplant 18” apart in rows about 3 feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Eggplant is sensitive to cold and should be planted after temperatures have warmed. Eggplant is considered to be in the same genus as potatoes and shares several pests in common. The Potato Flea Beetle (similar in appearance to but distinct from the Cabbage Flea Beetle) chews holes in the leaves and can completely defoliate small plants. Colorado Potato Beetles are as attracted to Eggplant as they are to Potatoes and the orange larvae can very quickly eat even a large plant down to a skeleton. Both of these pests can be excluded with row covers, but check the plants periodically because if even a few Potato Beetles get underneath, they can wreak havoc. We usually cover directly after planting to protect small plants from flea beetles and provide a warmer environment. When the plants are large and ready to bear, we remove the covers (for convenience—Eggplants are self-fertile and don’t require pollinators to produce fruit) and control Colorado Potato Beetles with Spinosad (see Broccoli) or by picking them off by hand. Because Eggplants are growing and producing over a long season, providing fertilizer at about the time they bear their first fruit can promote a longer productive season.

HARVEST: We cut or pull fruit off the plants when they are good sized but while their skin is still glossy. Eggplant can be cut quite young, but don't let fruit hang too long—a truly ripe Eggplant whose skin has lost its gloss becomes bitter and seedy. Harvested eggplant are best kept cool at high humidity levels, but are occasionally damaged by low temperatures in the refrigerator.

VARIETIES: A-1014—55 days—This standard eggplant was highly recommended by Seedway as an exceptionally early, productive and high quality introduction with compact, manageable plants and a long production period. We found it to be everything they promised, fruit a bit smaller than our other favorites

Beatrice—62 days—One of our favorites, among the most productive every season. Very attractive large fruit of the 'Rosa Bianca' type, with violet skin and rounded shape. Excels for making vegetarian 'scallopini'.

Barbarella—64 days—another hybrid 'Rosa Bianca' type with large rounded fruit and dark violet-purple skin.

Calliope—64 days—Like a miniature version of 'Nubia', this striking striped eggplant is small in size and borne in profusion. South Asian-type eggplant popular in India.

Dairyu—60 days—Early and productive 'Ichiban'-type Japanese eggplant with abundant long, slender fruit.

Fairy Tale—65 days—Plants bear abundant small fruit with excellent flavor and few seeds. Small plants with extremely high yield potential.

Machiaw—65 days—Taiwanese-type eggplant, can grow over a foot long, slender and dark pink.

Galine—67 days—This Italian-style Eggplant is similar to the standard varieties in its purplish-black coloration, but the fruit is more elongated. This year replacement for 'Nadia' which was unavailable

Nubia—67 days—Beautiful purple-striped fruit of standard size and shape are quite striking, and delicious as well. Can be a miserly producer some seasons.

Orient Express—58 days—Japanese-type (like Dairyu), early and abundant.

Patio Baby—50 days—'Patio Baby' is a new variety bred specifically for containers.

Miniature spineless fruit are reported to be continuously produced over a long season

Santana—61 days—'Santana' has continually impressed us with its sustained production of large and jumbo fruit of the standard eggplant type.

ENDIVE/ESCAROLE—6-pack inserts @ \$2.50

SPACING: We set our plants 1 foot apart in rows about 1 foot apart. Frisee Endive probably doesn't need quite this much space, while Escarole could use more.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-May

CULTURAL NOTES: These are all 'chicories', close relatives of Lettuce and similar in culture, but are more prone to bolting under hot conditions. Spring plantings need ample water and fertility to form a full size head before they begin to stretch, and should be harvested promptly as soon as they reach usable size—late summer plantings are more forgiving.

HARVEST: Like lettuce, cut at the base. When they are ready, the leaves in the center of the head begin to bunch together and fold over.

VARIETIES: Rhodos—42 days—Known as tres fine or frisee Endive. Bears long, deeply cut and toothed leaves. The leaves in the heart are blanched, tender and more sweet than bitter. Outer leaves are more strongly bitter.

Dubuisson—50 days—Curly endive, not as finely cut as Rhodos—easier to grow, with less tendency to tipburn.

Olmos—48 days—Classic Escarole forms a large plant with tender leaves and a creamy yellow blanched heart.

Clio—48 days—Related to escarole and endive, this chicory is commonly known as Italian Dandelion or ‘Catalogna’—slow bolting, can grow quite large.

FLORENCE FENNEL—6-pack inserts @ \$3

SPACING: We set plants 1 foot apart in rows about 1 foot apart, but the spacing can be tightened if soil fertility is high.

AVAILABILITY: We will have a few packs available in late April-May, and we plant again in late June-July.

CULTURAL NOTES: In the same family as Dill, Chervil, and Cilantro (not to mention Carrots, Parsley, and Celery) Fennel dislikes root disturbance, so care should be taken not to disturb the root ball when planting. Fennel thrives during cooler weather, but requires a long season. Plants have ferny leaves (which are edible) but are grown primarily for the swollen base or ‘bulb’ which forms just above the base of the soil. Fennel responds best to consistent soil moisture and high fertility.

HARVEST: We cut Fennel when the ‘bulb’ is thick and rounded, but before the scales start to separate and stretch (at which point the plant is starting to flower, and becomes tougher). We cut with clippers at the base of the bulb—the root is tough, so be careful if using a knife.

VARIETY: Orion—80 days—the largest, most reliable variety we have found, for a long time, ‘Orion’ was the only one we grew. Much better performance than traditional OP varieties.

Preludio—73 days—Excellent performance with an earlier harvest date. Good complement for planting with Orion to extend harvest period.

KALE AND COLLARDS—6-pack inserts @ \$3.50

SPACING: We set plants 1 foot apart in rows about 1 foot apart. In row spacing can be reduced to about 8”.

AVAILABILITY: Like Broccoli, we make one early planting of Kale, but make several larger plantings to mature in the cooler weather of late summer and fall when the flavor is best. Plants are available May/June, and possibly again in July and August.

CULTURAL NOTES: Most varieties are considered to be the exact same species as Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage and others. Kale suffers from the same pests and problems outlined under Broccoli. Kale is exceptionally hardy and can continue to produce well into December. Cold weather improves the flavor.

HARVEST: We snap leaves off as they enlarge. The whole plant can be clipped directly above the growing point (where the newest leaves are emerging). Growth is continuous, but slows in extreme heat or cold.

VARIETIES: Top Bunch—50 days—Collard (originally ‘Colewort’) variety boasts large, dark green rounded leaves with slight savoy. Very tender and flavorful.

Black Magic—62 days—More uniform version of an Italian heirloom variously known as Lacinato, Toscano, Dinosaur Kale, and Cavolo Palmizio. Leaves are narrow, very dark green and blistered in appearance. Production typically isn’t as high as other varieties, but flavor and nutrition are unsurpassed.

Red Russian—50 days—Unlike most Kale varieties, this Siberian heirloom is actually more closely related to Rutabaga than Cabbage. Oak shaped leaves are thin and tender with purple stalks. Very sweet and tender after a few frosts.

Winterbor—55 days—For many years, our standard curly kale variety. Tall plants bear large, tightly curled leaves that are easy to pick. Regrowth is rapid, and overall production is unsurpassed.

Tiger—50 days—A replacement for our unavailable favorite ‘Top Bunch’, ‘Tiger’ performed well last season

KOHLRABI—6-pack inserts @ \$2.50

SPACING: We set plants 6” apart in rows 12” apart.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-May.

CULTURAL NOTES: Perhaps the oddest member of the Broccoli/Cabbage species, Kohlrabi is grown for the swollen base of the stem. Similar in culture to its close relatives (see Broccoli), Kohlrabi is more tolerant to heat and much quicker to mature. HARVEST: We clip the tough root at the base of the ‘bulb’ when it is 2-3” in diameter and before it begins to elongate. Kohlrabi are peeled, and the interior pith is sweet and crisp and wonderfully versatile—can, among other things, be eaten raw, sautéed, stir-fried or pickled. Very similar to the inner portion of a Broccoli stem

VARIETIES: Winner—32 days—Our favorite for quick maturity, vigor, size, uniformity, reliability, appearance and flavor. Very slow to become tough.

Kolibri—35 days—Similar to ‘Winner’ but with purple color.

LEEK/SCALLIONS—3” pots with multiple plants @ \$3

SPACING: We set Leeks about 5” apart in rows 3 feet apart, although rows could be spaced more closely. Scallions can be set closer, about an inch apart is sufficient.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Separate the clump of plants in the 3” pot into individual leeks, and set them deeply with only an inch or so of green above the level of the soil. Leeks grow quite slowly and require ample moisture and fertility. They are exceptionally cold-hardy, with some varieties lasting all winter. The entire plant is edible, but the choice white portion is preferred—‘hilling’ or heaping soil up around the shank will increase the proportion of white, blanched stem. Scallions are grown in much the same fashion, but are much quicker to mature.

HARVEST: When plants have acquired sufficient girth (at least 1”) we pull them by hand, peeling and trimming the roots and some of the green leaves as we go. In tighter soils, it may be necessary to loosen the soil with a digging fork before pulling.

VARIETIES: King Richard—75 days—Very long and quite early, the stalks are often over a foot long below where the leaves begin to fan out.

Nabechan—65 days—Traditional scallion variety from Japan, where this vegetable is particularly esteemed. These can be allowed to grow quite large without any sacrifice in quality.

LETTUCE—6-pack inserts with six different varieties @ \$3

SPACING: We plant lettuce one foot apart in rows about a foot apart. Plants can be spaced somewhat more closely (8”) in the row if desired.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-June, some may be available throughout the season as well.

CULTURAL NOTES: Lettuce is relatively easy to grow and quick to mature, but does better in cool to mild temperatures—heat causes plants to begin flowering, often before

they have grown a full size head. Growing lettuce is more challenging during the summer months, when more attention must be paid to water, maturity, and variety selection. We select varieties that do best under the expected conditions (i.e. lettuce plants bought toward the end of June will be of varieties that, in our experience, tolerate summer heat).

HARVEST: We cut the heads off at the base, but in the spring and again in the late summer and fall, gardeners may choose to pick or clip leaves and allow lettuces to regrow—this is not a good option when temperatures are hot.

VARIETIES: We grow too many varieties to list here, and only sell them in mixed packs. We grow multiple varieties in each ‘class’, including green and red romaine, green and red leaf and oakleaf, green and red Boston, green and red Batavian, and others that don’t fit neatly into any category.

LOVAGE—3” pots @ \$3.00

SPACING: 12-18” apart in rows about 2 feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Lovage is a hardy perennial related to celery. Plants begin growing early in the spring, ultimately growing into a large (4-6’) plant when it is in full flower. Leaf production resumes after flowering is complete.

HARVEST: Individual leaves are cut or pulled at the base. The aroma and flavor are quite strong and reminiscent of celery—a little bit goes a long way. Small amounts are welcome in potato salad, soups and stews.

MARJORAM—3” pots @ \$2.50

SPACING: About 8” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Annual relative of Oregano with a sweeter flavor—leaves and flowers are edible.

HARVEST: Cut any time plant is large enough—keep flowers cut to encourage production. Marjoram retains its flavor dried.

MELONS/WATERMELONS—4-pack inserts, some with multiple varieties @ \$3.00

SPACING: We plant melons 1 ½ feet apart in rows six feet apart, but ideally, they would be spaced 2 feet apart or more.

AVAILABILITY: May-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Melons are closely related to Cucumbers and are treated in much the same manner. Watermelons are relatively less susceptible to Cucumber Beetles and the diseases they spread than other melons.

HARVEST: Watermelons are a little tricky to harvest—because they do not continue to ripen after picking, it is important to correctly judge ripeness in the field. One sign of ripeness is a yellow spot where the fruit rests on the ground, but what we look for is that the curly tendril nearest to where the fruit is attached to the vine is brown and dried.

Because Watermelons have a long shelf life, it is usually best to err on the side of caution, allowing fruits to remain on the vine for a day or two after the above ripeness indicators have been observed. Other types of Melon vary in the way they are harvested, but as they do continue to ripen after harvest, are more forgiving than watermelons.

Typically, other melons are ripe when they ‘slip’ from the vine, i.e. when the melon readily separates from the stem that connects it to the rest of the plant.

WATERMELON VARIETIES: All our Watermelons have seeds.

Little Baby Flower—70 days—This red flesh Watermelon bears abundant small 2-4 lb fruit. Quite sweet with a distinctive rind pattern.

Dark Belle—75 days—New variety in the 5-7 lb size range—red, sweet flesh with green rind with darker green stripes. Traditional shape with much smaller fruit.

Gold Flower—70 days—This oblong, yellow fleshed watermelon is reliably the earliest to ripen for us each season. Very sweet and prone to cracking, fruit average about 3-7 lbs.

Pony Yellow—78 days—Second year trial of another new mini-watermelon, 3-5 lbs with yellow, juicy flesh.

Sangria—88 days—Very sweet and juicy with bright red flesh, also quite large with the typical oval shape. Rind is dark green with lighter striping.

Yellow Doll—68 days—Quite early and manageable in size (5-7 lbs. on average), Yellow Doll is one of our favorite varieties—beautiful yellow flesh is consistently sweet and refreshingly crisp and juicy. Rind is medium green with darker stripes.

OTHER MELON VARIETIES: Athena—80 days—With its thick rind and dense orange flesh, Athena is our most consistent ‘Muskmelon’ type, both in production and quality. Harvest when the fruit detaches easily from the vine with a slight tug. Athena is the variety most resistant to cracking or softening in the field. About 3lbs.on average.

Goddess—70 days—‘The best early melon we have ever seen’ gushed one catalog, and we concur. Fine-flavored, fragrant 7-8lb. fruit. Muskmelon type. Harvest at forced slip.

Hanna’s Choice—80 days—Tuscan-type muskmelon with oval shape, high yields and excellent flavor.

Halona—76 days—We grew this one for the first time in 2006 seeking a replacement for the sometimes disappointing ‘Earliqueen’, and we think we have found it. Almost as early, Halona is much more consistent in size (about 4 lbs.) and flavor (exceptionally sweet). Also boasts better disease resistance. Cracks very readily, so early harvest may be warranted.

Sugar Cube—73 days—We were very impressed with the production and flavor of this mini muskmelon—Intensely sweet and sized at 2-4 lbs. Reliably productive and very cute.

ONIONS/SHALLOTS—3” pots with multiple plants @ \$3

SPACING: We set onions about 5” apart in rows 3 feet apart, but the rows can be considerably closer together. Smaller onions and shallots can be more closely spaced or planted in small clumps.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-May

CULTURAL NOTES: Separate the plants from the 3” pots into individual onions. We plant onions as early as we possibly can because they begin to form bulbs in response to the lengthening days rather than the size of the plant, so earlier plants have more opportunity to grow large before they begin to bulb, resulting in larger onions. For best results, Onions require fairly fertile soil and consistent moisture. They are very poor competitors with weeds, so must be regularly weeded.

HARVEST: Onions can be harvested at any stage. Those that are meant for storage should be allowed to fully mature, at which point most of the tops will fall over. At this point they can be pulled and allowed to fully dry in a dark, warm place. When fully dry, the roots and tops can be clipped

VARIETIES:

Bridger—90 days—We’ve found early onions to be easier to reliably produce, and Bridger is the earliest yellow we grow. Consistent performer, medium-size bulbs for short term storage.

Conservor—110 days—A red skin ‘French’ shallot with very large, flavorful bulbs. Like most shallots, these store exceptionally long.

Camelot—110 days—New shallot variety with very dark red skin and good storage. 2016 was the first year we grew this variety.

Cabernet—95 days—We grew this for the first time in 2017 when it performed quite well, forming a high percentage of medium-large deep red globes with good storage. Very early for a red onion

Cortland—104 days—New variety is a replacement for our old favorite ‘Copra’. Yellow cooking onion with superior storage characteristics. A variety with organically produced seed, performed exceptionally well in 2017.

Expression—98 days—We had very good luck with this yellow variety for a number of years. Large, sweet, early and reliable. Not for long storage.

Monastrell—100 days—Supposed to be larger and later than ‘Cabernet’, red onion with organically produced seed.

Red Long—90 days—Italian heirloom variety, variously known as ‘torpedo’ or ‘bottle’ onion. Flavor is mild and appearance is very appealing. Size varies, but most are small enough to grill whole or shish kebab. Not suitable for storage.

Sierra Blanca—105 days—Sweet white variety grows quite large. Short storage only. Also known as ‘Superstar’.

Zoey—100 days—Sweet yellow onions, not as sweet as Vidalia or Walla Walla, but better storage potential. Can grow quite large.

OREGANO—3” pots @ \$3

SPACING: 12”

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Easy to grow, spreads readily. Dig, divide and replant clumps every several years.

HARVEST: Cut leaves as needed—flavor is most intense just before flowers open. Oregano remains flavorful when dried.

PARSLEY—3” pots @ \$3

SPACING: 12” or more.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-June and possibly later.

CULTURAL NOTES: Parsley planted too early has a tendency to bolt—later plantings after the weather has warmed can be continuously harvested until heavy freezes arrive in the fall. For best sustained production, plants should be fertilized a couple times during the season.

HARVEST: Pick or clip individual leaves at their base. Plants that have begun to flower will not revert to producing leaves even if the flower stalks are kept cut.

VARIETIES: Wega—75 days—Highly recommended curly variety. Curly parsley is commonly used for garnish, but is also easier to finely mince than flat leaf parsley. Less prone to bolting than flat leaf parsley, but less productive overall.

Giant of Italy—75 days—According to our source, this large growing Italian flat leaf variety is noticeably more vigorous, large, and quicker to regrow than the typical strains. Productive, flavorful and nutritious. Many people consider flat leaf parsley more flavorful than curly types.

PEPPERS—3” pots @ \$3.50

SPACING: We plant peppers 18” apart in rows about 2 feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: May through Mid-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Peppers are tender (i.e. not cold or frost hardy), so planting should be delayed until the weather warms. Chance early plantings should be protected with row covers, and can be kept covered until the weather warms or the plants become too large. University research indicates that peppers which are planted deeply—with a portion of the stem under ground—tend to produce earlier with higher yields. All peppers start out an immature color (can be green, purple, white or cream colored depending on variety) then eventually ripen to their mature color (can be red, yellow, orange or chocolate brown depending on variety). Peppers are subject to a few pests and several fungal diseases, all of which are quite difficult to control. Avoid planting in soil that can become waterlogged for extended periods and avoid watering late in the day when leaves won't have a chance to dry before nightfall, or use drip irrigation. Some pepper plants, particularly hot varieties in the poblano class, can grow quite large and benefit from staking. Over the last several years, we have decided to stake all our pepper plantings and they've never done better.

HARVEST: Immature (green, purple or white) fruit can be picked as soon as it has grown large and firm to the touch. Pepper plants are brittle, so it is often advisable to use clippers to harvest the fruit. If mature (red, orange, yellow, brown) fruit is desired, the peppers need to hang on the plant for several additional weeks, during which time there is an increased chance of pest and disease problems. Peppers can be picked as they begin to change color and allowed to fully ripen in the safety of your kitchen—put them in paper bags to slow down moisture loss.

SWEET VARIETIES (all our sweet pepper varieties are hybrids):

Aristotle—71 days—Another contender to replace our favorite early green to red bell pepper, 'Socrates' which appears to be discontinued. Reported to have earliness, high yields, compact plant, and excellent disease resistance.

Bianca—69 days—Medium-large bell that turns from ivory to red. Productive and very attractive.

Yellow Bardo—70 days—Hybrid version of 'Corno di Toro Giallo', a bull's horn pepper that ripens a bright yellow color. Most recent in a long string of varieties with similar characteristics—'Ringo' was the first, then 'Canario', then 'Silyen', and now 'Yellow Bardo'. So far we've liked them all, as we did this one in 2017.

Early Sunstation—69 days—This bell pepper produces an abundance of large fruit that ripen from green to bright yellow. For some reason, we have found that it is usually easier to carry yellow-fruited varieties to maturity than red or orange-fruited varieties.

Flavorburst—62 days—New bell variety ripens from light green to golden yellow exceptionally early with continuous yield. One of our best performers.

Galileo—70 days—New pepper, extra-large to jumbo bells, ripen green to red. Very impressive the last couple years.

Giant Marconi—63 days—The largest Italian bull's horn peppers we've seen. Thin walls, enormous size, sweet flavor make them exceptional for frying. Ripen green to red.

Revolution—72 days—This variety boasts an excellent disease resistance package while yielding some of the largest bell peppers we've ever seen. Ripens green to red.

Socrates—71 days—We once again have seed for this long time favorite green to red bell—very early to ripen and sweeten, and very productive overall.

Sweet Delilah—70 days—An Italian bull's horn type like Giant Marconi but smaller, with thicker walls—kind of like a sweet New Mexico chile, but larger. Ripens red.

Tequila—72 days—Quite early and productive, this is the best variety of purple bell peppers we have found. Medium to large fruit start out a beautiful lavender color and eventually ripen red.

Tinkerbell Red and Yellow—55 days—Mini peppers are very popular these days, and we're excited to try these new varieties. Said to bear large quantities of 2"x1 1/2" mini-bell peppers on 3' tall plants.

Zsa Zsa—65 days— Hybrid Hungarian sweet pepper is prolific, early to ripen red, extremely sweet and quite beautiful, changing from creamy yellow to orange to red.

HOT VARIETIES

Astry—70 days—Beautiful Hungarian wax type pepper, only moderately hot. Ripens from a creamy yellow, through orange, to bright red. Hybrid.

Baluarte—67 days—New jalapeno variety, supposed to be high-yielding with large, crack resistant fruit.

Baron—80 days—New Ancho/Poblano type hybrid, for trial. Ripens red.

Bastan—85 days—Another new Ancho/Poblano type, with large fruit and moderate heat. Ripens chocolate brown.

Charger—75 days—Authentic 'Anaheim'-type chile that grows well in the Northeast. Mild pungency, thick walls, large fruit size. Hybrid.

Devil—75 days—This new hybrid version of the traditional 'Serrano' is more vigorous than the original, somewhat earlier, with much larger fruit. Plants become loaded with peppers with the appearance of small jalapenos. Fruit turns from green to red, but is most often used green. Hotter than a jalapeno, but not significantly. Hybrid.

El Eden—85 days—New hybrid version of 'guajillo', an extremely popular Mexican type. Medium hot, most often used dried and reconstituted.

Habanero—100 days—Known for their scorching heat, habaneros also boast a beguiling, fruity flavor unique to peppers in the *Capsicum chinense* species. Habaneros can be used green but are most often allowed to ripen to a bright orange. Plants are shrubby and become loaded with luminous fruit late in the season. Open-pollinated.

Havasu—60 days—Known as a 'Santa Fe' pepper or 'Chile Guero', a little less spicy than a jalapeno but still has a good kick. Hybrid.

Helios—87 days—We're partial to the improved performance, vigor and disease resistance of hybrid peppers, so we tried this hybrid habanero—it performed well last year, with huge yields, earlier than the OP. Somewhat less hot than standard 'habanero'. Hybrid.

Highlander—75 days—We have been suitably impressed with this 'Anaheim' (more properly known as New Mexican or 'Hatch') type—mild, long green chiles that are wonderful for grilling or roasting. Ripe peppers of this type are used to make the 'ristras' commonly seen in New Mexico, although they are too thick-walled to dry successfully in our climate. These peppers will turn from green to red if allowed to ripen. Hybrid.

Holy Mole—80 days— The first hybrid variety of the 'Pasilla' type pepper, bearing long (up to 10") slender peppers that turn from a dark green (at which stage they are known as 'Chilaca') to brown. Provide little or no heat—they are commonly used dried as a component of Mole sauces. This variety has proven itself to be far more productive than traditional OP varieties. Hybrid.

Jalafuego—70 days—jalapeno type, suggested replacement for our favorite 'El Jefe', which is unavailable this year. Johnny's characterizes it as their highest yielding jalapeno. Hybrid.

Red Flame—80 days—Cayenne-type pepper with 6-6 1/2" long thin-walled fruit that readily air-dry. Very spicy and very productive. Hybrid.

San Ardo—75 days— This ‘poblano/ancho’ (see ‘Tiburon’ below) performs admirably with good yields of large, heart shaped, moderately pungent fruit. Hybrid.

Thai Hot—82 days—This charming miniature variety bears loads of tiny upturned fruit that ripen green to red. Very ornamental, but quite edible (and seriously hot). Peppers dry easily—the whole plant can be pulled and hung up to dry for winter use. Open-pollinated.

Tiburon—65 days—Probably the finest variety of ‘Ancho’ type chile for the Northeast, Tiburon bears heavy yields of green-black, large, heart shaped fruit that are best known for making Chiles Rellenos. Known as ‘Poblanos’ when they are green, they eventually ripen red and are commonly dried, when they are known as ‘Ancho’. Peppers are medium-hot—slightly tamer than a jalapeno. Hybrid.

ROSEMARY—3” pots @ \$3.50, some larger plants available.

SPACING: Rosemary in this climate is most often grown in a container, although they can be set in the soil at least 8” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-August

CULTURAL NOTES: Rosemary plants are not hardy enough to survive the winter in our area, so growers often leave plants in containers, bringing them inside when the weather gets cold. Rosemary likes sun, well-drained, limey soil and thrives when it is frequently cut.

SAGE—3” pots @ \$3.50

SPACING: 12” or more.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: This hardy perennial thrives in a sunny, well-drained spot. Sage forms a relatively large plant, but can become straggly after a few seasons if not kept cut back. Sage doesn’t form clumps and therefore can’t be divided.

HARVEST: Cut newly formed leaves as they grow. Flowers are attractive and edible. Sage dries quite successfully.

SAVORY, SUMMER—3” pots @ \$2.75

SPACING: About 8” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: This annual herb should be kept cut for best production. Thrives in full sun, can’t tolerate frost.

HARVEST: Dark green leaves have a peppery flavor—keep them cut as they grow for extended harvest. Summer savory dries well.

SQUASH, SUMMER—4- pack inserts @ \$3

SPACING: 12-18” apart in rows about 5-6 feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Similar in most respects to Cucumbers, Squash tends to be a little more resilient and easy to grow. Keep picked to encourage continued production and to avoid raising baseball bats.

HARVEST: We usually cut Zucchini types with small paring knives or clippers, while other types can be twisted off by hand. Squash grow very rapidly and should be harvested every 2-3 days to avoid oversized fruits. Squash can be picked quite small—we consider them ready when the flower detaches easily from the fruit.

VARIETIES:

Golden Glory—50 days—Most recent in a long line of golden-yellow zucchini that we've tried.

Green Eclipse—44 days—We have been favorably impressed with the yield and appearance of this dark green zucchini over the past few seasons.

Gentry—43 days—Hybrid version of the old 'Yellow Crookneck'—Necks are stronger and less curved for less breakage.

Ishtar—45 days—This squash is known as Cousa, or Lebanese Zucchini. Similar to zucchini in appearance, but shorter, fatter and lighter green. This is among the most productive squash we grow.

Flaminio—50 days—Hybrid version of Italian heirloom 'Costata Romanesco' with similar fruit characteristics—striping and ridges—but much higher yields. Fruit are relatively large, and are often harvested young with the flower still attached.

Magda—48 days—Virtually identical to 'Ishtar', see above.

Raven—48 days—Long time favorite of growers and gardeners alike. Boasts extremely dark green fruit and a long production period.

Slick Pik YS 26—50 days—Prototypical yellow straightneck squash, very reliable, productive and delicious. Leaf stems are mostly spineless, making it easier to pick.

Spineless Beauty—44 days—Medium green zucchini is high yielding and disease resistant. The name doesn't refer to a deficit of courage, but a literal lack of spines on the leaf stems for more comfortable picking.

Y-Star—52 days—Bright yellow Patty Pan type with large plants and excellent yields.

Zephyr—54 days—Unique bicolor straightneck squash with good yields and exceptional flavor. Fruit are yellow with a green tip. One of our best producers during the late summer.

THYME—3" pots @ \$3.50

SPACING: 12" more or less.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Spreading perennial herb needs to be kept cut for best sustained production. Requires full sun and adequate drainage. Clumps should be dug, divided and replanted every several years.

HARVEST: Clip leaves as needed—cut back heavily occasionally to encourage new growth. Thyme dries quite well, and the flavor is welcome in many dishes. When asked what she considered the one indispensable herb, Martha Stewart (after briefly considering parsley) chose thyme and I concur.

TOMATILLOS/HUSK TOMATOES—3" pots @ \$3.50

SPACING: We plant tomatillos 18" apart in rows 6 ft. apart. The large plants benefit from staking.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: We plant our tomatillos alongside our tomatoes, treating them identically. See notes under tomatoes. **Tomatillo plants require cross-pollination, so you must plant at least two plants.**

HARVEST: Harvest when fruits completely fill their papery husks but before they begin to turn yellow at which point they lose their refreshing tartness and turn insipidly sweet.

VARIETY: Siquieros—75 days—We're hoping this is a suitable replacement for the unavailable HPG-20, which was productive and yielded enormous fruit.

Goldie—75 days—sprawling, vigorous plants bear prolific quantities of small, cherry-sized fruit inside a papery husk. Harvest when they turn yellow. AKA Cape Gooseberry.

TOMATOES—4” pots @ \$3.75

SPACING: We plant our tomatoes 18” apart in rows 6 ft. apart and stake them.

Determinates can be spaced more closely and don’t necessarily require staking.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Tomatoes are prone to several fungal diseases—staking them minimizes foliar contact with the soil and promotes air movement, allowing the leaves to dry more quickly after a rain. Tomatoes have been shown to respond well to deep planting, setting a 2-3” section of the stem under the soil surface. Certain varieties (plum tomatoes, for example) are especially prone to a condition known as blossom end rot, where the bottom of the tomato turns black—this condition is caused by a calcium deficiency, brought on either by a soil deficiency or a temporary deficiency in the plant caused by inconsistent watering. To avoid this condition, plants should not be subject to wide fluctuations in soil moisture levels and can be lightly limed or fertilized with bone meal, both of which contain ample calcium.

Recently, the devastating disease known as ‘Late Blight’ has changed from a relatively rare, late season scourge to an expected but unwelcome annual guest. Unlike ‘Early Blight’, late blight can bring your tomato season to a crashing halt in less than a week. When conditions are conducive to the spread of the disease (high humidity, wet leaves, not too hot) we spray foliage and fruit with a copper hydroxide fungicide allowed by the National Organic Program. In our experience, these sprays are effective in preventing and suppressing infections. We also include a few tomato varieties in our plantings that are known to have some genetic resistance to late blight, including ‘Mountain Magic’, ‘Plum Regal’, and ‘Mountain Merit’.

HARVEST: Although tomatoes can be allowed to completely ripen on the vine, they are less likely to crack if they are picked slightly underripe—known as the ‘breaker’ stage--and allowed to fully ripen on the safety of your kitchen counter. We find that this practice sacrifices little (if any) flavor and allows us to successfully produce sound specimens of even the most fragile and crack-prone heirloom varieties. Only fruit that has begun to change color should be picked—dead green fruit will not ripen off the vine (unless you gas them with ethylene, like the abominations you find in the supermarket).

VARIETIES: We are happy to offer our gardening customers the full range of tomatoes we grow on the farm, plus several additional varieties that are especially suitable for container growing.

In the interest of orderliness, we divide our tomatoes into three broad categories:

The first group is the **hybrids**— hybrid varieties can be considered to be the progeny of arranged marriages, with the goal of producing plants and fruit with specific, desirable, and predictable characteristics, usually involving fruit size, shape, yield, or disease resistance. Hybrids tend to have the highest yields, and although they have often been developed without sufficient consideration for flavor, those that we offer are all very good, some exceptional. Because of the way the parent lines are crossed, hybrid tomatoes that are saved for their seed will not produce progeny with the same characteristics as the hybrid.

The second group is the **heirloom and open-pollinated varieties**—before hybridization became common, plant breeders used the slower process of selecting fruit from plants with desirable traits, growing out the seed, then reselecting over the course of many plant generations to develop stable varieties with desirable characteristics. Because

the development of most heirloom varieties predates the commodification of produce, characteristics such as flavor, color and yield were emphasized rather than shelf-life, perfect appearance or ‘pack out’. This is the most diverse group, with tomatoes of every shape, size and color (even some with several colors). They are almost all quite delicious, though their flavors range from sweet and mild to quite tart (a little something for everybody). Because seed from these varieties will produce fruit like the original fruit, seed is quite easy to save, therefore inexpensive, therefore of little interest to commercial breeders. For this reason, there is little research on which varieties exhibit specific resistance to tomato diseases, but our observations are that they tend to fare as well as the hybrids during most seasons. They do, however, generally produce very soft, delicate fruit that can crack quite easily in adverse weather. In addition, heirloom varieties (with some exceptions) usually have lower yields than their hybrid relatives. Nonetheless, their aesthetic appeal, both in terms of flavor and beauty, are unexcelled.

The third group—**cherry and plum tomatoes**—is an arbitrary one, containing as it does both hybrid and heirloom members. The cherry tomatoes are usually highly productive, often grow on very large plants, and usually have a sweeter, more intense flavor than larger tomatoes. Plum tomatoes are usually medium sized, with a low moisture content, making them well-suited to rapidly boil down into sauce or paste, but less so for fresh eating. Plum tomato plants are usually relatively small.

Individual varieties within these groups are listed alphabetically, with an explanation of salient characteristics like flavor, fruit size and color, and plant habit. The following abbreviations are used:

Ind.—indeterminate, meaning that the plant can continue to grow and produce fruit over the entire season. Plants often grow quite large and require staking

Det.—determinate, meaning that the plant will grow to a certain size, produce its crop, and then, mission accomplished, go into decline. These are best grown using short stakes, but can be allowed to sprawl.

Comp. Ind.—compact indeterminate, can continuously fruit, but the plants are compact and manageable. See descriptions for details.

HYBRIDS

BETTER BUSH: Comp. Ind. Sturdy, self-supporting plants stay compact but bear delicious full-size red fruit all season. Developed especially to grow in containers. 68 days.

BHN589: Det. We have liked this variety for the last couple years—bears early 8-10oz. fruits and keeps bearing over an extended period. Round red fruits have exceptional flavor. 74 days.

BHN 871: Det. This variety boasts large, bright orange fruit, good disease resistance, and amazing flavor. 76 days.

BIG BEEF: Ind. This versatile variety bears loads of big, red beefsteak-style fruit with excellent flavor. Plants are vigorous and grow quite large, continuing to produce good-size fruit throughout the season. 73 days.

BIG BRANDY: Ind. New hybrid developed by crossing two heirloom tomatoes. Has the excellent flavor (and funky appearance) of an heirloom, with the crack-resistance and higher yields of a hybrid. 78 days.

BLACK VELVET: Ind. New ‘hybrid heirloom’ similar to ‘Black Prince’, but with better production, far less splitting and defects, and firmer fruit. This is the variety you

see labeled as ‘Kumato’ in the grocery store. We like this one better each year we grow it. 72 days.

CAIMAN: Ind. New organically grown hybrid, we grew it for the first time last year and were pleased with quality and yield. Very expensive seed means very limited availability. 76 days.

CHEF’S CHOICE ORANGE: Ind. Award-winning new orange beefsteak made a very good impression on us last year, with sustained production of 8-11 oz. fruit with beautiful appearance and spectacular flavor. 75 days.

CHEF’S CHOICE PINK: Ind. We liked ‘Chef’s Choice Orange’ so much, we had to give this one a try. Reported to have heirloom flavor with hybrid performance. Large fruit borne on potato-leaved plants. 75 days.

CHEROKEE CARBON: Ind. New variety resulting from a cross between ‘Cherokee Purple’ and ‘Carbon’. Results in 2016 were promising. 75 days.

DAMSEL: Ind. New organically grown hybrid is reported to boast heirloom-quality flavor and texture with improved disease and crack resistance. Plants are supposed to be relatively compact and easy to manage, and are supposed to have some tolerance to late blight. Dark pink color when ripe. 73 days.

EARLY GIRL: Ind. Reliably producing the first ripe tomato of the season, Early Girl has more to offer than precocity—although fruit size falls off over the course of the season, the sharp, real tomato flavor remains and many devotees seek it out by name even when the big mainseason tomatoes appear. 52 days..

LEMON BOY: Ind. An eloquent refutation to the common slanders against yellow tomatoes—they’re flavorless, insipid—Lemon Boy packs a lot of flavor (dare I say zesty?) with good looks to boot. Although prone to cracking and discoloration in adverse weather, Lemon Boy can potentially produce enormous crops of beautiful, clear yellow, delicious fruit. 72 days.

MOUNTAIN FRESH PLUS: Det. Most widely grown fresh market tomato in the East and Midwest—good flavor, reliable, productive. 77 days.

MOUNTAIN MERIT: Det. One of the more promising of the new late-blight tolerant tomatoes, with impressive size and flavor. Plants resist late blight and early blight as well as a suite of other less common diseases. 75 days.

POLBIG: Det. Has become our best variety for the earliest full-size red fruit. Very good flavor and long production period. 60 days.

PRIMO RED: Det. Second year trial of an early round red, for comparison with ‘Polbig’. 68 days.

SCARLET RED: Det. Second-year trial for this round red, main season variety, characterized by the seed company as high yielding, great flavor, with vigorous determinate plant. 73 days.

HEIRLOOM/OPEN-POLLINATED

AMISH PASTE: Ind. Well-known ‘oxheart’ type which we characterize as an ‘heirloom plum’. Good yields of ½ lb. fruit which, like typical plum tomatoes, have low moisture content (though not as dry as most modern plums) but with more intense flavor. One of the best for sauce and salsa. 85 days.

AUNT RUBY’S GERMAN GREEN: Ind. These big beefsteaks ripen from a pale green color to a deep amber-green color with a blush of pink on the blossom-end. In our opinion, these beautiful tomatoes are among the best fresh-eating tomatoes around. Fruit

is fragile and the ripeness is somewhat difficult to judge—pick when the blossom end begins to soften, and allow to ripen another day or two on the counter. 80 days.

BRANDYWINE: Ind. With its unusual ‘potato-leaf’ foliage, huge pink-red beefsteak fruit, and incomparable flavor, Brandywine has become the poster boy for the resurgence of heirloom tomatoes. Its reputation for flavor is well-deserved, but the big plants often yield somewhat sparsely, often over a long period. 78 days.

CHEROKEE PURPLE: Ind. but with relatively short vines. This Tennessee heirloom has become increasingly popular over the last few years, rivaling Brandywine’s claim as ‘best tasting tomato’. Cherokee is earlier and more productive than Brandywine, with the purplish-brown coloration characteristic of ‘black’ tomatoes. The fruit is large, more globe-shaped than most ‘beefsteak’ types, and very fragile—harvest promptly to avoid excessive cracking. 72 days.

GOLDIE: Ind. Truly exceptional—from its phenomenal yields of (generally) defect-free jumbo fruit, to its unique ‘Creamsicle’ orange color, to its velvety texture and rich flavor, Goldie is one of our favorite tomatoes. 90 days.

GREEN ZEBRA: Ind. Not a true heirloom, this increasingly popular tomato was developed using traditional breeding methods and is a stable strain (unlike hybrids). Big plants yield bumper crops of small to medium sized striped fruit that ripen to an amber-green color, often with a blush of pink on the blossom end. Sweet and tart, the flavor is outstanding, and the beautiful emerald-green flesh graces any dish. Prone to blossom-end rot (calcium deficiency brought on by inconsistent water supply) and cracking in wet weather, Green Zebra usually comes through with bountiful yields. 77 days.

OPALKA: Ind. This Polish heirloom is a meaty, low-moisture tomato that excels for making sauce and paste. Better fresh flavor and more juicy than ‘modern’ plum tomatoes. Productive but quite late. Foliage is wispy, fruit are elongated and prone to blossom-end rot. 82 days.

ORANGE BANANA: Ind. Bright orange plum-type tomato with outstanding flavor for sauces, paste and salsa. Very prolific producer. 85 days.

PINEAPPLE: Ind. Although there are many bicolor heirlooms available, Pineapple remains our favorite. The fruits are often enormous, mostly yellow, with a red starburst pattern on the blossom end that extends to the inside, resulting in stunning red and yellow marbled flesh. The flavor is mild and sweet with a complex fruitiness. 85 days.

CHERRIES AND PLUMS

BLACK CHERRY: Ind. Heirloom. Vigorous plants produce heavy crops of round cherry-size tomatoes with the classic ‘black’ tomato color and flavor. Unique and irresistible alone or in combination with the rest of the cherry tomato spectrum. 65 days.

CLEMENTINE: Ind. Bright orange complement to ‘Mountain Magic’, this large cherry impressed us with its excellent flavor, appealing color, and good resistance to cracking. 68 days.

JULIET: Ind. Hybrid. The big sister of the original ‘grape’ tomato, Juliet shares many of Santa’s qualities, but in a larger package. Crisp and flavorful, Juliet is very productive and one of the most reliable and resilient producers under a wide range of conditions. The size is perfect for eating out of hand, salads, drying and roasting. 60 days.

MOUNTAIN MAGIC: Ind. Hybrid. Star performer in 2012, with big yields of delicious, juicy 2 oz fruit. Has demonstrated resistance to early blight and late blight. 66 days.

NOVA: Ind. Hybrid. Productive, healthy plants bear loads of bright orange grape-type tomatoes. Flavor is quite good. 60 days.

PAISANO: Det. Hybrid Plum-type with San Marzano shape, reported to have good flavor and color. 68 days.

POZZANO: Ind. Hybrid. Organically produced hybrid San Marzano-type tomato with large yields of very uniform, plum-type fruit. Excellent cooking tomato—more resistant to blossom-end rot than most similar varieties. 72 days.

PLUM REGAL: Det. Hybrid. Excellent large plum-type tomato with some early and late blight resistance. 80 days.

RIBELLE: Compact Ind. Hybrid. Italian bred plum tomato with San Marzano parentage. Manageable vines are nonetheless larger than typical determinate plum tomatoes. 70 days.

SMARTY: Compact Ind. Hybrid. Quintessential red grape tomato with big yields over a long season, healthy foliage, and crack-free, crisp sweet fruit. 69 days

SUNGOLD: Ind. Hybrid. This one wins our vote for the best tomato variety ever developed—big plants bear loads and loads of sunny orange, bite-sized fruit with very intense sweet and tangy flavor. Sungold is usually the first tomato to ripen, and they keep coming for a long time. Their only drawback is a tendency to split after a heavy rain—a common characteristic of fruit with high levels of sugar. 57 days.

SUNGREEN: Ind. Hybrid. This cherry tomato from the same breeder as ‘Sungold’ bears unique lime-green fruit with fabulous flavor. Plants are large, can bear over a long period, but it can be somewhat difficult to tell when fruit is ripe. A subtle shift from opaque whitish-green to translucent amber green accompanied by slight softening is the signal to pick. 75 days

SUNPEACH: Ind. Hybrid. We like pink-fruited tomatoes, and this cherry is a winner. Very similar to ‘Sunlemon’ in size and shape with an unusual pinkish-red color and mouthwatering flavor.

SUPERSWEET 100: Ind. Hybrid. Long-time standard round red cherry tomato with outstanding yields and excellent flavor. Plants are very large and require support. 65 days.

YELLOW MINI: Ind. Hybrid. Charming bright yellow round cherry tomato with excellent flavor and texture. Not as prone to splitting as many other round cherries. Keeps quality over a long season. 57 days.

