

# Cleveland County Kitchen

Developed by: Nancy Abasiokong, Extension Agent, Family & Consumer Sciences and Annie Thompson, Extension Admin. Assistant

March 2015



## Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 tomato (148g)

Amount Per Serving		Calories from Fat 0	
			% Daily Value*
<b>Calories</b>	25		
<b>Total Fat</b>	0g		0%
Saturated Fat	0g		0%
Trans Fat	0g		
<b>Cholesterol</b>	0mg		0%
<b>Sodium</b>	20mg		1%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b>	5g		2%
Dietary Fiber	1g		4%
Sugars	3g		
<b>Protein</b>	1g		
Vitamin A	20%	Vitamin C	40%
Calcium	2%	Iron	4%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:  
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

### Inside This Issue:

<i>Getting to Know the Nutritious Tomato</i>	1
<i>What's So Great About the Tomato?</i>	
<i>Food Safety Tips for Handling Fresh Tomatoes</i>	2
<i>Let's Eat Tomatoes of All Kinds!</i>	
<i>Preparation/Tips/Recipe</i>	3
<i>Recipes</i>	4
<i>Recipes</i>	5
<i>NC Tomato Statistics</i>	6
<i>Recipes</i>	6

## Food of the Month - TOMATOES

### Getting to Know the Nutritious Tomato...

Wouldn't it be great if we could enjoy juicy, summer-tasting, vine-ripened tomatoes all year instead of having them only during our traditional tomato growing season - late June through late October (or until the first frost)? Now in Cleveland County, we have tomatoes available during the 'off-season' - early November through late June - from a new hydroponic greenhouse farm. You can learn more about this new farm through the Cleveland County Kitchen - March 2015



video.

**Did you know** tomatoes are the most popular vegetable grown in home-gardens today? They were not always so popular - until the nineteenth century, they were thought to be poisonous and were used as a decorative plant. Tomatoes originated in South America with the Aztecs. They were introduced by early explorers to Spain and then to the rest of Europe. Many believe Thomas Jefferson, who raised tomatoes in 1781, introduced them to the New World.

Tomatoes began to be more widely cultivated in the U.S. around 1835.

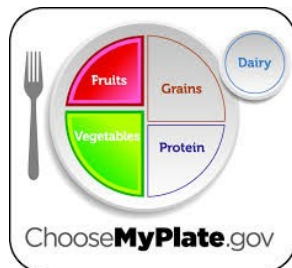
### A Fruit or Vegetable?

Botanically, tomatoes are a fruit, but they are most often



used like a vegetable. Tomatoes, a member of the nightshade family (along with peppers and potatoes), were formally classified as a vegetable in 1893, through a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that listed tomatoes as a vegetable for the purpose of levying a tariff. There are many different types and colors of tomatoes. They vary in size from the round, standard-sized tomatoes to smaller plum, pear-shaped, cherry, and grape tomatoes. Originally tomatoes were yellow, but now, most produced in the U.S. are red.

### What's So Great About the Tomato?



1 medium tomato shows why they are so good for us. Serving size: 1 tomato - serving of tomatoes is:

- Low in calories (25 calories)
- High in Vitamins A (20%) & C (40%)
- Natural antioxidants, carotene, lycopene
- Low sodium (20mg)

Tomatoes are very nutritious, versatile, and easy to eat. The Nutrition Facts Label for

- Good source of potassium and fiber
- Free of saturated fat and cholesterol

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines recommend making 1/2 of our plate fruits and vegetables. Tomatoes can be one colorful and easy way to meet this goal.

## Food Safety Tips for Handling Fresh Tomatoes

Food safety practices are important when handling tomatoes and all fresh produce. Tomatoes and other produce have been linked to the foodborne illness caused by Salmonella bacteria. Bacteria from the soil, water, animal, or human sources can contaminate fresh produce. Properly wash all produce **before** cutting/slicing to prevent bacteria on the skin being transferred to the interior and consumed. You can prevent other food poisoning dangers by washing



hands properly with soap and water before and after handling produce, and always using clean equipment, utensils, and cutting surfaces.

**To Wash Tomatoes** - wet with water, rub the surface, rinse with running water, and dry with a paper towel.



**After washing**, cut away and discard the stem scar and surrounding area - slice or chop the tomato.

### Do Not:

- Do Not wash tomatoes in a sink/ bowl filled with water because contaminated water can be absorbed into the tomato's stem scar.
- Do Not wash with soap or detergent because the tomato can absorb detergent residues.



## Let's Eat! Tomatoes of All Kinds...

Tomatoes are a welcomed sign of summer and bring on a delightful anticipation of the many delicious ways they can be enjoyed! There are at least 10 types of tomatoes and over 400 varieties available in U.S. markets today. Select your favorite based on personal preference and how the tomatoes will be used. Heirloom; "cluster" or "truss" tomatoes, first grown in Europe; Beefsteak; Roma (Paste); Cherry and Grape types; Salad (slicing); and Greenhouse are just a few of the different types of tomatoes available. When it comes to "eating the rainbow," tomatoes are at the top of the list. Delicious "vine-ripened" tomatoes come in a variety of colors - red, pink, yellow, purple, green, multi-colored, and more.

In addition to personal preference, use these guidelines for firmness, texture, and flavor when selecting tomatoes whether for salads, sandwiches, sauces, or preserving.

### Selection:

- Select firm, dense, fragrant fruit
- Bright, shiny skins, well colored for the variety
- Fruit should be firm, but yield to gentle pressure
- One pound equals - 2 cups chopped or 3 medium tomatoes
- Avoid bruised, soft, blemished, moldy, or hard tomatoes

### Storage:

- Store unwashed at room temperature (\*not in the refrigerator)
- Away from direct sunlight
- Stem end facing up (to reduce softening and darkening of fruit)
- Unripe tomatoes ripen in 3-4 days
- Use ripe tomatoes within 5-6 days
- Cut/chopped tomatoes or tomato products should always be covered and stored in the refrigerator if not eaten within 2 hours of preparation or use within 1 hour if outside temperature is over 90°F; use refrigerated cut/chopped tomatoes within 1 to 2 days.

(\*Refrigerate tomatoes if ripe and can't be used before spoiling or if leftover slices, etc. Bring back to room temperature before serving.)



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### Preparation Tips

- Wash tomatoes and all fruits/vegetables under cold water just before cooking or eating (see Food Safety Tips for details)
- Use a sharp serrated knife for easiest slicing
- Tomatoes can be eaten raw; cooked - broiled, baked, roasted, stewed or microwaved; used as an ingredient in many dishes; canned; frozen; or dried
- For best results when using tomato pulp in a recipe, peel and remove seeds before cooking (they can get tough when cooked)

### To Peel Tomatoes

It is not necessary to peel fresh tomatoes; however, tomatoes can easily be peeled, if you prefer. Start by dipping washed tomatoes in boiling water for about 30 seconds or until the skins split. Remove with tongs or a slotted spoon and dip immediately into ice water bath. Remove from ice water. Skins will easily slip off. Cut out core and proceed with recipe.

### To Seed Tomatoes

Cut tomato in half crosswise- (parallel to stem); Hold tomato over a bowl, (cut side down), gently squeeze the tomato or use your finger to gently remove seeds.

### Preserving Tomatoes

When it comes to preserving tomatoes, they can be frozen - whole, sliced, chopped, or pureed; dehydrated; or canned - using raw or hot pack methods in the boiling bath or pressure canner. Do not can overripe tomatoes. Because the acidity in tomatoes varies, home canned tomatoes must have some form of acid added. For proper acidity in home-canned tomato products, add 2 Tablespoons of commercially bottled lemon juice or 1/2 teaspoon powdered citric acid for each quart. For pints, add: 1 Tablespoon commercially bottled lemon juice or 1/4 teaspoon powdered citric acid. (Vinegar may also be used to acidify tomatoes, but it may give an undesirable flavor to tomato products. For current research-based information on canning, freezing, and dehydrating tomatoes: contact NC Cooperative Extension Cleveland County Center (704-482-4365) or use the National Center for Home Food Preservation site:

[http://nchfp.uga.edu/tips/summer/home\\_preserv\\_tomatoes.html](http://nchfp.uga.edu/tips/summer/home_preserv_tomatoes.html)

## Bruschetta with Tomatoes, Basil, and Olives

- 1 loaf (8 oz.) French or Italian bread, cut on diagonal into 1/2" thick slices
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and cut in half
- 8 ripe small tomatoes (about 1-1/2 pounds), chopped
- 1/4 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and chopped
- 1/4 cup loosely packed fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1/4 cup loosely packed fresh parsley leaves, chopped
- 3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. coarsely ground black pepper



1. Preheat broiler. Place bread slices in 15-1/2" X 10-1/2" jellyroll pan. Place pan in broiler at closest position to heat source. Broil bread until lightly toasted, about 1 minute per side. Rub one side of each toast slice with cut side of garlic.
2. In medium bowl, gently toss tomatoes, olives, basil, parsley, oil, salt, and pepper until combined.
3. To serve, spoon tomato mixture on garlic-rubbed side of toast slices.

EACH BRUSCHETTA: About 70 calories; 1g protein; 9g carbohydrate; 4g total fat (1g saturated); 0mg cholesterol; 145mg sodium.

Source: NC Cooperative Extension, Union Co. Center. Sally McNeill, RD, LDN, Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Agent

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## Fried Green Tomatoes

4 medium Green tomatoes  
1 cup cornmeal

Salt & Pepper to taste  
2 Tbs. Vegetable Oil

Wash tomatoes and slice into 1/4" slices.

Season with salt and pepper, as desired. Dredge (dip) in the cornmeal. Heat oil in a frying pan. Add tomatoes and fry until brown, turning once.



## Green Tomato Pie

Make pastry for a double crust 9-inch pie. Arrange bottom crust in pie pan. Sprinkle crust with 2 Tbs. flour. Slice four cups of fresh green tomatoes thinly and fill crust. Sprinkle tomatoes with 1 cup sugar. Dot tomatoes with butter, approximately 1/4 cup. Sprinkle with 1/2 tsp. of cinnamon or nutmeg. Pour 3 Tbs. vinegar over tomatoes. Put the top crust on the pie. Bake at 400°F for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 350°F and bake 20-25 minutes longer. Serve hot. Yield: 1- 9-inch pie

Source: NC Cooperative Extension, Union Co. Center. Sally McNeill, RD, LDN, Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Agent

## Marinara Sauce

4 tsp. olive oil  
3/4 cup chopped onion (optional)  
1-1/2 tsp salt  
2 tsp dry parsley  
1 Tbs. garlic powder granules

4 cloves garlic, chopped  
4 (28oz.)cans tomatoes, crushed, whole, or chunk  
2 tsp. black pepper  
2 tsp. dry basil

- Sauté chopped garlic and onions in olive oil on medium heat until light golden brown.
- Add tomatoes, salt, pepper, parsley, basil and garlic powder.
- Continue cooking on medium heat for 30 minutes.
- Turn down heat to low and continue cooking for about 1-1/2 hours, stirring occasionally.

Source: Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie County

## Vegetable Pasta Salad

1 (16oz.) pkg. tri-color Rotini pasta  
1/2 red bell pepper, diced  
1/2 red onion, diced  
1/2 cup Italian-style salad dressing  
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

1 squash, diced  
1/2 green bell pepper, diced  
1 cucumber, diced  
1/2 cup creamy Caesar salad dressing  
1/2 cup feta cheese

1 zucchini, diced

2-3 medium tomatoes, diced

1. Cook pasta according to package directions, Drain and rinse pasta under cold water; set aside.
2. Mix together both salad dressings and set aside.
3. Dice vegetables (squash, zucchini, red and green bell peppers, onion, cucumber, and tomatoes). Place in large mixing bowl. Mix together.
4. Add to vegetables - pasta, salad dressing mixture, and both cheeses.
5. Stir gently to mix well. Cover and chill in refrigerator at least 1 hour to blend flavors.

Source: NC Cooperative Extension, Stanley Co. Ctr, Courtney Swain; Cleveland Co. Ctr., Nancy Abasiekong, Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Agents

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## Watermelon Tomato Salad

5 cups seeded watermelon cubes (3/4 inch)  
 1/4 tsp. salt  
 1/4 sup red wine vinegar  
 1 tsp. black pepper

3 cups of cubed tomatoes (3/4 inch)  
 1 small red onion, quartered and thinly sliced  
 2 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil  
 6 lettuce leaves

**Combine** watermelon and tomatoes in large bowl  
**Sprinkle** with salt, toss to coat. Let stand 15 minutes.  
**Stir** in onion, vinegar, and oil.  
**Cover** and chill 2 hours.  
**Serve** chilled on lettuce leaves, if desired.  
**Sprinkle** with cracked black pepper to taste.

Source: UK-University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension, Kentucky Proud Project

## Uncooked Fresh Tomato Sauce

6 tomatoes (large, cut into chunks)  
 1/2 onion, medium (finely chopped), opt.  
 3 Tbs. fresh basil (chopped)  
 1/2 tsp. dried oregano

1 Tbs. garlic (minced)(from 2 garlic cloves)  
 1/2 green pepper (finely chopped), opt.  
 1 Tbs. fresh parsley (chopped)  
 1 Tbs. olive oil

salt and pepper (to taste)  
 6 Tbs. parmesan cheese (grated)

6 cups pasta (cooked)

1. Finely chop tomatoes and mix with next 7 ingredients in a large bowl (or pulse ingredients in a food processor to blend).
2. Let the mixture stand at room temperature for about 20 minutes.
3. Cook pasta in salted water according to package directions. Drain pasta.
4. Toss hot pasta or rice with uncooked sauce. Top with grated Romano or Parmesan cheese.

Note: Add a can of white or black beans, drained, for extra protein before tossing with pasta or rice.

Yield: 6 servings (1-1/2 cups)

Source: What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl

## Basil, Tomato & Mozzarella Salad

Medium-large tomatoes, sliced thick  
 12oz. Or large pkg. Mozzarella cheese, sliced  
 Fresh, large basil leaves (12-15)  
 Salt  
 Garlic basil vinaigrette

Directions:

On a platter, arrange tomatoes, cheese, basil leaves; overlapping them. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt. Spoon over the garlic basil vinaigrette. Serve

Source: Rutgers NJAES Cooperative Extension



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## NC Tomato Statistics -The Numbers Keep Growing

Fresh tomatoes are growing even more popular with U.S. consumers and now, according to USDA's Economic Research Service, rank third in popularity, after potatoes and lettuce. U.S. tomato consumption has grown by 50% over the past 40 years.

All of the tomatoes grown in N.C. are for the fresh-market. North Carolina's tomato statistics include:

- Ranks 7th in national tomato production; providing 2.2% of the tomatoes produced in the U.S. (2007 NCDA)
- 1.1 million pounds of tomatoes produced each year; 3,400 acres harvested in N.C. (2008 NCDA)
- \$33.7 million North Carolina's annual sales (2008 NCDA)
- There are two major fresh-market tomato production regions in the state; Western NC and the Piedmont; Cleveland County is in the Piedmont region along with Rowan and Lincoln Counties

## Fresh Tomato Salsa

1-2 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
1/3 large onion, finely chopped  
½ large green bell pepper, finely chopped  
½ to 1 whole jalapeno pepper, finely chopped  
3-4 large Roma (paste) tomatoes, chopped  
2-4 Tbsp. fresh finely chopped cilantro (or fresh parsley)  
Juice from ¼ lemon

### Directions:

Mix ingredients together and serve, altering the recipe to suit your own taste preferences. Store covered in the refrigerator. To keep calorie and fat content low, serve with baked tortilla chips. (Note: This is a fresh tomato salsa recipe; it has not been tested for safety for canning/processing.)

Source: North Dakota State University Extension Service



## Easy Ratatouille

1 Tbs. olive oil	2 cloves garlic, minced
1 large onion, sliced	2 medium eggplants, chopped
4 small zucchini, sliced	2 green bell peppers, chopped
5 medium red tomatoes, chopped	1 Tbs. fresh basil, cilantro, or parsley, chopped
1/4 tsp. black pepper	

### Directions:

Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat.

1. Add garlic and onion and cook until onion is soft.
2. Add eggplant and zucchini. Cook until lightly browned and almost tender.
3. Add the green pepper and tomatoes. Cook for about 5 minutes.
4. Add fresh herbs and pepper. Cover the pan and cook for 5 more minutes.

Yield: 6 servings (1/2 cup each)

### Helpful Information:

Different varieties of eggplants are all delicious. Experiment with each color or mix them all together.

- Cook eggplant with or without the skins. Eggplants have edible skins.
- Eggplant can be baked in the oven or grilled. Add eggplant to soups and stews. Toss some raw eggplant into your green salad. Just be sure to cut it very small.

Source: Cornell University Cooperative Extension-NYC-FMNP Recipe Collection 2014