

Panel Discussion “Tomato varieties that taste good, grow well, and sell!”

Heather Bryant, Becky Sideman and Olivia Saunders
University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension
3855 Dartmouth College Highway, Box 5, North Haverhill, NH 03774
heather.bryant@unh.edu

Late blight and other fungal diseases present a management challenge for tomato growers in the Northeast. While fungicides exist to manage those diseases, some growers prefer to use them sparingly due to costs, farm philosophy and/or consumer preference. Because of these issues there is a growing interest in disease resistant tomato varieties.

Seven varieties of tomatoes marketed as late blight resistant were compared to one industry standard, non-resistant variety in a replicated field tomato trial in the summer of 2013. As growing conditions vary significantly across New Hampshire, the trial was carried out in three locations simultaneously; Durham (zone 5b), Ossipee (zone 5a), and North Haverhill (zone 4b).

All seedlings were grown in a greenhouse in North Haverhill and transported to the research sites for outplanting the first week of June in four replications with five plants per plot. A basket weave system was used for trellising. Harvest started in late July and continued until mid-September. Data was collected on yield, quality, flavor and resistance to disease. Data analysis was still underway at the time this article was written, what follows is based on results in the North Haverhill site only.

Plum Regal

- 4.8 oz red plums
- Medium yields
- Deep red flesh
- Good flavor
- Variable skin color
- Late yields

Mountain Magic

- 1.8 oz saladette
- Good yields
- Very uniform
- Low percentage of culls
- Very sweet

Yellow Pear

- 0.5 oz yellow, pear shaped cherries
- Low yields
- Low percentage of culls
- Variable color and shape, easily scarred

- Vigorous growth habit
- Good flavor

Jasper

- 0.3 oz red cherries
- Low yields
- High percentage of culls
- Very prone to cracking
- Extremely vigorous growth habit
- Good flavor
- Early yields

Defiant

- 5.9 oz red beefsteaks
- High yields
- High percentage of culls
- Good flavor

Legend

- 7.2 oz red beefsteaks
- Good yields
- Unusual flavor

Iron Lady

- 6.1 oz red beefsteaks
- Good yields
- Late yielding
- Firm fruit
- Good flavor

Celebrity

- 8.6 oz red beefsteaks
- Good yields
- Good flavor