

# North Carolina Harvest of the Month

## STEPS TO HEALTH

The North Carolina Harvest of the Month featured vegetable is



### Health and Learning Success Go Hand-in-Hand

Healthy eating can help with your child's success in school. Eating the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables can help kids do better in school. Explore, taste, and learn about eating more fruits and vegetables and being active every day.

Discuss with your children what their favorite fruits or vegetables are, why they like them, and their favorite ways to eat them.

Next time you food shop, have your child count the number of different shapes and colors of tomatoes for sale.

### Healthy Serving Ideas

- Tomatoes can be baked, broiled, roasted, boiled, grilled, stewed, or stuffed and may be used in a variety of dishes such as sauces, casseroles, salads, and side dishes.
- Use raw tomatoes to make salsas or as a base for soups and sauces.
- Buy low-sodium canned tomatoes, tomato paste, and tomato sauce when fresh tomatoes are unavailable.



### Fresh Salsa

#### Ingredients:

- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 3 jalapeno, minced
- 1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Juice of 1 lime

#### Directions:

1. In a medium bowl, mix all ingredients.
2. Serve or store salsa in refrigerator for up to three days in a covered plastic or glass container.

#### Nutrition information per 1/4 cup:

Total Calories 24, Total Fat 0 g, Protein 1 g, Carbohydrates 6 g, Dietary Fiber 1 g, Saturated Fat 0 g, Sodium 150 mg

[www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov](http://www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov)



### Home Grown Facts

There are thousands of tomato varieties. Varieties are commonly divided into these categories:

**Cherry:** Sweet tomatoes, usually eaten whole in salads

**Plum:** Pear-shaped, more meaty, ideal for tomato products

**Slicing:** Round or globe-shaped, used mainly for processed products

**Beefsteak:** Round, juicy, used mainly for sandwiches.

Other varieties include heirlooms, green, orange, and yellow tomatoes. Yellow and orange tomatoes tend to be sweeter than red and green varieties. Only red tomatoes, which contain a red pigment, contain lycopene.

While tomatoes can grow in a wide variety of soils, most are grown in the Western and Piedmont part of North Carolina. Fresh local tomatoes are available in North Carolina from July to October.



### BE AN ACTIVE FAMILY!

The summer months are a great time to be active outdoors. Create a weekly family calendar of ways to be active together as a family. Limit TV, video games, computer and mobile device use to no more than 2 hours a day. Get out and play!



Visit a farmers market and discover which tomato variety is your favorite. To find a road-side market or farmers Market, visit [ncfarmfresh.com](http://ncfarmfresh.com).

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### Why Focus on Fruits and Vary My Veggies?

- Fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy, balanced diet.
- Fruits and vegetables are also a good source of many vitamins and minerals which may lower the risk of serious health problems.
- Tomatoes are a great source of lycopene. Lycopene is a powerful antioxidant that may help lower the risk of some forms of cancer, promotes heart health, and helps keep the immune system healthy.
- A good tip to follow is to make half your plate fruits and vegetables to reach your daily needs!

To learn about the other food groups, visit

### How Much Do I Need?

The amount of fruits and vegetables you need depends on your age, gender, and how active you are every day. Look at the chart at right to find out how many cups of fruits and vegetables you and your family need every day.

### Recommended Daily Amount of Fruits and Vegetables\*

	Kids, Ages 5–12	Teens and Adults, Ages 13 and up
Males	2½–5 cups per day	4½–6½ cups per day
Females	2½–5 cups per day	3½–5 cups per day

\*If you are active, eat the higher number of cups per day. Visit [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) to learn more.

### How Much Tomato?

- A half cup of sliced tomatoes is about one small tomato.
- A half cup of sliced tomatoes is a good source\* of vitamin C and vitamin A.

\*Good sources provide 10–19% Daily Value

#### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: ½ cup tomatoes, sliced (90g)	
Calories 16	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 4mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 4g	3%
Dietary Fiber 1g	5%
Sugars 2g	
Protein 1g	
Vitamin A 15%	Calcium 1%
Vitamin C 19%	Iron 1%

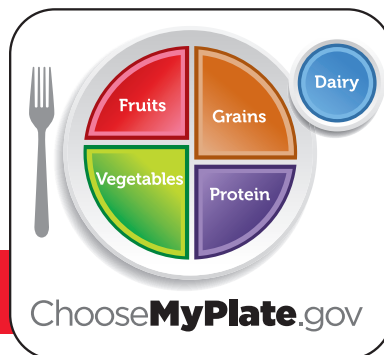
### Produce Tips

- Look for plump tomatoes with smooth skin, an even color, and a sweet smell. They should feel slightly firm.
- Keep ripe tomatoes at room temperature and away from direct sunlight for up to five days.
- Put firm tomatoes in a paper bag until ripe.
- Put cut or cooked tomatoes in the refrigerator for up to two days.

### More Tomatoes Each Day

- Add lots of tomatoes to sandwiches for a **healthy punch** to your lunch.
- Sauté chopped red tomatoes with okra pods and sliced onions for a **Southern-style side dish**.
- Toss sliced red, yellow, and green tomatoes with your family's favorite lowfat dressing for a **quick salad**.

For more tomato recipes, visit [www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov](http://www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov).



**ACTIVE ADULTS:** You don't need to complete all 30 minutes of recommended daily physical activity at once. Try a brisk 10-minute walk in the morning, take the stairs throughout the day, and go for a walk after dinner. By the end of the day, you may have met your activity goals!