



POT TOMATO GROWING GUIDE

Okanagan Ready

This is my method. It's worked for years — I grow a full tomato forest and hit 9ft cherry plants with serious yields. There are many methods, and use what works for you.

WHY GROW IN POTS (INSTEAD OF GROUND)?

Growing tomatoes in pots—especially **fabric grow bags**—gives you **more control** over your plant. (Image)

In the ground:

- Soil can hold too many minerals (especially in hard water areas)
- Nutrients become unbalanced over time
- Roots spread, but aren't always efficient

In pots:

- You control soil, nutrients, and watering
- Excess minerals can flush out
- Roots grow stronger and healthier

Better roots = better nutrient uptake = bigger harvests

GROWING IN GROUND (IMPORTANT NOTE)

Growing in the ground can work well, but it requires **more attention** than pots.

What to watch for:

- Soil can hold excess minerals (especially in hard water areas)
- Calcium buildup can block other nutrients
- Less control over watering and feeding

PICK YOUR TOMATO

🍅 **CHERRY (Easiest):** Small, sweet, very productive, Best in containers, needs the least nutrients, and easiest to grow.

🍅 **BEEFSTEAK (Large):** Big slicing tomatoes, Heavy feeders, Needs calcium + magnesium support

🍅 **ROMA / PASTE (More complex):** Great for sauces, Medium feeders, Benefits from calcium + magnesium

HOW TO GROW (BEST METHOD)

USE: 10 GALLON FABRIC POTS
(Available *HERE* for \$7 a bag)

- Prevents roots from circling
- Keeps roots cooler in summer
- Flushes out excess minerals from water
- ✓ Best yields and healthiest plants

OTHER POTS

- Plastic → traps heat + minerals
- Buckets → temperature swings
- Terracotta → dries too fast



How Container Material Changes Your Harvest

Same Plant. Different Container. Different Result.



PLASTIC NURSERY POT

- Traps heat (130°F+)
- Roots circle & strangle
- Cheap but costs yield

FABRIC GROW BAG

- Air-prunes roots
- 15-20°F cooler
- Best for tomatoes

TERRACOTTA

- Wicks moisture through walls
- Great for herbs
- Dehydrates tomatoes

5-GALLON BUCKET

- Conducts heat fast
- Hot days, cold nights
- \$0 but manage temp

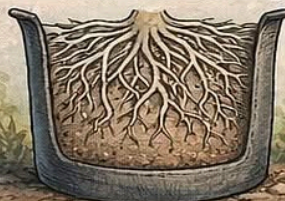
ROOT COMPARISON

Plastic: Circling



Plastic: Circling

Fabric: Branching



Fabric: Branching

Terracotta: Moderate



Terracotta: Moderate

Bucket: Uneven



Bucket: Uneven

SUN & WATER

☀ Full sun (8+ hours)

WATERING (IMPORTANT)

- Water deeply when top 1–2" of soil is dry

Best times to water:

- Morning (best overall)
- Evening (during hot weather if needed)
- In peak summer heat: Pots may need **morning + evening watering**

WHY THIS MATTERS

- Midday watering = water evaporates too fast
- Morning watering = plants stay hydrated all day
- Evening watering = helps recover from heat

Afternoon watering is like dumping a bucket of ice water on yourself in the heat — it shocks the plant. Don't do it unless you have to.

Tomatoes LOVE water, but they'll overdo it if you let them.
Too much, too fast = watery tomatoes and cracking.

SIMPLE RULE

- Normal weather → water once (morning)
- Hot weather → water twice (morning + evening)
- Always water deep, not light

Consistent moisture = better fruit + no cracking

WATER & MINERALS (IMPORTANT)

HARD WATER (OKANAGAN)

Contains natural (and extremely high in many places):

- Calcium
- Magnesium
- Mineral salts

What happens:

- Builds up in soil over time
- Can block nutrients (nutrient lockout)
- Worse in plastic pots

What to do:

- Use fabric pots (flush excess out)
- Water deeply occasionally to rinse soil
- Keep feeding light

Calcium/Magnesium:

- Cherry → ✗ Do NOT add
- Beef/Roma → ✓ Light dose every 1–2 weeks

SOFT WATER (Water Softener, RO only filtration, 5 stage)

Contains:

- Very low minerals

What happens: Plants become deficient. Weak growth, poor fruit development

What to do: Add calcium + magnesium regularly. Keep feeding consistent

Calcium/Magnesium:

- Cherry → ✓ Light
- Beef → ✓ Regular
- Roma → ✓ Moderate

FERTILIZER (KEY TO BIG HARVESTS)

I've gone lighter on fertilizer and still get great results. We use Nature's Gold Water Wise soil by the yard — trailer loads of it. It's top-of-the-line and doesn't need much, even for heavy feeders. This guide is based on typical bagged or lower-quality soils, which usually need more feeding. These days, the quality is less on so many things!

Early Growth

- Wait until blooming — that's when feeding matters actually.

BLOOM & FRUIT STAGE (MOST IMPORTANT)

Use a **high-phosphorus fertilizer** such as **15-30-15 (or a similar bloom formula)** at **HALF DOSE**.

Why:

- Drives flowering
- Increases fruit production
- Improves yield and size

WEEKLY FEEDING (SIMPLE SYSTEM) - WE HAVE 2 Types of Feeding guides available! See my website.

Feed **once per week during blooming**

Per plant:

- Mix fertilizer in water (as directed)
- Apply evenly to soil
- Consistency = best results

N = Nitrogen (First Number)

- Drives **leafy growth**
- Too much = big plant, less fruit
- Early growth only — don't overdo it

P = Phosphorus (Middle Number)

Drives **roots + flowers + fruit**

- This is the MOST important for tomatoes
- This is why bloom fertilizers are high in phosphorus

K = Potassium (Last Number)

- Supports **overall plant health**
- Helps with **fruit quality and strength**

SIMPLE WAY TO REMEMBER

- **First number (N)** → Leaves
- **Middle (P)** → Roots + Flowers + Fruit ★
- **Last (K)** → Strength + Health

EASY BUYING OPTION

We offer pre-measured weekly fertilizer bags We offer
pre-measured fertilizer bags

Perfect if you only have 1–2 plants and don't want a big bag

- ✓ No bulk purchase
- ✓ Easy to use
- ✓ Designed for bloom-stage feeding
- ✓ Helps avoid overfeeding (very common issue)

👉 **Each bag = enough for multiple feedings**

👉 You still mix and measure per watering

Use once per week during bloom stage

HOW TO USE

- Mix **~2.5g (1/2 tsp) per liter of water**
- Feed each plant evenly
- Morning water when its getting ready to grow and ripen!

One bag gives you multiple weeks of feeding, depending on how many plants you have

SUPPORT

- Cherry → stake or trellis
- Dwarf and Basket → None needed
- Beefsteak → strong cage/stake
- Roma → medium support

PRUNING (Optional)

- Remove Broken and dead branches and Remove lower leaves to improve
 - Improves airflow
 - Helps prevent disease

HARVEST

- Pick when fully ripe
- Frequent picking = more production

BACKUP PLAN (JUST IN CASE)



If you still fail — which I don't think you will — I've got you covered.

I sell fresh tomatoes all season, with multiple varieties available. You WILL DO GREAT, and YOU CAN GROW your own food.

QUICK TROUBLESHOOTING

Black bottom on fruit?

→ Calcium issue (adjust based on water type)

Yellow leaves?

→ Overwatering or mineral buildup

→ Nutrient Deficiencies

Cracking fruit?

→ Inconsistent watering

Slow growth?

→ Needs more heat or feeding

SIMPLE RULES



Full sun



Fabric pots



Water deep, not constant



Feed weekly during bloom

Hard water → LESS calcium/magnesium

Soft water → ADD calcium/magnesium



Healthy roots + proper feeding = bigger, better tomatoes