

# Heirloom Seed Project

at Landis Valley Village & Farm Museum



2019 Seed Descriptions

# Tomatoes

Heirloom tomatoes are generally indeterminate, bearing fruit over a long period. They also have an abundance of foliage and should be staked for highest yield.



**Amish Paste Tomato:** Cherry red. Amish Paste is an excellent sauce tomato, great in salsas or salads and tasty all by itself. It has a large plump, somewhat varied plum shape, about 12 oz. VG-103

**Aunt Ruby's Green Tomato:** Beefsteak, olive yellow in color, weighing a pound or more; grows in clusters of 2 or 3. Sweet and spicy, moderate yield. VG-171



**Belgian Beauty Tomato:** Beautiful deep pink/red color; very meaty; produces on average, 1-2 lb. fruit. Recommended for wine-making. VG-154

**Bell Pepper Tomato:** (pre 1900); Looks like a bell pepper and is great for stuffing. Medium-sized fruit. VG-157



**Black Brandywine Tomato:** One of the most interesting varieties that we offer, the exterior has a deep reddish-purple color and flesh that makes it appear almost black. Yields large, lobed fruit. VG-153



**Black Cherry Tomato:** Dusky red/purple color is a nice contrast when paired with yellow and red cherry tomatoes. Good for snacking (two-bite size) and pretty in salads; sweet flavor. Good producer through late summer. VG-188

**Black Prince Tomato:** Dark, mahogany-red, medium-sized tomato; globe-shaped fruit; bears over a long and productive season; firm with outstanding, slightly tart flavor. VG-176



**Cherokee Purple Tomato:** A Tennessee heirloom originating with the Cherokee tribe. Dark, rosy-purple fruit with brown shoulders and sweet, rich flavor. Soft fruit; harvest large fruits just before they are fully ripe to avoid cracking. VG-173



**Coyote Yellow Currant Tomato:** Pop this marble-sized tomato into your mouth for a burst of fruity flavor. Vigorous vines are loaded with clusters of creamy yellow, ½ “ fruits. VG-193

**German Strawberry Tomato:** (pre 1900) The “Ultimate Sandwich Tomato”, this fruit looks like a gigantic strawberry with firm flesh, little juice. Excellent flavor. VG-156

**Golden Queen Tomato:** Golden-orange globes with a mild sweet flavor. Produces a large crop of medium-sized fruit. Performed well even in adverse weather. VG-115



**Green Grape Tomato:** Clusters of 1–1½” green olive-shaped tomatoes, harvest when they slowly begin to have an amber blush. Excellent flavor, a favorite of the Heirloom Seed Project staff! VG-169

**Green Zebra Tomato:** When young it has dark green stripes set against a light green background; at maturity a light green striping appears on an amber background. Flesh is vivid green; clustered fruits are 2½ -3” VG-170



**Hartman Yellow Gooseberry Tomato:** Large yellow 1½” cherry tomato growing in beautiful clusters of 5-7 fruit. Although larger than a gooseberry, when ripe they have the same “veining;” Mild flavor; vigorous producer. VG-119



**Howard German Tomato:** (pre 1900) Red; elongated shape like a banana pepper; pointed end. Meaty tomato, few seeds, sweet and tasty, excellent yields. VG-121



**Mammoth German Gold Tomato:** Varies in size from large to mammoth! A single tomato can top 2 lbs! Yellow with red striping, very flavorful and sweet. Tie up vines throughout the growing season to support heavy fruit. VG-126



**Mortgage Lifter Tomato:** (1930’s) Meaty pink beefsteak tomato; an old favorite with good yields of 1-2 lb. fruits; sweet, delicious flavor.

**Oxheart Tomato:** Heart-shaped, large fruit, typically 12 oz. to 2 lbs. It tends to be a late season producer, but its firmness and mild flavor make it a popular heirloom tomatoes. VG-155



**Pink Brandywine Tomato:** Meatier than the red Brandywine with a mild sweet flavor, this variety has been overlooked in favor of its more popular red cousin. The fruit is slightly lobed, but of beefsteak size. Skin is a very light red; potato leaf foliage. VG-133

**Pink Grapefruit Tomato:** (pre 1900); A medium-sized tomato that is yellow on the outside and flushed with pink inside; a nice slicing tomato for salads with a moderately sweet flavor. Moderate yield. VG-134



**Purple Calabash Tomato:** Dark red, ruffled fruit with purple patches; 3-4" inches in diameter. Decorative addition to a salad plate; soft and juicy. Harvest just before they are fully ripe to avoid cracks. VG-174

**Red Brandywine Tomato:** Our #1 Best-Seller! Fruits are medium-sized and slightly lobed; juicy with a terrific tomato taste. Yields are plentiful and plants will keep producing until frost. VG-136

**Red Pear Tomato:** (1800"s) Firm, 2" bright red, pear-shaped fruit. Rich, tomato flavor. Prolific yields until frost. Attractive in salads, good for snacking and for sauce. A staff favorite. VG-168



**Reigart Tomato:** Small, plum-shaped tomato has superb flavor. It is slightly acidic, juicy and firm. Prolific producer! Cooks into a bright red sauce. VG-158

**Riesentraube Tomato:** Old German heirloom; translates to "giant bunch of grapes." Very prolific, 1-1½ " cherry-red pointed fruits; produces heavily until frost. Juicy, sweet flavor - the perfect snack for little gardeners! VG-151

**Yellow Brandywine Tomato:** Bright yellow beefsteak type tomato with potato leaf foliage. Same zesty flavor as other Brandywines. VG-150



**Yellow Pear Tomato:** (Before 1805) Small, 1 ½ “ pear-shaped fruit, lemon-yellow color. Mild flavor; salad or snacking tomato. Prolific producer, early crop that continues until frost.

**Zapotec** Yields 10 to 16 oz. bright red fruit, sweet and flavorful. Slice to show off its scalloped edges. Its pleated shape makes it very ornamental.



**Huberschmidt Husk Tomato:** Light green 1-2” fruits; peel the papery husk and use these tomatillos in Mexican green salsa. For ground cherry pies or preserves, cut in smaller pieces. Bushy plants spread 3-4’ over the ground. Fruits fall to the ground as they ripen. VG-122

**Reiff Ground Cherry:** From the garden of Titus Reiff, Terre Hill, PA. Traditionally used by the Pennsylvania Dutch in pies and preserves. Mounding plants spread 3-4’ over the ground. Ripe fruits drop to the ground; rub off the thin husk around them. Flavor has a hint of pineapple.

## Beans



**Amish Gnuttel Pole Bean:** “Gnuddelbuhn” An old cutshort variety also known as Corn Hill Bean because it was often trained to grow up corn stalks. Pods are 4” with 4-5 small beans per pod. Primarily used as a dry bean in soups and stews. Late season bean (90 days). VG-102



**Aunt Edith’s Sickle Bean:** Vigorous pole bean with large sickle-shaped pods. Seeds are elongated gray-brown with black lines. Traditionally cooked as a filled out snap bean in ham broth. Edith (Charles) Kennel of Mountville, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania received these from her mother, Annie (Nissley) Charles (1873-1928); donated by nephew, Chris Kennel. VG-191



**Cardinal Pole Bean:** Beautiful, dark red, round bean, the “True Lazy Wife of Swabia,” popular in southwestern Germany in the 1700’s. Stringless, use as a green snap bean or dry for a rich dark red baking or soup bean. Vigorous climber. VG-186



**Dr. Martin's Pole Lima Bean:** Vigorous growth habit with vines up to 12 feet in length; better yields when trained on a trellis rather than on teepee poles. Pods are 5" in length and contain 3-4 large beans. Best planted around the beginning of June in warm soil. May also be started indoors in individual pots. Matures in 90-100 days. VG-109

**Fisher Bean:** Bush Bean. PA Dutch *Oibuhne* 'Egg bean' or *Eenbuhne* 'All-in-one bean' Can be used as a snap or dry bean, but its small size, round shape and circle around the eye make it an attractive dry bean. Good yields. Grown by the Iroquois of eastern North America. VG-113

**Green Star Pole Bean** Use as a young snap bean or dry for soup or baking. Long, flat pod has 7-8 white oval beans. These are "string beans" – strings need to be removed before cooking. Plant when soil warms; vigorous vines needs poles or trellis for support.

**Hoffer Lazy Wife Bean:** (pre-1810) A popular bean and one would suspect that its name has something to do with its fame. It is the ease with which this green bean grows, cooks, and the fact that it is stringless that has earned it the name - Lazy Wife Bean. It came from Germany to Bucks County, Pa. and then to the Hoffer family in Lancaster County, Pa. It climbs naturally on teepees or trellises. The pods are long and bumpy with plump, round white seeds. The dry bean is also an excellent soup bean. VG-120



**Mostoller Wild Goose Bean:** (Pre 1900) Collected from the craw of a wild goose shot in Somerset County, PA in 1884. This pole bean seed is oval, white with a reddish-speckled orange-brown spot of the eye. Superior-flavored green snap bean, also an attractive dry bean. Vigorous grower. VG-128



**PA Dutch Red Lima Bean:** Bush lima bean from the family of Verna Shirk. Its red color makes it an attractive addition to "Chow-Chow," a pickled relish of many colorful vegetables. Medium-sized, dark burgundy red seed. . VG-149



**Pretzel Bean:** The Pretzel bean is in fact a cowpea! Plant in blocks of 6-9 plants; A beautiful tall plant with lavender flowers and curly pods at the top – hence the "pretzel"! Can be shelled and cooked when green or harvested as dry peas. Use fresh or dried pods in floral arrangements. VG-159



**Scarlet Runner Bean:** (pre-1750) Many people grow this bean solely for the beautiful red blossoms that grow on the long vines. Others use it as a dried bean. In the dried stage, the bean is a beautiful black bean with purple markings. Can be grown anywhere it has support, even on corn stalks! Matures in 65-90 days. VG-142



**Wren's Egg Pole Bean:** (pre-1825) Also known as "Speckled Cranberry." Can be eaten as a green snap bean, shelled green or as a dry bean. The pods are wide, thick and about 5" long. When dried, the bean is tan with maroon speckles and streaks and resembles a wren's egg. Good yields; attractive when grown on a trellis. VG-147

## Other Vegetables

**Lutz Beet:** "New Century Beet". Begins with red and white striations, color changes when cooked. Keeps well through winter months, but can be eaten raw when harvested young. Glossy green tops are also delicious. Matures in 60-80 days. VG-125

**Early Jersey Wakefield Cabbage:** (pre 1840's) A pointed-headed cabbage, has an excellent mild flavor. Matures early, but keeps well in the field. Cover lightly in the heat of the day. Matures in 60-75 days VG-111

**Danver's Half Long Carrot:** 7-7 ½" long, tapering to a blunt end. Bright orange, tender and sweet. Plant in early spring. 75 Days to mature. Suitable for clay soil. VG-168



**PA Dutch Buttered Flavor Popcorn:** (pre 1885); Heirloom variety grown by the PA Dutch. Matures in 105 days. 4-6 ears of small creamy colored kernels per stalk. VG-132

**Seneca Corn:** (Indian Corn) Beautiful colors that are a mix of reds, purples and yellows. Ears are 6 – 8" in length. Use for corn meal, crafts, decorations. VG-167

**Lemon Cucumber:** Lemon-shaped fruits have pale yellow skin and crisp white flesh. Listed in Wilson's 1894 seed catalog in Bucks County. Very productive and drought tolerant. VG-185



**White Cucumber:** Creamy white variety; sweet and aromatic. Sow in hills or train onto a trellis; likes fertile, well-drained soil that has warmed after danger of frost. Seeds may also be started indoors 3-4 weeks before transplanting. To save the seed, leave several on the vine until bright orange and until the skin and flesh are very soft. VG-146

**Russian Red Kale:** “Ragged Jack” or “Rugged Jack Kale”. Mildly acidic, tender leaves, bold flavor and very hardy. Delicate, oak-leafed appearance, this variety is not only tasty, but also a wonderful visual addition to your garden. VG-140

**Black Seeded Simpson Lettuce:** (1850) Early loose-leaf lettuce, with a mild, sweet flavor, Grow in spring and fall; fairly hot-weather tolerant. Crinkled light green leaves, beautiful in the garden. VG-106



**Deer Tongue Lettuce:** Fairly slow to bolt, this lettuce forms an upright, loose head with light green triangular shaped leaves, thought to resemble a deer’s tongue. Tender leaves with a sweet flavor, especially when young. VG-108

**Speckled Lettuce:** This lettuce seed is said to have traveled from Lancaster County, PA to Ontario in the early 1800’s by covered wagon with Mennonite families who settled there. An attractive loose head of green leaves speckled with red. Grow in spring or fall. VG-184



**Blue-Podded Pea** Dutch variety (Blauwschokkers) from the 1600’s. Striking indigo blue pea pods. Use very young peas as snow peas; mature peas are dried for soup. Plant in early spring. Grow on a pea fence or trellis; pretty, bi-color purple blossoms.

**Grandma Hershey’s Sugar Pea** (Pre 1900) “Aerbs” From Ada and Isaac Hershey (1868-1940), developer of “Lancaster Sure Crop” Corn. Yields well; peas are still tender when well-developed in the pod. Grow on pea fence.



**Risser Early Sugar Pea** Old variety donated by a local Risser family in Lancaster County, PA. Edible podded; a reliable producer with good flavor. Plant in early spring in cool soil; yields an early crop. Provide support for the tall vines.



**Risser Sickle Pea** Eighteenth century variety passed down through the Risser family. Pod is curved like the blade of a sickle. Young pods are edible as snow peas and larger pods may be shelled. Good yields. Plant in early spring in cool soil. Provide support for pea vines.

**Bull Nose Pepper:** Blocky, sweet green pepper matures to red. Sturdy plants produce a large crop of thick-walled fruit. Grown by Thomas Jefferson and acquired from the Monticello seed collection. VG-195



**Hinkelhatz Pepper:** (1800's) "Hinklehatz" translates to "chicken heart" which pretty accurately describes the shape and size of this hot pepper! Used by the Pennsylvania Dutch in pickles and in vinegar. Prolific producer, ripens to red late in the season. 125,000 Scovilles of heat! VG-178



**Weaver's Stuffing Pepper** Miniature, 2" diameter, flattened sweet pepper, maturing from green to red. Productive plants are covered with peppers. Traditionally stuffed and pickled; try it stuffed as an appetizer or snack.

**Gilfeather Turnip:** Big-knobbed and bulky with light green skin and white flesh, this is actually a rutabaga! Sweet and late to mature; excellent as a raw vegetable. Likes cool weather and can be planted as a spring or fall crop. Sow the seed directly into the garden in rows spaced about 12" apart; thin the plants when they are large enough to use as greens. VG-114

## Melons and Squash

**Citron Melon:** (pre 1900); Green seeded; looks like a round baby watermelon; flesh is firm and cream-colored to greenish-white. On its own it has a very neutral taste, but this is the melon used to make candied citron. GP-302



**Jenny Lind Melon:** This old-fashioned melon is sweet and aromatic. Green fleshed muskmelons are 1-3 pounds in weight and have a slightly flattened appearance. This variety is worth growing for its wonderful flavor. GP-305



**Rocky Ford Melon:** (1881) Also called “Eden Gem;” probably one of the oldest green-fleshed muskmelons. Rocky Ford has a delicious sweet flavor and a spicy aroma; produces early and heavy yields. Melons weigh 2 – 2 ½ lbs. GP-307

**Fortna White Pumpkin:** (pre 1900) From the Fortna family in Adams and Franklin counties in Pennsylvania, this unusual pear-shaped pumpkin is white-skinned with creamy yellow flesh; good in pies and breads. Produces 5-10 small to medium size fruits per plant; vigorous vine growth requires space. Matures in late September to October. GP-304



**Patty Pan Squash:** White, flattened squash with scalloped edges; bush type habit. Good producer; harvest young light green fruit, up to about six inches in diameter. Plant in spring after danger of frost. Sow 5 seeds per hill, thinning to 3 plants. Hills should be 5 to 6 feet apart. GP-309

**PA Dutch Crookneck Squash:** A local Lancaster County favorite. Sweet, dark orange flesh is excellent for pies and soups or as a roasted vegetable. Long solid neck extends from the bottom bulb containing the seeds. Very large fruits weigh 10-20 lbs. and require lots of space to grow. GP-311

## Field Crops

**Flax** Long-stemmed, blue flowered fiber flax; seed imported from Holland. Flax does not like dry, sandy or heavy soil. It grows best in good garden soil that has been worked into a fine texture so that the straw can be easily pulled with little breakage. Plant early in the season (early-mid-April for us). Seed can be hand broadcast. The thicker you plant, the less likely that you will have weeds to deal with and the finer the fiber. Less seed per square inch will give you thicker and stronger fibers from your straw.

**Flax Seed: “Nathalie”** Long-stemmed flax for linen production. A more recent variety that is less likely to lodge (fall over). Treated with a fungicide to protect the seed in cool, wet soil. A limited amount of untreated seed is also available. One pound of seed will plant a 20'x20' area.

**Flax Straw:** We grow our own flax field every year to produce flax straw for sale to our customers and for demonstrations at the Museum. It is available unretted and sold by the pound. One pound of flax straw is approximately a bundle you can just about hold in your hand at the center of the stalks.

**Lancaster Sure Crop Corn:** Very tall grower. This is a dent field corn, not a sweet corn. Ears can grow to 12" long. Isaac E. Hershey was the originator of the Lancaster Sure Crop corn on his farm south of Paradise, PA in the early 1900's. In early hybrid production, Lancaster Sure Crop was chosen as one of seven (only) in the US to develop modern hybrids. FC-411 (2 oz.); FC-412 (1 lb.)

Thank you for your interest in the Heirloom Seed Project seed varieties. For more information or to order, contact Joanne Ranck-Dirks at [c-jranckdi@pa.gov](mailto:c-jranckdi@pa.gov) or 717-569-0401 ext. 204.