



## Heirloom Tomato Seeds Top Choices

**It's time to start making a list of heirloom tomato seeds you'd like to plant this growing season.**

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Cherokee purple heirloom tomato  
photo courtesy Gary Ibsen

What's a "Black" Tomato

Heirloom tomato grower Gary Ibsen explains the "Black" tomato:

They're not really black, but include a range of dark colors: deep purple, dusky deep brown, smoky mahogany with green shoulders and bluish-brown. The depth of colors seems to be encouraged by a higher acid and mineral content in the soil. "Black" tomatoes are native to early 19th century Southern Ukraine and originally from a small region of the Crimean Peninsula. Beat the winter doldrums by checking out these top heirloom tomato seed favorites and making your own list of seeds you'd like to plant this growing season.

### Top Heirloom Tomato Favorites

TomatoFest® Garden Seeds lists the "Top 10" favorite heirloom tomatoes: Paul Robeson (purple/black) Cherokee Purple (purple/black) Brandywine (pink) Amana Orange (orange), Marvel Stripe (red/yellow striped) Julia Child (pink) Black Zebra (green/purple striped) Black Cherry (purple/black) Kellogg's Breakfast (orange) Aussie (red)

TomatoFest obtained the data from surveys of tomato seed sales to home gardeners and commercial tomato farmers, and a review of heirloom tomato sales to retailers and restaurants.

"Black" tomatoes are fast becoming the new "red" tomato," said Gary Ibsen, TomatoFest® Garden Seeds owner and grower of 600 varieties of certified organic, heirloom tomatoes in California.

"This is exciting news," Ibsen says, "because it shows that consumers are being more adventurous in selecting the dark colored varieties of heirloom tomatoes that only a few years ago were next to impossible to find in the marketplace."

### About Carmel TomatoFest®

Founded and operated by Gary Ibsen in 1991, the Carmel TomatoFest has revitalized the appreciation and desire for true heirloom tomatoes.

### Using Your Heirloom Tomatoes

Don't fret over what to do with an abundance of heirloom tomatoes and other tasty heirloom delights. Check out Cooking with Heirlooms, by Karen Keb Acevedo.

The 2008 NatureSweet Carmel TomatoFest takes place at Quail Lodge Resort, Carmel, California on September 14.

Net proceeds from the festivities will be donated to regional and national youth-focused charities;  
831-625-6041; [www.tomatofest.com](http://www.tomatofest.com)