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What's Growin' On?: Talking Tomato

-Ashley Tullis, USU-Iron County Staff Assistant & USU Extension Master Gardener

USU Extension Gardening Experts say that July is the month of the tomato, so on that note, lets talk tomato. With the harvest season fast approaching so are those higher temps and while many might be looking forward to a satisfying yield, others may be experiencing a less than stellar tomato harvest due to a few common issues addressed below.



If your plants are not producing it could be due to hot weather. USU garden experts say that when temperatures reach 95 degrees and above, tomato flowers will abort, leaving very little fruit to set on the plant. To avoid this, try offering a bit of shade for your plants when possible.

Another helpful tip- avoid spraying the foliage with water during the day to cool the plants off, doing this could cause leaf scorch and ultimately kill the plant.

Another common issue many gardeners experience is Blossom end rot (black sunken areas on the end of tomatoes) which is caused by uneven watering. The

key to dodging this issue is to stay consistent with your watering schedule and apply adequate amounts of water at the appropriate time. USU advises watering tomatoes deeply and infrequently, applying 1-2 inches per week and to use drip irrigation if possible.



Want more tips? Visit <https://extension.usu.edu/yardandgarden/> for more yard and garden information or to enroll in any of the online gardening courses offered through USU Extension.



Source: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1237&context=extension_curall, <https://extension.usu.edu/yardandgarden/>
Photos: <https://vegetableguide.usu.edu/diseases/tomato-pepper-eggplant/blossom-end-rot>, <https://ask.extension.org/questions/410505>

KATHY'S CORNER

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JUST A QUICK NOTE

What do you love most about summer? If you love the heat you must be truly happy with the weather we've been experiencing. However, it may not feel as warm as the thermostat may indicate so don't let the nearly-continuous breeze we have here in SW Utah lure you into thinking you are immune to sunburn, heat exhaustion or dehydration.

Make sure you slather on sun screen, chug enough water (not soda), and avoid hard labor during the hottest part of the day.

Please keep yourself healthy and safe this summer!

Sincerely,

Kathleen (Kathy) Riggs, Professor
USU Extension, Iron County
Family and consumer Sciences/4- Youth

✓ CHECK IT OUT

SCHEDULING USE OF OUR FREEZE DRYER

As herbs, berries and other produce start to ripen and be harvested, it is a great time to consider trying your hand at freeze-drying. One-to-one training will be conducted by appointment if you are new to this method of food preservation or you may consider registering for the on-line class on July 15th.

Freeze dryer is available weekly on most Mondays and Tuesdays July-August.

OTHER GREAT READS INSIDE:

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LOOK WHAT'S COMING

VOLUNTEER FAIR JUDGES NEEDED

Though some Counties have chosen to forego having a county fair, several in our area are moving forward. Safety measures to avoid contributing to pandemic numbers will be implemented so if you feel you are able, your help will be greatly appreciated.

We are looking for volunteers on the following dates to judge a variety of home arts and 4-H exhibits for the following county fairs:

August 13- Kane County (Orderville)
August 13- Garfield County (Panguitch)
August 26- Beaver County (Minersville)

We could also use volunteers to judge exhibits at the Iron County Fair, Wednesday, August 29th- We prefer volunteers who do not plan to exhibit in the fair.

Can you help? Please contact the Extension Office 586-8132 for more details or email: ashley.tullis@usu.edu

USU EXTENSION'S PRESERVE THE HARVEST ONLINE CLASSES

USU Extension is hosting several evening classes online during the month of July (7:30-9:00 p.m.). Each class is \$5 and you must be registered to obtain access. Register through Eventbrite: <https://tinyurl.com/yZgyxxcs>

July 14: Jams & Jellies
July 15: Freezing & Freeze Drying
July 21: Dehydrating
July 22: Pickling & Fermenting
July 28: Tomatoes
July 29: Pressure Canning (Low Acid Foods)

EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING DURING COVID-19

Though we can tire of the constant reminders to wear masks and practice social distancing, we may not realize that exposure to all the publicity and impacts of this pandemic also can be draining to our sense of emotional well-being.

Morissa Henn, DRPH with Intermountain Healthcare recently wrote an article in a publication (Healing for Life®) widely circulated in our area. In case you missed it, here is a summary of 10 ways to care for our emotional and mental well-being during COVID-19.

- > Exercise daily, aiming for 30 minutes.
- > Use technology to stay in touch with people including an actual call or video interaction.
- > Create Positive Family Time making memories and building each other up.
- > Meditate and Relax by simply taking 10 minutes in silence to focus on breathing deeply.
- > Limit News Media to only specific times of day.
- > Set a Schedule for yourself and family members to increase feeling more in control of your situation.
- > Read a Physical Book
- > Do What You Enjoy- Movies, hikes, cooking, etc.
- > Spend Time Alone by taking a walk, shutting a door, going for a drive can relax the brain and calm emotions.
- > Control What You Can by cleaning your personal space or sharing hope and optimism with others.

The concluding comments from this article are encouraging: "...normal will return. The world is full of good people who will help each other.... We'll get through this. We always have."

Additional resources from IHC regarding self-care are found at: www.IntermountainHealthcare.org/COVIDSelfCare



COULD YOUR EMERGENCY SAVINGS USE A BOOST?!

According to Money Moxie, a publication of Smedley Financial Services, Inc. in Salt Lake City, there is a report from the Federal Reserve stating many Americans could not cover an unexpected expense of \$400. Further, it states those who carry a credit card balance, or do not have a credit card are unlikely to have money set aside and are most at risk as depicted in the following table:

Credit Card Balance	Could Pay Emergency \$400 Expense	Have 3 Months of Emergency Savings
Always Pay Full Balance	90%	81%
Sometimes Pay Full Balance	63%	54%
Never Pay Full Balance	43%	29%
Don't Have Credit Card	27%	18%

Source: Money Moxie®, May-June 2020

24:7 DAD® CLASSES

This is a FREE series of classes offered to help fathers and father-figures at least 18 years of age increase their capacity to care for themselves, children, and other relationships.



On-line classes are Tuesdays, July 14, 28 August 04, 11, 18 from 7-9 p.m.

Topics: Orientation & Introduction; Family and What It Means to be a Man; Communication and the Father's Role; Discipline and Getting Involved; Dads and Work.

REGISTER at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/247-dad-online-class-5489-registration-110317586872>

Questions: Contact Ruben Garcia: ruben.garcia@usu.edu

THE POWER OF LAUGHTER

It almost goes without saying that people enjoy a good laugh now and again. However, when there doesn't seem much to even smile about or people around you don't seem to be in the mood for laughter, you may need to remind yourself of the short- and long-term benefits. These are summarized from an article posted by The Mayo Clinic:



<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relief/art-20044456>

Short-Term Benefits:

- Stimulate many organs- As laughter enhances the intake of oxygen-rich air, hearts, lungs and muscles become active and endorphins (feel good) are released from the brain;
- Activate and relieve your stress response- A hearty laugh fires up and then cools down your stress response while increasing and then decreasing heart rate and blood pressure. The result is a good, relaxed feeling.
- Soothe tension- Laughter can also stimulate circulation and aid muscle relaxation. Both can help reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress (e.g. shoulder and neck aches and even headaches).

Long-Term Benefits:

More than a quick pick-me-up, laughter is also good for the long term. Potential benefits include:

- Improve your immune system- Increase neuropeptides that help fight stress and potentially more-serious illnesses.
- Relieve pain- Laughter helps the body produce its own natural painkillers.
- Increase personal satisfaction- Gain better capability to cope with difficult situations by defusing anger and help you connect with people.
- Improve your mood- Feeling depressed? Laughing can lessen depression and anxiety making you feel happier.

REASONS TO KEEP BABY WIPES ON HAND FOR SURVIVAL

There are a number of various uses for baby wipes you may or may not have considered. While baby wipes do not contain disinfectant, they do have cleaning capabilities to reduce grime and wipe away many surface germs and bacteria much like using a sudsy dishcloth to wipe off counters, tables and chairs.



Food Storage Moms has a list of 31 reasons for storing baby wipes for survival. A few that you may not have considered include:

- Great for mini-baths when camping or hiking
- If they dry out in the container, use as toilet paper.
- Soothes sunburns.
- Use to wipe down your pet's feet if sore or dirty.
- Keep a stash in your car glove box or somewhere else in the car. After fueling, stopping for groceries, or attending an event, wipe down car door handles, steering wheel, etc.

Source: <https://www.foodstoragemoms.com/store-baby-wipes/>

10 TIPS: BE FOOD SAFE AT HOME

CLEAN

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Sanitize surfaces.
3. Clean-sweep refrigerator foods weekly.
4. Keep appliances clean- inside and out.
5. Rinse produce before preparing.

SEPARATE

6. Separate food when shopping/use produce & meat bags.
7. Separate foods when preparing and serving.

COOK AND CHILL

8. Use a food/meat thermometer when cooking.
9. Cook food to safe internal temperatures
10. Keep foods at safe temperatures (Keep hot foods hot; Keep cold foods cold)

Source: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips-be-food-safe>