

CHERRY / GRAPE TOMATO VARIETIES

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**Extension Service
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This project was designed to help gardeners in the Treasure Valley determine which cherry/grape type tomatoes to plant. Since there are a wide range of tomato varieties available, only those varieties sold in local retail establishments were chosen for evaluation. Some of the parameters evaluated included productivity, disease resistance and palatability.

Grape tomatoes have thick skins, low water con-

tent and a flavor similar to Roma tomatoes, however they will store longer than cherry tomatoes.

Cherry tomatoes have thin skins, high water content and can have variable size, depending on variety. They should be eaten within a few days of harvest.

The varieties planted in this trial are listed in Table 1.



Sweet Cherry 100 Tomatoes



Sweet Olive

Table 1. Tomato cherry/grape varieties tested at the OSU Malheur Experiment Station, Ontario, OR. 2009.

Variety	Fruit Type	Fruit Color	Size & Shape
Yellow Cherry	cherry	yellow	½ - 1 inch diameter - round
Tumbling Tom Red	cherry	red	1 - 1 ½ inches diameter - round
Grape	grape	red	1 inch length, oblong, Roma type
Juliet	grape	red	1 ½ inches length, oblong, Roma type
Juliet Roma Grape	grape	red	1 ½ inches length, oblong, Roma type
Husky Cherry Red	cherry	red	1 ¼-1 ½ inches diameter - round
Sweet Chelsea	cherry	red	1-1 ½ inches diameter - round
Yellow Pear	cherry	yellow	1 - 1 ½ inches diameter - pear shaped
Sun Gold	cherry	orange	½ - ¾ inch diameter - round
Sweet Cherry 100	cherry	red	½ - ¾ inch diameter - round
Porters Dark Cherry	cherry	red	1 - 1 ½ inches diameter - round
Sweet Olive	cherry	red	½ - ¾ inch diameter - round
Christmas Grape	cherry	red	½ - ¾ inch diameter - round

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Fruit size is important for many consumers. The smaller-sized cherry/grape tomatoes are often consumed in salads. Those that can be eaten whole, are often preferred over those that must be cut before being consumed. Those varieties that produced fruit in the ½ - ¾ inch size could be eaten whole, while the larger fruits need to be cut.

Many tomatoes are susceptible to the soil, foliage and fruit diseases common in this area. Some of the most common are verticillium wilt, early blight, leaf roll virus, curly top virus and blossom end rot.

Selecting varieties that are resistant to these diseases will help ensure a productive garden.

Only the variety Tumbling Tom appeared susceptible to the soil-borne disease verticillium wilt. Juliet-Roma and Sweet Olive displayed mild virus symptoms. All of the other varieties had healthy foliage throughout the growing season.

Other important factors when selecting cherry/grape tomato varieties are determinate vs. indeterminate growth, potential fruit yield and earliness.

These are listed in Table 2. Determinate and indeterminate determine whether the fruit will all set at approximately the same time (determinate) or will set a few fruits continuously throughout the season (indeterminate). A determinate-type plant is usually more favorable for regular tomatoes where having the fruit all mature about the same time is desirable for canning.



Sun Gold Tomatoes



Yellow Pear



Juliet Roma Grape

Table 2. Characteristics of tomato cherry/grape varieties tested at the OSU Malheur Experiment Station, Ontario, OR. 2009.

Variety	Determinate/ Indeterminate	Vine Characteristics	Earliness	Potential Yield
Yellow Cherry	determinate	compact	early	high
Tumbling Tom Red	indeterminate	sub-compact	moderate	very low
Grape	indeterminate	compact	moderate	moderate
Juliet	indeterminate	spreading	moderate	moderate
Juliet Roma Grape	indeterminate	spreading	moderate	moderate
Husky Cherry Red	indeterminate	moderately spreading	moderate	moderate
Sweet Chelsea	indeterminate	spreading	moderate	moderate
Yellow Pear	indeterminate	spreading	moderate	high
Sun Gold	indeterminate	spreading	moderate	high
Sweet Cherry 100	indeterminate	spreading	moderate	high
Porters Dark Cherry	indeterminate	spreading	moderate	moderate
Sweet Olive	indeterminate	spreading	early	high
Christmas Grape	indeterminate	spreading	late	moderate

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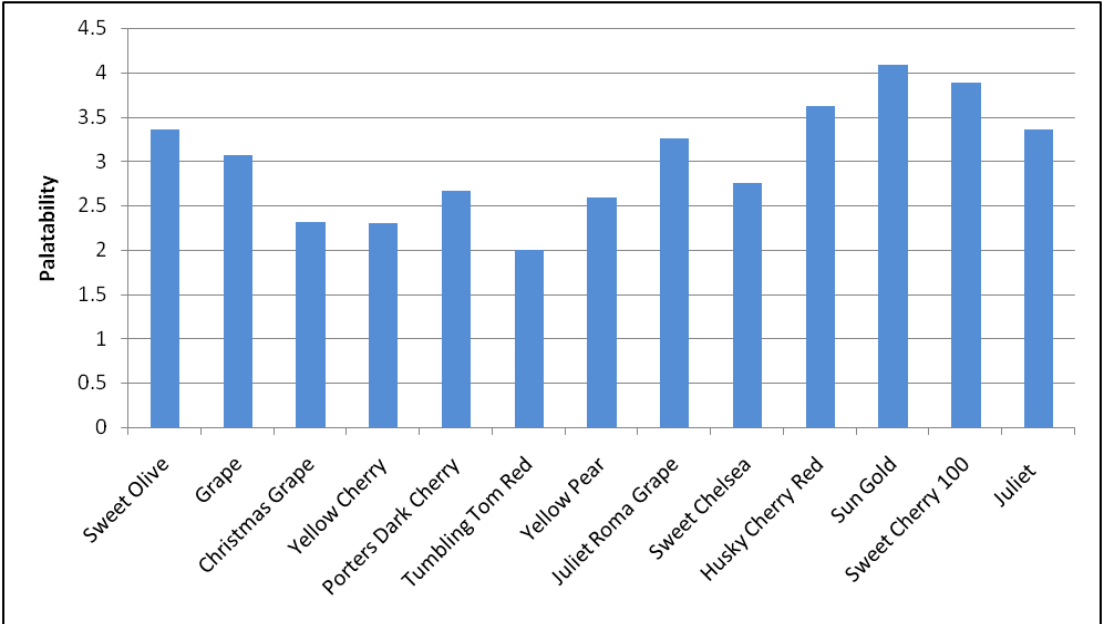


Figure 1. Taste panel evaluation of palatability with 0 = not palatable and 5 = extremely palatable. OSU Malheur Experiment Station, Ontario, OR. 2009.

The final characteristic evaluated was palatability or tastiness. A panel of consumers was used to evaluate taste preference (Figure 1). Sun Gold, Sweet Cherry 100 and

Husky Cherry Red were rated highest in flavor, while Christmas Grape, Yellow Cherry and Tumbling Tom Red were the

lowest. Only five of the thirteen varieties received votes as "best tasting" by panel members, with Sun Gold receiving the most votes (Figure 2).



Christmas Grape



Juliet



Husky Cherry Red



Porters Dark Cherry



Yellow Cherry



Grape



Tumbling Tom Red



Sweet Chelsea

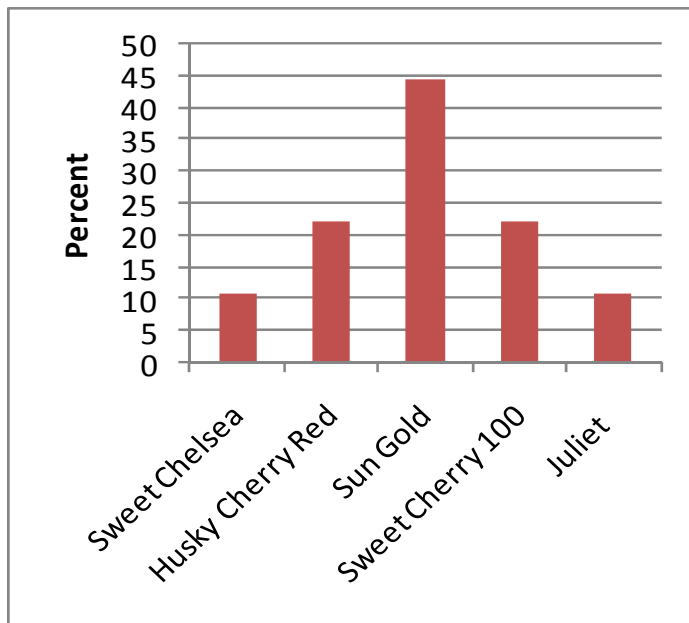


Figure 2. Varieties rated as "Best Tasting" by taste panel. OSU Malheur Experiment

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