Organically grown tomatoes are delicious! It’s safe to say that every home grown organic tomato tastes better than its supermarket cousin. Tomatoes are fun and easy to grow once the basic growing requirements of sun, water, trellising and feeding are understood.

Most tomatoes require full sunlight for maximum growth and fruit size. However, there are some very productive varieties that can tolerate less sunlight. Check with the professionals at Driftwood for our specialized varieties if limited sunlight is a factor.

Water tomatoes as they require it. Young tomatoes will require a little more water at first until they become established and their root system has penetrated deep into the soil. Check young plants to see if they might need water simply by poking a finger into the soil. If the soil is dry to the touch two inches below the soil surface, then it is time to water. Depending on the time of year and the local climate, the warmer it is, the more watering is required. Tomato plants will signal drought stress very quickly by wilting leaves. Keep an eye on the garden and change watering habits according to the climate and the needs of the plants.

Staking or trellising tomatoes is very important for exposing as many of the leaves to sunlight as possible. The more energy tomatoes derive from sunlight, the larger the fruit size will be! Sunlight translates into sugar, and sugar translates into taste and nutrition for your tomatoes.

Soil preparation is one of the most important elements of a successful tomato harvest. Start your organically grown tomatoes by adding the proper organic ingredients such as compost, mulch, planting mixes and most importantly, an organic fertilizer to the soil. Tomatoes are very heavy feeders. Compost and mulch help to create a friable soil that is workable, retains water, discourages weed growth, attracts earthworms, reduces erosion, and will ultimately provide nutrition for your plants.

Fertilizers will feed the living organisms in the soil. By feeding these beneficial soil organisms or “microbes” the tomatoes are likewise fed. This process is achieved as the microbes digest the organic fertilizer and convert it into forms that plants can use. As an example, plants cannot use fish meal in its protein form. It must first break down into a simpler form of nitrogen, which tomato plants can use directly for their growth. The microbes act as enzymes similar to the enzymes in our own stomachs. When humans eat proteins such as fish, red meats or fowl, they must be digested or broken down in the stomach before nutritional benefits are realized. A similar process occurs in the soil through the enzymatic action of the beneficial soil microbes.

Tomatoes are susceptible to a condition called “blossom end rot” which will distort the growth and ruin the fruit. This condition is usually caused by a calcium deficiency in the soil. Feeding the soil with rich organic materials is necessary to grow and harvest large, abundant, tasty and nutritious tomatoes. Visit Driftwood so one of our helpful associates may assist you in choosing the correct tomato variety for your garden.