Tomatoes are probably one of the most popular summertime vegetables. It’s a member of the nightshade family and is closely related to potatoes, peppers, and eggplant.

As a South American native, the word tomato is derived from the ancient Mayan word “xtomatl”.

There are hundreds of cultivated tomato varieties and this includes several heirloom varieties that have been grown for generations. All tomatoes can be classified by type: cherry, grape, beefsteak, plum (paste), slicing, and pear tomatoes based on their size, shape, and color. Beefsteak and heirloom tomatoes are only available seasonally but other types may be found year-round in supermarkets.

Storage Tips
Tomatoes should never be refrigerated. Refrigerating tomatoes will damage the fruit. To ripen unripe fruit, place it in a paper bag out of direct sunlight.

Tomatoes can be frozen or dehydrated to preserve the sweet, succulent flavor for winter.

Cooking Tips
Wash tomatoes in cold water and remove the stem end prior to use. You may peel the tomatoes if desired.

There’s a wide variety of uses for tomatoes ranging from baking, broiling or grilling, raw in salads, soups, stews, casseroles, salsa, on sandwiches, and just about any other way you can imagine serving them.

Uses
• Stuffed tomatoes
• Tomato pie
• Shish kebobs
• Pureed with peppers in a soup