

# THE DAKOTA GOLD TOMATO

Neal S. Holland and Larry J. Chaput

The Department of Horticulture and Forestry, North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station, North Dakota State University, announces the naming and release of a new yellow-fruited tomato cultivar, DAKOTA GOLD. It was tested as selection ND #044. Dakota Gold tomato resulted from a cross of Cannonball pollinated by a selection derived from Sheyenne x Fargo Yellow Pear.

The plants are determinate or bush type, vigorous, productive and have good foliage cover. The rating for foliage disease (septoria and early blight) infection would be similar to that of Sheyenne or Cannonball.

The maturity of Dakota Gold is a few days later than Sheyenne and a few days earlier than Cannonball. The average fruit size is also intermediate between Sheyenne and Cannonball. A comparison is shown in Table 1. The fruits are smooth deep globes with a uniform light green immature fruit color. Upon ripening the fruit color is a clear bright yellow. The fruit has thin skin and is subject to cracking when grown under fluctuating moisture conditions or if allowed to remain on the plant after becoming half-ripe.

The new variety is recommended for home garden use as a productive, early yellow tomato and is better adapted to North Dakota conditions than any other yellow-fruited variety tested to date. It should be harvested when about half colored and ripened off the vine at room temperature to reduce the skin cracking problem.

The Department of Horticulture and Forestry does not have seed of Dakota Gold available for general distribution or sale. A limited quantity is available for commercial seed increase. Dakota Gold will be available from some seed companies in 1985 and there should be an adequate number of plants produced by the greenhouse spring plant trade.

Dakota Gold is the 20th variety to be developed and introduced as a direct result of the tomato breeding program carried on since 1920. Many of the earlier varieties are no longer being grown and have been replaced by later introductions having greater productivity, earliness, large size and better plant habits.



Table 1. Tomato Variety Comparisons

| Variety     | Ave. Days to Maturity | Fruit Size in Ounces* | Description                                                                                             |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lark        | 60                    | 3.4                   | 1973 NDSU introduction. Prostrate, compact plants. Resistance to cracking. Improved red interior color. |
| Bounty      | 66                    | 4.5                   | 1941 NDSU introduction. Deep smooth red globes.                                                         |
| Cavalier    | 66                    | 4.9                   | 1953 NDSU introduction. Deep smooth red globes of larger size.                                          |
| Sheyenne    | 66                    | 4.8                   | 1966 NDSU introduction. Deep smooth red globes. Better foliage cover and higher production.             |
| DAKOTA GOLD | 69                    | 5.2                   | New 1985 NDSU introduction. Yellow fruits of deep, smooth globes.                                       |
| Cannonball  | 71                    | 8.1                   | 1973 NDSU introduction. Very large, globe-shaped fruits. Very productive.                               |

\* Based on 1984 production through August 30.

Holland is professor and Chaput is agriculture research technician, Department of Horticulture.