

# Tomato Production Estimates

Pounds per plant / per month

	Fair	Average	Excellent
January	1.00	2.00	4.00
February	1.00	2.00	4.00
March	2.00	3.00	6.00
April	3.00	4.00	6.00
May	3.00	6.00	8.00
June	4.00	7.00	9.00
July	4.00	6.00	8.00
August	3.00	5.00	7.00
September	3.00	4.00	6.00
October	2.00	3.00	6.00
November	1.00	2.00	4.00
December	1.00	2.00	4.00

If a grower were in production from March 1st until December 31st with one long crop during the “longest day length” period of the year, using the numbers listed above, the expected production would be:

Fair:	26 pounds per plant / year
Average:	42 pounds per plant / year
Excellent:	64 pounds per plant / year

If a grower were in production from September 1st until June 30th with one long crop during the “shortest day length” period of the year, using the numbers listed above, the expected production would be:

Fair:	21 pounds per plant / year
Average:	35 pounds per plant / year
Excellent:	57 pounds per plant / year

Tomatoes can be grown in greenhouses during any month of the year. The grower must determine the amount of available light, the cost of energy, and the expected market prices for various times of the year. Production can vary depending upon the ability of the grower, the quality of the greenhouse environmental controls, the control of insects and fungus and the maintenance of proper nutrition within the plants.

The cost of producing a tomato crop varies substantially from season to season. It is generally accepted in the industry that this cost can range for \$.50 per pound to \$.95 per pound. On an annual basis, most growers will spend about 1/3 on labor, 1/3 on energy costs and 1/3 on all other expenses to produce a crop. The cost per pound will vary with the time of year the crop is grown and will also vary depending upon the size of the greenhouse complex. Larger greenhouses can take advantage of more efficient machinery; such as, packing equipment, forklifts, delivery vehicles, computers, etc. and usually make more efficient use of labor.

In an effort to minimize expenses and maximize profits or to avoid heavy production during periods of the year when market prices are depressed, some growers elect to “skip over” some months. They choose to raise two crops (Spring & Fall) or a single Spring crop. The choice of cropping schedules must be determined by each individual grower. An estimate of the amount of monthly production lost can be determined by using the numbers listed above. Each grower must determine their own expenses based upon their individual situation.