

US (WA): Scientists working to grow the best tomato

In the day when the mass production of food trumped everything else, plant breeders developed the "perfect" supermarket tomato. Thick-skinned and with a shelf life for the ages, it was a boon for growers, shippers and retailers.

But even non-foodie consumers realized that they were getting the short end of the stick. Those reddish orbs looked like the real thing but tasted like damp cardboard, and the supermarket tomato became a standing joke. It also spurred the rediscovery and celebration of the heirloom tomato, the antique, vernacular fruit that managed to capture not only the folksy history of a regional variety but also the warmth and memory of summer itself. The poster child was the brassy beefsteak Brandywine, but thousands of tomato varieties have survived thanks in large part to this renaissance.

As home gardeners across the land have discovered -- especially in this year's June monsoon -- heirlooms often fall down in key areas: They are sickly, they take forever to fruit, and the yield is low.

Source : <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/147134/US-%28WA%29-Scientists-working-to-grow-the-best-tomato>