TOMATO SEED SAVING METHODS

Solanum lycopersicum

Three main methods.

1. Simple drying
2. Self-sustaining garden/planned burial
3. Fermentation (ross)

What and when to pick / collect seed stock.

* Aim for the best looking fruit, fat juicy, fully ripe.
* **Varietal purity OR true to type** describes a seedling that is exactly the same as its parent plant. This is achieved by using seed from an open pollinated non hybrid parent plant that has not been cross pollinated.

For example, if you grow one and only one variety of tomato it is highly likely seed collect from this parent plant will produce true to type seedlings.

* **Cross pollination** describes the opposite. If growing many different varieties, chances are the bees have visited several plants thus pollen has crossed between each variety. Seed from any of these parent plants is likely to be cross contaminated therefore its anyone’s guess as to what you might end up with…
* Generally seedlings will not grow true to type and are not ideal for collecting seed from esp. if wanting to preserve a variety.
* F1 hybrids are a cross between two or more varieties. These are commonly found in nurseries and are used in mass commercial production. Generally they are labled so and produce a really good crop. However seed collected from hybrids will never grow true to type, don’t waste your time.

Methods

* Simple drying

Squeeze out onto paper towel and allow to dry. I cut small disks and place three seeds on each. Allow to dry in a warm sport, preferable dark then store in air tight container, dry dark spot and use next season. Seed viability is approx. 12\15 months max.

* Self-sustaining garden. Simply allow stray fruits (ideally good ones) to root and remaining in soil where they fell over wintering until next season. Come spring seedlings will begin to emerge, select the best / strongest and replant on elsewhere keeping in mind crop rotation.
* Planned burial is much the same.
* Last tip / method. Come to a DVGC seed swap meeting.