

My First Tomato

By: Ashly Johnson

I was sitting in the veggie garden on June 2nd. My grandma was planting tomato seedlings a couple of feet away from me. It had been a long, cold, and hard winter, and her and my grandpa had run out of canned tomatoes. They couldn't wait until the summer brought a fresh pick of the juicy, red fruit. At the time, I had never tasted a fresh tomato-only in sauce.

On that day, I was particularly interested in watching my grandma's hands transplant the seedlings. I was actually quite comfortable on the cool, damp soil. I cleared my throat. "Grandma, why do you plant tomatoes?" I asked her curiously. "Well they're very delicious in sauce, or on sandwiches, or even in salads." She replied, as she patted down the soil, being careful not to pack it down too hard.

"What do tomatoes taste like?" I asked her. It took her a minute to respond, and I could tell that she was thinking hard about her answer. "They are very juicy and not

strong. They are full of vitamins and minerals. You should try one. In fact, you can eat the first one that ripens." She smiled-it seemed to make the soil glow.

I was excited-yet scared, because I had never tasted a fresh tomato before. "Do you think that I will like it?" I asked. "I bet you will. Now come on. I need help with these seedlings." "Okay!" I perked up because I loved working in the garden.

At about noon, the sun was hot, and the seedlings were finally planted. "Let's go in the house and cool off-it's lunchtime." Grandma said. We went in the cabin and ate lunch, then played games. We spent the rest of the summer like this until one day in July-July 19th to be exact. My grandma and I went for a walk by the veggie garden. We were about to pay a visit to her dog, when I caught a glimpse of red. The sun shone perfectly on the bright fruit.

I raced over to the tomato and plucked it right off the vine. "Grandma, grandma! It's the first ripe tomato!" I called. I had been waiting for that moment since the day she planted the seedlings. She had already been on her way over.

"Are you ready?" She asked. I nodded my head. I practically skipped back to the house as she walked next to me. We sang and laughed as we entered the house. We slipped off our shoes and quickly washed our hands. The tomato was still in my hands—close to being squished from my excitement. I was so anxious to find out what I was missing by never having a tomato. My grandma rinsed the soot off of it, and cut a small slice. She handed it to me, and I stuffed it in my mouth. It was delicious! Ever since I have loved fresh tomatoes. Agriculture has changed my life!