



Not Quite Beefsteak Tomatoes, but . . .

by Grant Matheke

There were several promising tomato cultivars from Territorial Seeds (Box 158, Cottage Grove, OR 97424) in this summer's vegetable trials that may be worth a trial in your garden. Scientists never feel comfortable making definitive statements (they sometimes have a nasty habit of coming back to haunt you). All that hedging notwithstanding, if I were a tomato grower, I'd leave a little space in my garden to give 'Prairie Fire', 'Oregon 11', and 'Northern Delight' a try. Individual fruit of 'Prairie Fire' with 1.5-inch to 2-inch diameter fruit outweighed our standard outdoor tomato, 'Sub Arctic 25', by more than 3 times, and yield per plant for each of these cultivars was very similar (Table 1). 'Prairie Fire' matured up to two weeks later than 'Sub Arctic 25' (Figure 1). 'Oregon 11' has fruit about the same size as 'Sub Arctic 25'. It is important to note that all these cultivars except 'Moskvich' were grown in that cold, overcast 2000 growing season, and not one of them, not even 'Sub Arctic 25', ripened fruit outdoors. We will repeat this trial next year to see what happens.

Table 1 - 2001 Tomato Variety Trials

| Cultivar | Yield per plant (g) | Fruit Weight (g) | Cultivar | Yield per plant (g) | Fruit Weight (g) |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------|---------------------|------------------|
| SubArctic 25 | 1988 | 32 | Glacier | 1451 | 31 |
| Northern Delight | 1995 | 44 | Kootenai | 1421 | 62 |
| Prairie Fire | 1820 | 113 | Stupice | 1264 | 50 |
| Oregon 11 | 1732 | 38 | Moskvich | 918 | 226 |



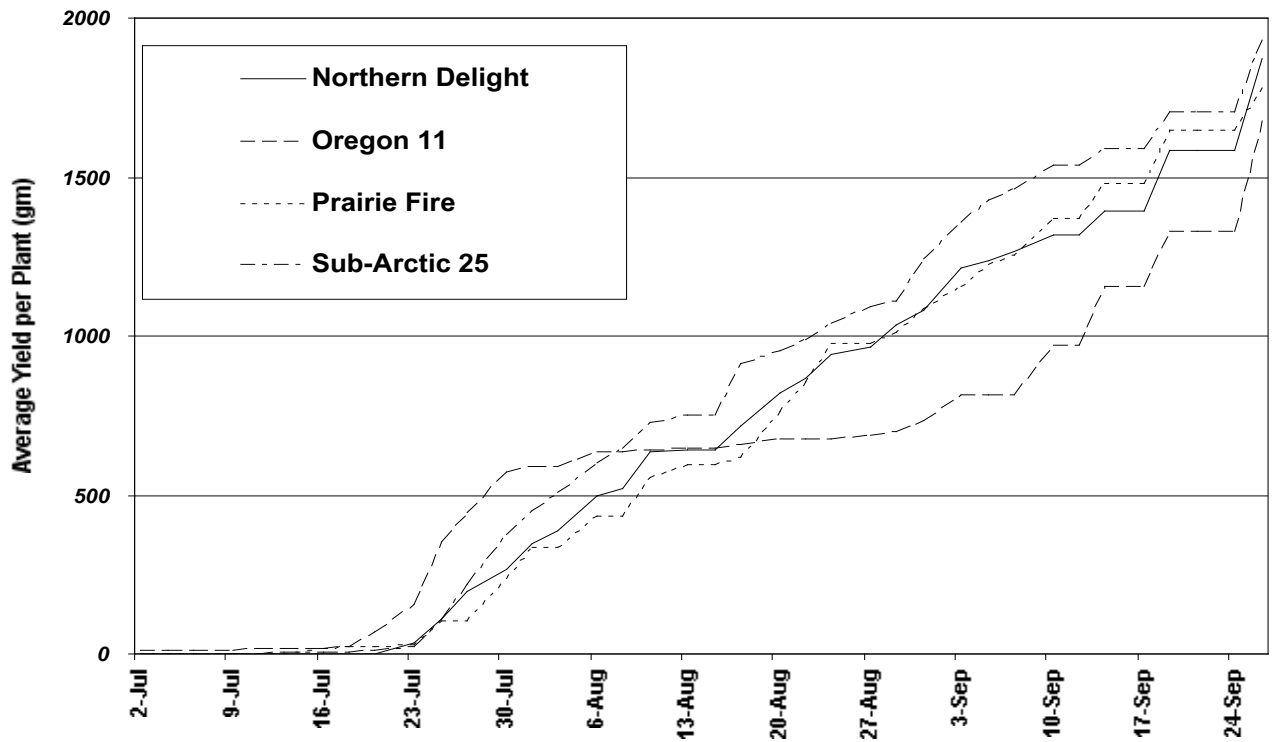
'Prairie Fire' tomato.

Photo courtesy of <http://irisheyesgardenseeds.com>



'Northern Delight' tomato. Photo courtesy of <https://australianseed.com>

Figure 1 Tomato Trials, Cumulative Yield– Top Four Varieties



Originally published in Georeson Botanical Garden
Review Vol. 10, No. 2, 2001

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