

## How to build a better tomato using genetics

Since plants were first grown for food, farmers, and more recently plant breeders, have selected their best plants, saved the seeds and planted what they hoped would be improved varieties. Through much of the last half of the 20th century, scientists and plant breeders largely devoted their efforts to practical matters, creating tomatoes that were fast-growing, firm, robust and easy to harvest. They developed new and exciting molecular techniques to select for the traits they wanted, but there were some unintended consequences of their selections, such as inferior flavor.

Lately, my colleagues and I have been working on ways to reintroduce some of the memorable tastes and smells that have been lost, without sacrificing the benefits. The goal is to have hardy, economical fruit year-round that tastes like what's harvested at the peak of the season.

But it's complicated.

**View the original article here: [Building a better tomato](#)**