

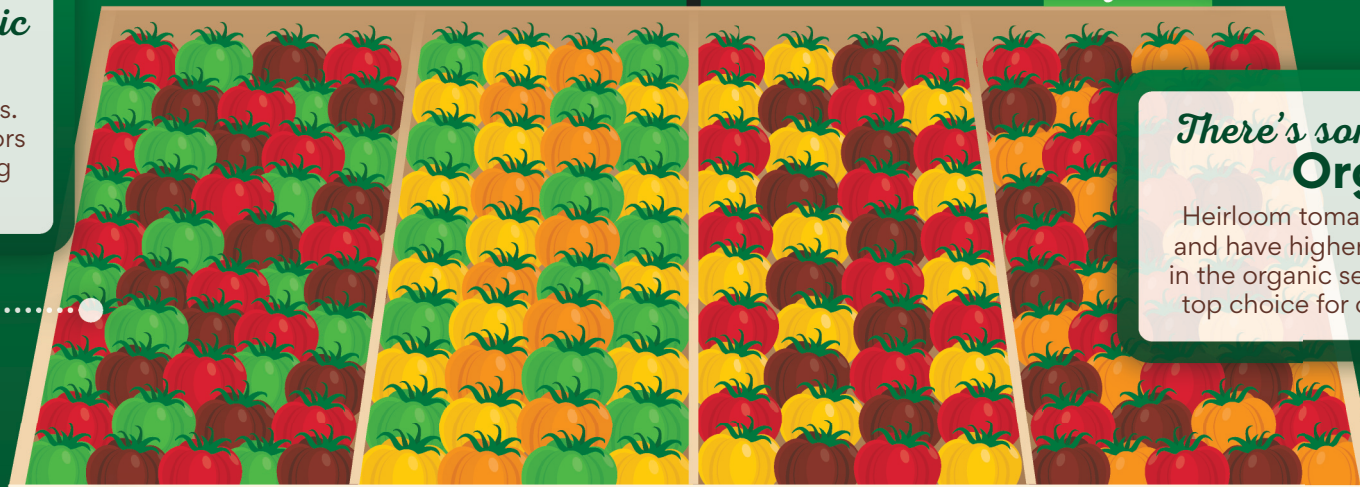
Best Practices in Heirloom Merchandising

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Organic

3 is the magic number

...of color varieties.
Mix sizes and colors
in an eye-catching
bulk display.



There's something about Organic

Heirloom tomato sales grow faster and have higher market penetration in the organic sector, making them a top choice for organic consumers.

\$3.99-\$4.99

The sweet spot on pricing

While price is an important factor, most (84%) consumers who have tried heirlooms are willing to pay more for them than they do for other tomato varieties.

To endcap or not to endcap?

High visibility of high traffic areas is great! But work best when volume is sustained for 6-8 weeks.



The 4 P's of Heirloom Merchandising

PRODUCT

An heirloom display should include at least

3 different color varieties

of multiple sizes.

A mixed display of bulk products is the most visually appealing to consumers. However, too many varieties can make upkeep more difficult.



53% of consumers prefer to see heirloom tomatoes in displays where the **colors and types are mixed together.**

The more popular colors are Red, Yellow and Brown.



Lack of availability **is the largest purchase barrier** for consumers.

Their top reasons for not purchasing heirloom tomatoes is because they are not available where they shop.



Sales Solution:

Include a greenhouse grower in your sourcing strategy for **YEAR-ROUND SUPPLY.**

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69% of consumers selected

“Quality”

as one of the top **3 most important factors** in the purchase of heirloom tomatoes followed by **Flavor (62%)** and **Price (46%)**.

Consumers define heirloom quality by lack of defects such as bruises and blemishes, as well as level of ripeness.



81% of consumers

prefer to **buy heirlooms in bulk** rather than in packaging where they can make their own selections from the varieties present.



PLACEMENT

Visibility= Availability

High traffic placement and visibility is important so heirlooms don't get overlooked.



Place heirlooms tomatoes alongside other **seasonal ingredients** that work together to make a delicious dish.

This will inspire people with usage ideas and provide education about flavor expectations.



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Sales Solution: Engage Shoppers with signage and cross merchandising!

The two main things people want to know about heirlooms are their **flavor profile (50%)** and **how to use them in recipes (42%).**



20% of people who do not purchase heirlooms reported that they don't buy because **they don't know how to use them.**



PRICE



\$3.99/lb
is a sweet spot on **heirloom tomato pricing.**

As far as willingness to pay goes, 38.5% mentioned \$3.99 per lb as the most they are willing to pay followed by \$5.99 (19%).

84% of consumers are willing to pay more for heirloom tomatoes than other tomatoes.

Hence perceiving that they offer more value and should live up to that expectation.



According to retail experts, heirloom tomatoes are often pitted against beefsteak tomatoes. To encourage trade-ups, **“don't go over \$1.00 the price of beefsteak.”**



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PROMOTION




According to retail experts, the potential to promote is heavily tied with **volume availability**. Promote seasonality when applicable.

According to retail experts, the potential to promote by lowering the price point on heirlooms is tied with volume availability.



The right promo price point is anywhere between a **20-50% price drop** from the regular price point of heirloom tomatoes.



When volume is not permissive, promote other attributes such as **local or organic** to bring in consumers with those preferences.

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The insights presented in the kit are a compilation of responses from multiple consumer and retailer surveys touching on preferences, decision factors and/or barriers affecting heirloom tomato purchases. Retail experts offered their expertise, and discussed successes and challenges in merchandising heirlooms.

Sources:

Nielsen. (2024). US FMCG Fresh Tomato data, 26 weeks ending March 16, 2024.

Survey Monkey. (2024). Data from a nationwide panel of 42 confirmed heirloom tomato consumers.

Survey Monkey. (2024). Data from a nationwide panel of 114 tomato consumers who do not typically purchase heirlooms.

Interviews with 7 retail experts including category managers and merchandisers. (2024).



Make the Commitment!

Harness the potential of heirlooms to uplift the tomato category.

Category Growth:

Heirlooms can drive innovation and interest.
Elevate category performance with an expanded selection of specialty tomatoes.

Customer Loyalty:

Expect enhanced customer satisfaction through unique offerings, a superior taste experience and consistent availability.

Expected Outcomes

Market

Differentiation:

Stand out from the competitor as a leader in high-quality, unique produce!

Sales Uplift:

With **35.5%** growth in sales over a 6 month period, organic heirlooms are poised to drive further growth by attracting new and repeat customers.



Source: Nielsen. (2024).
US FMCG Fresh Tomato
data, 26 weeks ending
March 16, 2024.

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