

Breeding for organic tomatoes

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As a first step, we will characterize the organic industry and how it fits into the fresh produce supply for US consumers. We will also show how it revives traditional fresh produce growing areas around major urban centers as an alternative to year round supply from Florida and Mexico. The seed industry doesn't reflect very well the growth of the whole organic sector; so what are the main challenges of the budding organic seed industry? They revolve around supply, genetics and regulations.

As a second step, we will focus on tomatoes and take a look at their share of the total organic fresh produce market. We will then initiate a discussion around the perception of "a good organic tomato" and then we will go more into the details of the major biotic and abiotic stress factors that have the potential to influence any breeding effort for organic tomato cultivars. Specific traits for organic growers and consumers will be examined and proposed to the discussion with a look at the future