

Tomato and Pepper Success Guide

A fun, practical roadmap for strong transplants, sturdy plants, and flavor-packed harvests.

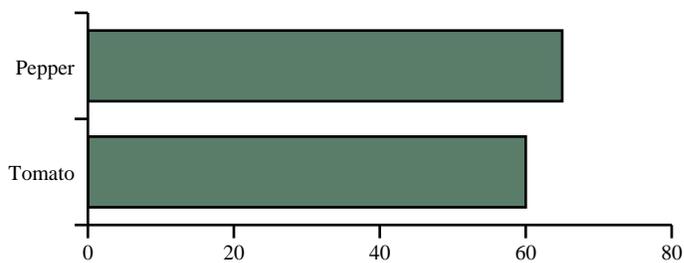
Key Milestones

For Southwest Michigan, plan to transplant about 1 to 2 weeks after the median last frost (May 04). Soil temperature matters as much as air temperature.

Transplant Targets

Crop	Soil Temp Target	Spacing	Support
Tomato	60F or warmer	24-30 inches	Cage or trellis
Pepper	65F or warmer	18-24 inches	Stake if heavy fruit

Soil Temperature Targets (F)



Pro Tips

- Harden off plants for 7 to 10 days with increasing outdoor time.
- Water deeply after transplanting, then let the top inch dry before the next soak.
- Remove the lowest tomato leaves so stems do not sit in wet soil.
- Mulch once the soil has warmed to lock in moisture and reduce disease splash.

Weekly Check-In

Week	Focus
Week 1	Transplant, water deeply, add support.
Week 2	Check soil moisture, inspect for cutworms.
Week 3	Top dress with compost, remove suckers on indeterminate tomatoes.
Week 4	Retie vines, prune for airflow, watch for blossoms.

Watering and Mulch Basics

Aim for even moisture. Inconsistent watering can lead to blossom end rot. Apply 2 to 3 inches of mulch after the soil warms to keep roots stable.

Situation	What to Do
Hot, dry week	Deep water 2 to 3 times per week
Rainy week	Skip watering and improve airflow
Heat wave	Water early morning and add shade cloth if needed

Harvest Cues

Crop	Ready When	Tip
Tomato	Full color and slight softness	Pick often to keep vines producing
Pepper	Firm, glossy, full size	Color changes add sweetness

Disclaimer

This guide is informational only. Follow local guidance for disease or pest outbreaks.

Sources

Original content by Wiley Rooster Farm & Greenhouse.