

An interview with Dan Sutherland about how he grew a 9.44 pound World Record Giant Tomato

As we all learned last Fall, Dan Sutherland from Walla Walla, Washington has once again grown a world record tomato. Dan's Giant Tomato tipped the scales at 9.44 pounds. Officials with the Great Pumpkin Commonwealth verified his achievement at a Super 1 Foods grocery. This whopper beat out Sutherland's old record by almost a full pound, from when Sutherland was the official World Record holder for heaviest tomato set back in 2016. His tomato then was 8.61 pounds. [As shown on BP.com](#), the lineages of these 2 World Records is as follows: Note these are the females. They were all open pollinations.

Dan kindly let us interview him about his growing techniques as follows. Your world record has left hundreds of growers in awe of your accomplishments! CONGRATS DAN ! Thank you so much for considering our Q&A. and congrats for your WR 9.44 plus 8.48 Giant Tomato in 2018. Well here we go. Lets start. What got you into Growing the Giant Tomato's and do you grow any other vegetables on your acre of land.

Big pumpkins got me into growing Giant Tomatoes, I was growing giant pumpkins when I saw the tomato thread on BP, and so I decided that I would try growing some. The first year I was only growing for seed replacement stock, and one of those grew to 5.63 lbs. I wasn't even trying, so then the next year 2016 I grew the World Record 8.61.

In 2017 we moved from Waitsburg, WA to Walla Walla, Washington with different climate, much hotter weather and different soil. That's when I grew 4 tomatoes over 7 lbs. and of course in 2018 came another WR of 9.44 lbs.

How many Tomato plants do you grow, and could you share some of your 9.44 and 8.61 genetics'. Looks like they were a open crosses). I grow a lot of Tomatoes for eating,; Altogether around 70 plants. We produce

TOP 11 Biggest Tomato's

Name	Year	Wt. lbs.	Grower
9.44 Sutherland WR	2018	9.44	Dan Sutherland
8.61 Sutherland WR	2016	8.61	Dan Sutherland
8.48 Sutherland	2018	8.48	Dan Sutherland
8.41 MacCoy WR	2014	8.41	Dan MacCoy
8.36 Boudyo	2015	8.36	Fabrice Boudyo
8.22 Marley	2017	8.22	Steve Marley
8.07 Daho	2018	8.07	Medhi Daho
7.73 Menting	2018	7.73	Joe Menting
7.69 Graham WR	1986	7.69	Gordon Graham
7.66 Hill	2018	7.66	Larry Hill
7.45 Martin	2014	7.45	Margaret Martin



WR 9.44 Sutherland moments after harvest by Dan.



9.44 Sutherland 2018 Domingo

Female ancestors shown below.

5.95 Konieczny 2016
5.80 Osmala 2013
4.37 Osmala 2012
3.24 Osmala 2010
7.18 Harp 2009
5.58 Timm 2008



5.95 Konieczny 2016
5.55 Marley 2015
5.75 Marley 2014
4.55 Wahl 2013
2.48 Lovelace 2012
2.00 Vincenzo Domingo

It's impossible to give a recipe for fert's, I go by observation of the plants, they will tell you if something is wrong, I've been gardening for 40+ years and I'm learning more every year, It's amazing how everything is so interconnected. So I would just leave this with you. I plant the seed, I water it, but God giveth the increase!! I can't make the seed grow. I can't do anything except try to give it an environment that I think may be advantageous to it. The Lord does the rest. I wish everyone the best with their Giant Tomato's in 2019.

around 100 quarts of tomato soup and lots of salsa and then give about 600 lbs. to our family members.

When do you start the plants inside and how much space does each plant get. I don't have any particular time that I start my plants, I kinda depend on the season, whether it is a cold spring or a mild spring.

How tall do you grow the plants, Do you cut the plant at a certain height, and do you tie it up on a stick. I grow the plants until I find a mega that I think has World Record potential, if I don't find one I'll let it go until the date is such that it won't ripen before frost, then I'll

pull the plant. I've had 7+ lber at close to 7' tall plant.

About how many weeks after planting do you start looking for a mega bloom to pollinate. When do you pollinate. I start looking for megas as soon as they show up, I don't have any set number of days or weeks, I pretty much let the pollination happen naturally unless of course I'm crossing my genetics.

Do you only grow one truss per plant and one giant tomato per plant I grow many trusses until I make my final decision, and grow one final Tomato on each plant.

Do you support the weight of the biggest fruit with a hammock or nylons. I do support my fruit in a hammock, it is the easiest way for me, but pretty much anything will work

Do you cover the plants and Mates to keep the bugs off. No I never cover my tomato plants, healthy plants will not have bugs period!!!

What fungicides do you use to prevent mold and mildew on the leaves. I don't use any fungicides. My plants are very healthy and Healthy plants WILL NOT HAVE FUNGUS, MOLD,OR MILDEW !!

How much water do you apply and at what rate I have no idea how much water I actually apply, I just go by instinct and feel.

Do you add any cow or chicken manure or other types of compost and how much. Yes in the past I've tried about everything, cow, chicken, goat, etc. etc. They all have their place in a fertility program.