

## New TomTato plant grows potatoes and tomatoes

1<sup>st</sup> October, 2013



A horticultural company in the U.K. is marketing a revolutionary new plant that grows both tomatoes and potatoes. It is called the TomTato and yields up to 500 sweet, cherry-sized tomatoes and a healthy crop of white

potatoes. Britain's Daily Mail newspaper joked you can now get ketchup and fries from the same plant. The company, Thompson and Morgan, began research into the possibility of grafting together tomato and potato plants over 15 years ago. Paul Hansord, horticultural director at the company, said the great thing about the plant is that it is not genetically modified in any way. He said he knew it was possible to graft the two plants together because they belong to the same plant species.

Mr Hansord explained how the commercial concept developed. He said: "At the start, we thought it'd just be a novelty thing to do. But as the trials developed, we realised what we had produced was really high yield, had fantastic flavour and could be done commercially for the first time. The TomTato is being dubbed as "veg plot in a pot". Hansord said it can be grown inside or outside, in a large flower pot or in a bag. It is selling at around \$25 on the company's website. Britain's Telegraph newspaper said: "'Double-crop' plants like the TomTato could be extremely useful in the future, as they help populations grow more food in smaller spaces."

Sources: Thompson Morgan / Daily Mail / Telegraph

### Writing

Creating new plants like the TomTato will be of great help to the world. Discuss.

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

*horticultural / marketing / revolutionary / tomatoes / potatoes / genetically-modified / commercial / novelty / high yield / flavour / flower pot / double-crop plants / useful*

### True / False

- A pharmaceutical company produced the new TomTato plant. T / F
- The TomTato plant can produce up to 500 tomatoes. T / F
- The TomTato company has been researching this concept for 50 years. T / F
- The tomato and potato belong to different species of plant. T / F
- The project started out as a serious piece of research. T / F
- The company slowly realised they could make money from TomTatoes. T / F
- One TomTato plant will cost around \$25. T / F
- A paper suggested TomTatoes could be one solution to food crises. T / F

### Synonym Match

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. horticultural | a. nicknamed   |
| 2. marketing     | b. joining     |
| 3. crop          | c. cultivate   |
| 4. grafting      | d. gardening   |
| 5. in any way    | e. notion      |
| 6. concept       | f. harvest     |
| 7. yield         | g. exceedingly |
| 8. dubbed        | h. advertising |
| 9. extremely     | i. return      |
| 10. grow         | j. at all      |

### Discussion – Student A

- Are there any dangers in creating things like a TomTato plant?
- Would you like a TomTato plant?
- How successful do you think the TomTato will be?
- Would the TomTato sell well in your country? Why?
- What do you think of the "veg plot in a pot" slogan?
- What are the benefits of double-crop plants?
- Are double-crop plants the key to future food shortages?
- What questions would you like to ask the TomTato's creator?

## Phrase Match

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. marketing a                          | a. tomato and potato plants |
| 2. a healthy crop                       | b. like the TomTato         |
| 3. the possibility of grafting together | c. same plant species       |
| 4. genetically                          | d. concept developed        |
| 5. they belong to the                   | e. of white potatoes        |
| 6. how the commercial                   | f. yield                    |
| 7. a novelty                            | g. revolutionary new plant  |
| 8. high                                 | h. "veg plot in a pot"      |
| 9. being dubbed as                      | i. modified                 |
| 10. Double-crop plants                  | j. thing                    |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of the idea of a TomTato plant?
- Is the TomTato plant a good or bad idea?
- What other combinations of plants would you like to see?
- Do you think the TomTato is the first of many hybrid plants?
- What do you think of the name TomTato?
- What's wrong with genetically modifying plants?
- Should the company graft a spinach plant to the TomTato to make a SpinTomTato?
- How interesting would it be to be part of the TomTato research?

## Spelling

- A aucoulrnthitl company in the U.K.
- a lnootvyeiuar new plant
- leisdy up to 500
- tgfginra together tomato and potato plants
- it is not genetically fomddiie in any way
- they belong to the same plant sseiepc
- how the lermoamcci concept developed
- it'd just be a ntlveoy thing to do
- we silraeed (UK) / elierzad (USA) what we had produced
- fantastic rvfaolu (UK) / rloovf (USA)
- being uebbdd as "veg plot in a pot"
- ymxeeltre useful

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. h	3. f	4. b	5. j
6. e	7. i	8. a	9. g	10. c

## Role Play

### Role A – Strawberry/melon

You think a strawberry/melon plant is best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their plants. Also, tell the others which is the least attractive of these (and why): rice/chili pepper, sugar cane/onion or wheat/garlic.

### Role B – Rice/chili pepper

You think a rice/chili pepper plant is best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their plants. Also, tell the others which is the least attractive of these (and why): strawberry/melon, sugar cane/onion or wheat/garlic.

### Role C – Sugar cane/onion

You think a sugar cane/onion plant is best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their plants. Also, tell the others which is the least attractive of these (and why): rice/chili pepper, strawberry/melon or wheat/garlic.

### Role D – Wheat/garlic

You think a wheat/garlic plant is best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their plants. Also, tell the others which is the least attractive of these (and why): rice/chili pepper, sugar cane/onion or strawberry/melon.

## Speaking - Produce

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most useful produce at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |            |          |
|------------|----------|
| • rice     | • onions |
| • potatoes | • tea    |
| • garlic   | • wheat  |
| • coconuts | • apples |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.