

Sweet 'n' Neat Scarlet – a Tomato



Freshly picked cherry tomatoes, salad ready

Growing veggies in containers is a popular gardening trend and for good reasons. It is deck/patio scaping but mostly it is a place to plant vegetables where they receive adequate sun. Some landscapes just do not have the hours of sun needed for a good crop. A container(s) offers flexibility to garden where the sun shines and it can be moved to follow the sun as the season shortens.

Each year, we grow a couple tomato plants amongst sun-loving perennials. This year I also tried growing a tomato in a terra cotta container on a patio. My tomato variety is Sweet 'n' Neat Scarlet. I selected this variety after perusing the cherry tomato choices at a garden center. Sweet 'n' Neat Scarlet is described as a compact dwarf variety (10- 12-inches tall), heavy bearing,

determinate and 60 days to maturity. The three-inch plant I selected was already compact-looking with three little yellow flowers that were edible fruits by July. This small plant is well-branched and the fruits grow in clusters like grapes. It likes full sun and does not want to stand in water.



**Sweet 'n' Neat Scarlet, a compact dwarf tomato.
Plant stake supports top branch heavy with fruit**

Sweet 'n' Neat Scarlet is an All-American Selection winner. It was hybridized to live in containers on decks and patios, in window boxes and even in hanging baskets. It is for small-space gardening. There is also Sweet 'n' Neat Yellow.

When I purchased this variety, I was skeptical about the perfect description on the sign at the garden center but worth a try. To tell the truth, I bought it because I thought it was 'cute,' an adjective generally not used in the same sentence with tomato plant. As I write, Sweet 'n' Neat Scarlet is still a dwarf compact plant and I pick sweet-tasting cherry tomatoes every couple of days. It is on my next-year shopping list; the yellow one too.