



Kevin Milaeger

Milaeger's

Tomatomania 2015--- Coming Soon!!!

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Milaeger's Tomatomania is about a month away so it's time to mark your calendar--- Saturday, September 12th. This is our big, annual, tomato tasting event---an opportunity for you to taste and compare over 120 kinds of tomatoes---for FREE! I don't know of any other tomato tasting event of this size and scope, especially for free. In addition to tomatoes, we'll have over forty kinds of peppers for you to try, from the big sweet bell peppers, all the way up the heat scale to the world's hottest---the Carolina Reaper. In addition to the free tastings, we have many other tomato and pepper based foods and drinks for you to sample, with the purchase of tickets. (You can buy tickets and use them on whatever you'd like to try. [Click here](#) for our Tomatomania event page.)



Tomato Tasting

At Tomatomania, you are given the opportunity to vote for your favorite tomatoes. This is very important to us here at Milaeger's, and it should be to you, too.

The voting results help us plan what to grow the next year, so we take them very seriously. The voting is done by category, so a cherry tomato is not compared to a paste tomato, for example. In the spring, some folks come to Milaeger's to buy tomato plants and wonder why we no longer offer a certain variety. Invariably, they failed to vote at the previous year's tasting, so we have no way of knowing their preferences. So, yes your feedback is important. (If you can't come to Tomatomania this year you can always [email me](#) with your suggestions.)





Gold Medal

The tomato tasting is organized as carefully as possible, but there are some unavoidable gray areas in our results. For example, let's say we are gathering the fruit of a certain variety (we generally grow three to five plants of every type.) When we pick the fruit, there could be some that are a little under ripe, or a little overripe, so when a guest samples from that

group, the flavor could vary from one sample to the next. We try to gather all fruit at the optimum stage, but we have many employees involved in this project, so it isn't fool proof. Also, sometimes we don't have enough of a certain type to do a full test---we may run out of samples during the tasting, so some varieties have no chance of getting any votes during the latter part of the event. But the main purpose of this event is fun. To do a perfect, completely scientific tasting is unrealistic, at least for us. We just want to get an indication of what our customers want, and have fun doing it. Everyone seems to have a good time.

In addition to the tomato and pepper tasting, we offer a number of tomato and pepper based concoctions that you can sample, with the purchase of tickets. All are made with our own tomatoes and peppers, and other ingredients such as leek, basil, cilantro, and other herbs. These popular offerings include Caprese bruschetta, a broad selection of salsas and guacamole treats, grilled brats and hot dogs (garnished with a chopped tomato pico de gallo), pizza from our wood fire roasted grill, gourmet BLT's with extra thick bacon and heirloom tomatoes, and other wonderful selections. In the beverage area, we'll be serving a number of types that are based on some of the products we sell in our store. Bloody Marys with Zing Zang mix, margaritas with Camarena tequila, draft beer from Kenosha's Rustic Road Craft Brewery



Ananas Noire (left) & Gold Medal

(both cups and growlers to go,) a great assortment of wine by the glass, and of course soda and water. This year we have something new in the dessert category. Dan Reisdorf will be making a yummy selection of mini-malts. (These are not made with our tomatoes and peppers!) Dan will be using his vintage "soda jerk" equipment, some of which was manufactured in Racine many years ago. Dan's malts have been very popular at other Mileager's events in years past.



Green Berkeley Tie-Dye

Don't forget that you can take some of our tomatoes home with you. We'll have a broad assortment available for you to choose from. It's a pretty chaotic day, so the tomatoes won't be labelled, but you can choose by color, shape, and size. The peppers (especially the hot ones) will

be labelled. All can be purchased with tickets. Along with the tomatoes and peppers, we'll also have our fall crop of greens. We call it "Greens to Grow." Most of these were started in July. They are a special crop of young plants that you can plant out in early September, and harvest a short time later. They will all perform well in the cooler autumn weather. There will be about twelve kinds of starter plants including lettuce, kale, spinach, Swiss chard, broccoli and cauliflower. All of these will be available earlier in September, before Tomatomania, but we should still have plenty at the tasting event.

If you have garden questions, the local Master Gardener volunteers (through the University of Wisconsin Horticultural Program) will be on hand to discuss any type of garden issue. On a musical note, the ever popular local band Wylde Thyme will be returning this year. They play mostly Irish selections, plus a lively mix of Cajun, Old Time songs, and tunes from around the world.



Czechoslovakian Black Pepper

Tomatomania is one of Milaeger's biggest, most popular events. Everyone has a great time, and we'll make sure you do, too. We look forward to seeing you there.