



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE  
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**

# Tomatillo

**In season:**



**Summer**

## Lesson Plan

### Objectives

Participants will:

- identify tomatillos as green, tomato-shaped vegetable with a papery husk.
- increase knowledge in growing, selecting, storing, nutrition and use of leafy tomatillos.
- prepare and taste a food that includes tomatillos.
- demonstrate use of equipment needed to prepare tomatillo recipe.

### Items Needed for the Lesson

- Visuals and real samples of tomatillos to show husk
- Photos of foods made with tomatillos
- Parts of a Plant visual
- Whisk and fork

### Handouts or Take Home Items

- Pick It! Try It! Like It! Preserve It! fact sheet

### Recipe Choices

- Tomatillo Vinaigrette
- Roasted Tomatillo Salsa

### Cooking and Food Safety Skill Sheets

- Handwashing
- Knife Safety and Cutting Boards
- Measuring Liquid and Dry Ingredients
- Oven Use and Safety
- Blender Use and Safety

### Other Cooking and Food Safety Skills

- Cooking terms - chop, vinaigrette and whisk
- How to whisk
- Cutting jalapeño peppers and safety precautions
- Checking roasted vegetables for tenderness

### Supplies for Tomatillo Lesson

- Tomatillo Vinaigrette
  - » Cutting board
  - » Knife
  - » Measuring spoons
  - » Whisk or fork
  - » Bowl
- Roasted Tomatillo Salsa
  - » Cutting boards
  - » Knives
  - » Measuring cups
  - » Measuring spoons
  - » Spoon
  - » Baking sheet
  - » Blender
  - » Oven mitt

What You Say:	What You Do:
<p>Every class we're going to learn about a different fruit or vegetable. I'm going to give you some clues and I want you to try to think of what it is. After each clue, raise your hand if you think you know what it is.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a member of the nightshade family.</li> <li>• It is native to Mexico and Central America and is often used in making Mexican foods.</li> <li>• It looks like a small green tomato.</li> <li>• Its name means "little tomato".</li> </ul> <p>(Answer: Tomatillo.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name off each clue, allow a few guesses before moving on to the next clue.</li> <li>• After someone guesses the answer, or you tell them, show them visuals of tomatillo.</li> </ul>
<p>How many of you have seen a tomatillo before?</p> <p>How many of you have eaten a tomatillo before?</p> <p>Tomatillos are green, tomato-shaped vegetables. They are about 1-2 inches in diameter. They are covered by a papery husk.</p> <p>They are also known as "husk tomato" or "Mexican green tomato".</p> <p>Tomatillos may be green or purple. The green tomatillos have a tart flavor and they may turn yellow as they ripen. Purple tomatillos have a slightly more sweet flavor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on someone who would like to answer.</li> <li>• Show the visuals of tomatillos again.</li> <li>• Show actual tomatillos if possible.</li> </ul>
<p>Different vegetables come from different parts of the plant. Vegetables are either a root, stem, leaf, fruit, flower or seed.</p> <p>What part of the plant do you think tomatillos are?</p> <p>(Answer: Fruit.)</p> <p>The fruit of a plant contains the seeds, which in turn are used to reproduce new plants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show the Parts of a Plant visual.</li> <li>• Call on someone who would like to answer.</li> </ul>
<p>Have any of you grown tomatillos before?</p> <p>After purchasing the tomatillo seeds, spread them on moist soil in a shallow tray or pan. Place the tray in a sunny spot and keep the soil moist at all times. When the plants grow and become about 6 inches tall, transplant them in the garden, again in a sunny spot. Space the plants about 3 feet apart.</p> <p>Plant more than one plant since at least 2 are needed for proper pollination.</p> <p>The tomatillo plants will grow 3-4 feet tall. In order to keep the tomatillos off from the ground, the plants will need to be supported by stakes or cages.</p> <p>Tomatillos are ready to be picked when the tomatillos fill and split the papery husk that grows around them. Leave the husk on the tomatillo until ready to use.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey the participants by show of hands.</li> <li>• Discuss growing tomatillos.</li> </ul>



= for adults or older youth

What You Say:	What You Do:
<p>When selecting tomatillos at the store, chose firm, green, shiny tomatillos that have tightly fitting husks. Look to make sure they have no mold.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show a tomatillo with the husk attached, pointing out the color and firmness.</li> </ul>
<p>How should tomatillos be stored?</p> <p>Tomatillos can be stored in the crisper section of the refrigerator in a loose or open container for 2-3 weeks.</p> <p>Wash tomatillos when you are ready to use them.</p> <p>Tomatillos can also be frozen fresh or preserved by canning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage discussion on storing tomatillos.</li> </ul>
<p>What are some different ways that we can eat tomatillos?</p> <p>You can prepare tomatillos any way that you like to prepare tomatoes. They can be baked, broiled, sliced or braised.</p> <p>Tomatillos are so similar to tomatoes that they can be used in all of the same ways.</p> <p>Tomatillos can be eaten whole as a sweet, tangy snack, added to omelets, layer with meat and vegetables on kabobs and cooked on the grill, etc.</p> <p>Tomatillos can be used as a substitute for tomatoes in salsa and often used in enchiladas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have participants name their favorite way to eat tomatillos.</li> <li>• If possible, show photos of food made with tomatillos.</li> </ul>
<p>Why would we want to eat tomatillos?</p> <p>Tomatillos contain vitamin C which helps cuts and bruises to heal, potassium which helps keep our heart healthy and fiber that helps with healthy digestion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage discussion of the nutrients in tomatillos.</li> <li>• Refer to Tomatillos Nutrition Information sheet.</li> </ul>
<p>Are you ready to try a recipe using tomatillos?</p> <p>What is the first thing that we need to do before preparing food?</p> <p>(Answer: Wash hands.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a good time to go over the Handwashing skill sheet.</li> </ul>

# Use this page if you are going to prepare Tomatillo Vinaigrette

## Equipment Needed

- Cutting board
- Knife
- Measuring spoons
- Whisk or fork
- Bowl

What You Say:	What You Do:
<p>Today we are going to be making Tomatillo Vinaigrette.</p> <p>Does anyone know what vinaigrette means? (Answer: A salad dressing usually made from oil, vinegar and seasonings.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on someone who would like to answer.</li> </ul>
<p>Let's read through the recipe together before we begin.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pass out the recipes and read through the ingredients and directions.</li> </ul>
<p>As you can see, this vinaigrette recipe has only 4 ingredients. It uses oil, vinegar and some Dijon mustard for seasoning, just like we stated earlier. It also includes chopped tomatillo.</p> <p>What does the term "chop" mean? (Answer: To cut into small pieces.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define the term "chop".</li> </ul>
<p>Next we will be measuring the vinegar, olive oil and Dijon mustard.</p> <p>All the ingredients will be combined in a bowl and whisked to combine.</p> <p>What does the cooking term "whisk" mean? (Answer: To beat ingredients with a fork or whisk to mix or blend.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Knife Safety and Cutting Board skill sheet.</li> </ul>
<p>This vinaigrette can be used as a dressing for salad greens or served over vegetables.</p>	
<p>How should we store any leftovers of the vinaigrette? (Answer: In a covered container in the refrigerator.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on someone who would like to answer.</li> </ul>

# Use this page if you are going to prepare Roasted Tomatillo Salsa

## Equipment Needed

- Cutting boards and knives
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Spoon
- Baking sheet
- Blender
- Oven mitt

What You Say:	What You Do:
Today we are going to be making Roasted Tomatillo Salsa. Let's read through the recipe together before we begin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pass out the recipes and read through the ingredients and directions.</li> </ul>
<p>The recipe calls for 18 medium tomatillos or about 2 cups. We will remove the husks and wash them.</p> <p>Remember from the lesson, the husks should be left on the tomatillos until they are ready to be used.</p> <p>How should we wash the tomatillos? (Answer: Under cool running water.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show the actual tomatillos with the husks on them.</li> <li>• Call on someone who would like to answer.</li> <li>• Review Washing Fruits and Vegetables skill sheet.</li> </ul>
<p>We will also be chopping an onion and cilantro.</p> <p>What does the cooking term "chop" mean? (Answer: To cut solids into pieces with a sharp knife or other chopping device.)</p> <p>We will be using knives and cutting boards to do the chopping. What are some things we want to remember when using knives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define the cooking term "chop".</li> <li>• Review Knife Safety and Cutting Boards skill sheet.</li> </ul>
<p>Jalapeño peppers can be substituted for the serrano chilies.</p> <p>Cut stems off peppers. You want to avoid avoid touching the seeds and flesh of the jalapeño pepper, as it may sting or burn your skin.</p> <p>How might we prevent this from happening? (Possible answers: Wear gloves, hold the pepper by the stem when cutting.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss ways to prevent peppers from stinging our skin.</li> </ul>
<p>After the onion is chopped, we will put the tomatillos, onion, and pepper on a non-stick baking sheet.</p> <p>We will drizzle with olive oil and season with salt. Then, toss with a spoon to coat them and roast for 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender.</p> <p>How can we check to see if the vegetables are tender? (Possible answers: Poke with a fork, poke with a toothpick, cut one piece with a knife, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on participants and allow discussion as this step is demonstrated.</li> <li>• Review Oven and Safety Use sheet.</li> <li>• Review how to check roasted vegetables for tenderness.</li> </ul>
<p>Remove vegetables and allow to cool.</p> <p>Once cooled, put all ingredients into blender and blend until smooth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Blender Use and Safety sheet</li> <li>• Demonstrate measuring the lime juice over a small bowl to prevent spills into the salsa.</li> <li>• Demonstrate leveling off the dry ingredients of salt and sugar.</li> <li>• Review Measuring Liquid and Dry Ingredients skill sheet.</li> </ul>
<p>The salsa can be served right away or refrigerated before use.</p> <p>What are some ways that this salsa may be served? (Possible answers: With baked chips, carrots or celery or as a dressing on salad greens.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share ideas on how to use the salsa.</li> </ul>
<p>How should the leftovers be stored? (Answer: In a covered, air tight container in the refrigerator.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on someone who would like to answer.</li> </ul>

## Visuals



**Tomatillo growing on the plant**



*Photo by Craig Cloutier, [flic.kr/p/9cn8dX](https://www.flickr.com/photos/9cn8dX/)*

**Green tomatillo**



*Photo by Jason Wilson, [flic.kr/p/oxbGxf](https://www.flickr.com/photos/oxbGxf/)*

**Purple tomatillos**

## Tomatillo Nutrition Information

Types	Serving Size/ Weight in grams	Calories	Fiber (g)	Vitamin A (International Units)	Vitamin C (mg)	Potassium (mg)	Folate (mcg)
<b>Tomatillo, 1 med.</b>	34	10	1	1%	4.0	91	2.4
<b>Daily Recommendations RDA=Recommended daily allowance AI=Adequate intake</b>	1-2 cup servings of fruit and 1-4 cup servings of vegetables per day depending on age.	Varies according to age and activity level	AI (depending on age) ranges from 14-33.6 g	Daily Value based on a 2,000 calorie per day diet	RDA (depending on age) ranges from 25-90 mg	AI (depending on age) ranges from 3,000-4,700 mg)	RDA (depending on age) ranges from 150-400 mcg)

# Tomatillo Sources

## Recipe

- [eatfresh.org/recipe/side-dish/roasted-tomatillo-salsa/](https://eatfresh.org/recipe/side-dish/roasted-tomatillo-salsa/)

## Information

- [eatfresh.org/discover-foods/tomatillos](https://eatfresh.org/discover-foods/tomatillos)
- [fruitsandveggies.org/](https://fruitsandveggies.org/)
- [ucanr.edu/sites/SD-NFCS/Nutrition\\_Education\\_EFNEP](https://ucanr.edu/sites/SD-NFCS/Nutrition_Education_EFNEP)

## Clues

- [specialtyproduce.com/produce/tomatillos](https://specialtyproduce.com/produce/tomatillos)

## Cooking Terms

- [reallifegoodfood.umn.edu/kitchen-skills-and-tips/cooking-terms-glossary](https://reallifegoodfood.umn.edu/kitchen-skills-and-tips/cooking-terms-glossary)

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In season:



Summer

# Tomatillo

## Pick it!

Should be dry and hard with tightly fitting husks and no mold.

Store in a refrigerator, in a loose or open container, for up to 2-3 weeks.

## Try it!

Used much like tomatoes – baked, broiled, sliced or braised.

Can be eaten raw.

Can have a tangy citrus flavor when eaten raw.

Sweeter when cooked.

Main ingredient in a Mexican dish called salsa verde.



## Types of Tomatillo

**Toma Verde:** Sweet yet tart; great in southwestern dishes, bright green, turns yellow as it ripens.

**Purple:** Sweet yet tart flavor, bright purple color.



## Did you know...

They contain vitamin C, which helps cuts and bruises to heal; potassium, which helps keep our heart healthy and fiber that helps with healthy digestion.

**Like it!**

## Tomatillo Vinaigrette

### Ingredients

- 1 tomatillo, chopped
- 2 Tablespoons vinegar (white wine or balsamic)
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard

### Directions

1. Combine all ingredients and whisk to combine.
2. Serve over salad greens and vegetables.
3. Store leftover dressing in refrigerator.

Yields 4 servings

Nutrition Facts per Serving:  
Calories 35; Fat 3.5g; Sodium 15mg; Carbohydrates 1g;  
Fiber 0g; Sugars 0g; Protein 0g

Sources: [fruitsandveggies.org/](https://fruitsandveggies.org/)

## Roasted Tomatillo Salsa

### Ingredients

- 18 tomatillos, husks removed
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- ½ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1 Tablespoon lime juice
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- 2 serrano chile peppers, stems removed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Put tomatillos, onion and peppers on a non-stick baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt. Toss to coat. Roast for 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
3. Remove vegetables from heat and let cool.
4. Put all ingredients in a blender container, cover with a tight fitting lid, and blend until smooth. Add 1-2 tablespoons of water to achieve the desired consistency.
5. Serve or cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

Yields 4 servings

Nutrition Facts per Serving:  
Calories 60; Fat 2g; Sodium 150mg; Carbs 13g; Fiber 4g;  
Protein 2g

Sources: [eatfresh.org/recipe/side-dish/roasted-tomatillo-salsa/](https://eatfresh.org/recipe/side-dish/roasted-tomatillo-salsa/)

**Find more recipes  
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