

Here are some of my favorite strategies from *Raw Foods on a Budget*! Enjoy!

-Brandi

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STRATEGY 1 JOIN A CSA PROGRAM

From Chapter "Change Where You Buy Food"

CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture and it's a way for individuals like you and me to buy produce straight from our local farms. Typically in a CSA program, an individual will sign up for a 'share', entitling them to a box of fresh fruits and vegetables every 1-2 weeks. It's that easy, and the benefits are huge! First, the produce is fresher and cheaper than what is available at most grocery stores, and it is often cheaper than produce sold at farmers markets. Second, CSAs help you support your local farms and community. CSAs are a type of cooperative business structure that allow individuals to purchase a share of the harvest from a farm for a specific season (e.g., summer, winter). This model benefits the farm because it provides them with cash up front to purchase seeds, compost, irrigation supplies, labor, and to plant and grow the produce. In other words, you are investing in your local farm and in return they help you to invest in your health by providing you with fresh fruits and vegetables.

So, how much does it cost to join a CSA program? When signing up for a CSA program, you will pre-purchase your share for a specific season or even the whole year, though some farms will allow you to subscribe for a shorter time period of time if they have the space. The price of a share can range from \$200 to \$700, depending on the farm, geographical region, season, and whether the produce is certified organic. However, the best way to think about the cost of a farm share is to think about how much it will cost you per box. For example, one summer, I paid \$650 for a share lasting 6 months, but it only cost me \$24 per week. And because I shared the produce with a roommate, it really only cost me \$12 per week!

As you can see from the picture (on right), CSA programs provide you with a bounty of in-season produce. Often this produce is grown organically and/or using sustainable methods. Shares mostly include vegetables and fruit but they can also come with herbs, flowers, and other farm products. For example, in the past, I have received organic heirloom tomatoes, kale, collards, bok choy, parsley, lettuce, peppers, onions, cucumbers, garlic, yams, basil, oregano, raspberries, watermelon, cantaloupe, blueberries, strawberries, and the list goes on. However, keep in mind that the variety and quality of produce available during any given season will depend on the weather and soil conditions. So, if the summer is unexpectedly very rainy, this will impact the quantity and flavor of produce you will receive. This is one of the reasons to get to know your farmer because they will be able to tell you what is going on at the farm. Lastly, farms often sell additional produce and products like olive oil and honey at the CSA distribution location. Sometimes, they even sell produce grown at other farms. For example, my CSA program sells peaches from another local farmer during the summer, and they even sell or-

ganic oranges, tangerines, tangelos, and grapefruit from an organic farmer located in Florida during the winter.

The structure of CSA programs differs from farm to farm. Some farms only offer shares during the summer, while others offer shares during the summer and winter, or all year-round. I have seen farms that offer a separate vegetable share and fruit share. Though less common, fruit shares often contain fresh local fruits like cherries, peaches, nectarines, blueberries, strawberries, apples, and whatever else is grown on the farm. In addition, the shares can come in different sizes such as small, medium, and large. And, some farms distribute produce in a pre-arranged box while others permit you to choose the foods you want in limited or unlimited quantities.

There are several things you will need to consider when looking for a CSA program. First, you will need to think about when during the week you can pick up your share. If you can only pick up your share on specific days of the week or on the weekends, this will limit which farms you can sign up with. Typically, farms have 1-2 pick-up dates/times during the week. In addition, many farms distribute shares off-site at community centers or health food stores while others only distribute shares at the farm, so be sure to factor in location when selecting a CSA. Next, you will need to consider what types of produce the farm will provide in the share. Fortunately, many farms have websites so you can easily find out what they grow. If the farm doesn't have a website, you will have to call the farm to obtain a list of produce they expect to provide in the share. Once you narrow down the farms to the ones that fit your criteria, decide whether it's important to have a share with a certified organic farm. Many farms are not certified organic but practice sustainable methods. If you are considering non-organic farms, ask the farm what type of pest control methods they use. Some farms follow organic methods but are not certified organic due to the high costs of becoming certified. The last factor is price. You will obviously want the farm that will give you the best price. To do a price comparison between farms, figure out how much each share or box of produce will cost you per week by dividing the total price of the CSA program by the number of weeks you will receive your share. For example, I paid \$650 to join a CSA program that lasted 27 weeks; when you divide 27 weeks into \$650, you get 24, which meant that I only paid \$24 per week.

Lastly, there are ways to reduce the cost of joining a CSA program. In some states like New York, farms will accept food stamps as payment. Some farms even offer discounted shares or scholarships to low-income families and/or work-share opportunities for CSA members to work on the farm or at distribution locations in exchange for a reduction in share costs. For example, my farm offered a \$24 credit for every work shift (about 2.5 hours every 3 weeks) a customer completed on share distribution days and all the customer had to do was distribute boxes from the truck. That's \$216 in savings for the whole season!

A great website to find your nearest CSA is www.localharvest.org/csa/. Or do a Google search for CSA programs offered in your city.

STRATEGY 2 PROTECT UNREFRIGERATED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES FROM FRUIT FLIES

From Chapter "Change How You Store Food"

If you leave your fruits and sweet vegetables (e.g. sweet corn, tomatoes, onions) on the counter, be sure to cover them with a cloth to protect them from the common fruit fly. Fruit flies deposit mold spores under

the skin of fruits and vegetables to increase the speed at which they spoil. In other words, they make your food go bad faster. An easy way to prevent fruit flies from having contact with your fruits and vegetables is to put them into a bowl and cover them with a cloth. I like to take a shoestring and tighten the cloth around the bowl (shown on right). Or, you can place your fruits and vegetables in a cloth bag. The thing you don't want to do is to put them in an airtight container, which will just make your food spoil regardless.



STRATEGY 3 SUBSTITUTE TRADITIONAL SWEETENERS WITH LOW-COST SWEETENERS

From Chapter "Change How You Prepare Food"

This is probably one of my favorite strategies in the whole book. When I thought of it, it was like I had discovered the missing key to eating raw foods. This strategy even helped me tame one area of my budget! The strategy is to partially (or fully) substitute your traditional raw food sweeteners like agave, honey, and dates with more low-cost sweeteners like raisins, dried fruits, and green stevia powder.

Green stevia powder. Also known as sweet leaf, stevia is a shrub native to Paraguay that has been used for centuries as a sweetener in herbal and medicinal teas. Though uncommon in the United States, stevia is used in Asia, South America, and some European countries. It even accounts for 40% of all the sweeteners sold in Japan (University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension). In addition, stevia is unlike many sweeteners in that it doesn't promote dental cavities or raise blood glucose levels. Yay!

Personally, I love using stevia in my own raw vegan recipes because it has a long-lasting sweetness which is useful in frozen recipes like ice cream and sorbet. Freezing temperatures tend to reduce the sweet taste of many sweeteners like agave and honey, so you end up using a lot. This is why you will find that almost all of the ice cream and sorbet recipes in this book have a little stevia in them.

Stevia also does a good job of extending the agave you already have. For example, last winter I drank a lot of tea. The problem was that I would put 3 teaspoons of agave in each 12 ounce cup of tea. This quickly became very expensive since I would drink 3-4 cups of tea per day. So, I came up with the idea that maybe I could add stevia to my tea in addition to agave to reduce my overall agave usage. I didn't know what to expect because I

was not a big stevia lover. Man, was I surprised! The green stevia powder that I purchased helped me reduce my agave usage by 66%! Now, I only use 1 tsp of agave in my cup of tea and it tastes the same! And I only have to buy agave once a month, whereas I used to buy it every 1-2 weeks. Try your own "stevia" experiment at home! Make a cup of lemonade and measure the amount of honey or agave you add it to. Then make another cup of lemonade and add several pinches of stevia before adding honey or agave. Now compare how much traditional sweetener you used in both lemonades.

You may be resistant to the idea of using stevia in your recipes because you have tasted it before and didn't like it. However, keep a few things in mind. I am recommending that you use green stevia powder and not the white stevia that is seen most often in the store. Stevia that is green is just ground up stevia leaves, whereas stevia that is white has been processed and often contains other ingredients. In my experience, white stevia tastes more bitter than green stevia. Though they both can taste bitter when used in large amounts. In most of my recipes, I use no more than 1/8 teaspoon because stevia is so sweet. In addition, I recommend that you use partial substitution when it comes to stevia. Unless you really like stevia, you will find that stevia has a different kind of sweetness than traditional sweetners. This is because stevia does not contain any sugars like fructose or glucose and lacks the ability to add texture to a recipe in the way that dates, agave, and honey do. For these reasons, stevia does not work well alone. However, it works wonders when used in combination with traditional sweetners. Sometimes, I even pour stevia into my agave bottles so that it's already mixed in and ready to use when I need it.

Raisins. This is my second favorite sweetener. Honestly, I like it more than agave and dates because raisins are both very sweet, fruity, and very moist. They complement fruit-containing desserts better than agave and dates, and give the desserts a well rounded flavor.

I got the idea to use raisins in my desserts from one of my favorite restaurants in New York City. I couldn't figure out why their fruit desserts tasted more fresh and flavorful than the raw vegan desserts served at other restaurants. Then, a waiter said that raisins were used to sweeten the desserts, and I couldn't believe that raisins made the difference. It took me a while to start experimenting, but when I did, I was shocked. The recipes I created were amazing!

When substituting raisins for other sweeteners, it is useful to consider the level of sweetness and type of texture that raisins will add to the recipe. Raisins are sweetener than dates and most other dried fruit, so you may need less of it when using it as a substitute. Raisins also add a fruity flavor to desserts, so if that is not what you are going for, then raisins may not be a great substitute. In addition, raisins help to increase the creamy texture and moistness of your desserts. I love using raisins in crusts because it makes them very succulent. You will find that many of the dessert recipes in this book include raisins such as the recipes for Creamy Plum Sorbet, Sweet Glory Nectarine Pie, etc.

Dried fruits. This is where substitution becomes a lot of fun! Try using a variety of dried fruits to sweeten your green smoothies and desserts. In the past, I have used dried currants and plums (or prunes) to sweeten my green smoothies, and dried figs to sweeten pie crusts and cookies. And the great thing is that most dried fruits are cheaper than dates and agave. However, be careful when buying dried fruits. Make sure that no sweeteners or other ingredients have been added to the dried fruit.

Substituting traditional sweeteners is an art form that becomes easier the more you do it. To help you begin your "substitution" journey, I have created a reference table for you to use as a guide.

Sweetener Substitution Guide

You may have noticed that this chart does not mention the amount of sweeteners recommended in these substitutions. This is because it really varies by recipe. However, when substituting a sweetener I have found that relying on my intuition does the trick. For example, when I am using stevia, I rarely use more than ½ teaspoon. In fact, most of the time I only use 1/8 teaspoon because stevia is so sweet. So here is how my sequence goes: I add a small amount of stevia (about 1/8 tsp or a pinch or two), a tiny bit of agave, and then I taste the recipe. If I can barely taste the stevia and there is no weird aftertaste, which is caused by adding too much stevia, I add a little bit more stevia and taste the recipe again. Finally, I sweeten the recipe with agave until it reaches the sweetness I like. The same technique applies when you are using, dates, honey, raisins or other dried fruit as substitutions. You just add a little to the recipe and then taste it, and then you add a little bit more.

When doing substitutions, allow yourself to create new flavors. Using a substitute is an opportunity to experience a new variation of an existing recipe. Most substitutions will not perfectly reproduce the taste of the traditional sweetener; however, more often than not, you will create something new and delicious!

Dates Combinations of dates and raisins raisins and stevia dates and stevia	Dates are tricky to substitute because they not only add sweetness; they add texture to the recipe. In fact, they add more texture than sweetness to a recipe. So any type of substitution will need to add both of these dimensions to the
	recipe.
Agave Combinations of agave and stevia raisins and stevia Combinations of agave and stevia honey and stevia	that a combination of stevia and agave is a nice substitute and you can't even tell the difference. However, the combination you do use will really depend on your recipe. If it looks like the recipe needs agave to add sweetness and a liquid content to the recipe, you may need to increase the other liquid portions of the recipe.

STRATEGY 4 EAT WHEN YOU ARE HUNGRY

From Chapter "Change How You Eat Food"

Yes, I know, this is easier said than done. But it will save you money, keep your digestion system happy, enhance the health benefits of a raw foods diet, promote weight loss, reduce aging, strengthen your mind-body-nature connection, and keep you energized all day so you can do the activities you want to do! Eating when you're hungry requires that you know when you experience biological hunger and fullness. The good news is that our bodies come equipped with biological signals that tells when we are hungry and full; the bad news is that we have been ignoring these signals for so long that we don't know what they feel like. In fact, most of us were taught by our parents and other adults to ignore these signals. As children, we were taught to clean our plates and eat at specific times such as lunch or dinner time (i.e. eating on demand). In addition, our role models for eating were not conscious eaters themselves and we adopted their poor eating habits. Thus, it's not surprising that many of us confuse stress, boredom, or other emotions with hunger, experience a loss of control while eating, and continue to clean our plates. In fact, we rely on cues like a cleaned plate or filled-to-capacity stomach to know when we are full; when in fact, we were biologically full before than. So how do we break these habits and sensitize ourselves to our biological cues for hunger and fullness? The key is to become more conscious or mindful before and while we eat.

To determine when you should eat, ask yourself the following questions BEFORE YOUR EAT:

- Am I really hungry or am I feeling bored, stressed, depressed, etc.?
- Are there other activities that I can do (e.g. go for a walk) instead of fulfilling this desire to eat? Real hunger cannot be distracted but fake "feelings" of hunger can.
- Am I actually thirsty? Often we eat when we are actually thirsty! Drink a glass of water first and if your hunger persists, then eat.

To determine when to stop eating, ask yourself the following questions WHILE YOU EAT. These questions will help you focus on your food and the eating process, and overall create an eating experience that will make it easier to determine when you are biologically full.

- Am I eating to fast?
- Am I chewing my food?
- Am I distracted or doing other activities while I eat?
- Am I listening for my internal sensations for fullness? You may not feel anything at first. Stay persistent and repeatedly ask yourself, "Am I full?". Eventually, the sensation will become stronger and you will get an answer.
- Am I eating because I am still hungry or because the food tastes good?
- If I stopped eating right now, would I be comfortably full?

These are a lot of questions, so bring them to the table with you! Write them down on a piece of paper, and put the paper in your wallet and pull it out whenever you want to eat. You may even want to put this list on your refrigerator. Every time you go to the refrigerator for food, ask yourself these questions. The more you do it, the easier it will get, and the more connected you will feel to your biological signals for hunger and fullness.

Also, consider keeping a food diary. Traditionally, a food diary is small book in which you write down when and what you are throughout the day. For the purposes of learning when to eat (and to stop eating), I recommend that you expand upon the traditional food diary and write down your answers the previous questions

before and after you eat. By doing this, you will notice trends in how you eat. For example, you may crave more junk foods when you are stressed or depressed. Or, there may be few instances during the day when you are actually hungry. Refer to Activity 1 on page TBD for more guidance in creating your food diary.

GET OFF THE OVEREATING ROLLER COASTER

Overeating is a way of numbing oneself to life.

- Gabriel Cousens in Conscious Eating

Overeating is so common that it's the norm. And when we try to break this habit, we find that it's a lot like riding a roller coaster. Sometimes we successfully avoid it and other times we unleash the beast and binge. Unfortunately, these overeating habits have a numbing effect on our lives by keep us from experiencing the richness of life, the sensuality and magic of raw foods, and being active and experiencing weight loss. Plus, to top it off, overeating can stir up feelings of guilt and shame as we punish ourselves *for* overeating.

In this section, you will be given the tools to break this vicious cycle. You will learn portion control. There I said it. I thought if I said it quickly, it would cushion the blow. No one likes to be limited, which for most people is the image they conjure up when they hear those two words. But really, all portion control really means is to eat an amount of food that support your life rather than take away from it. Call it "happy portions" or "joyful portions" if it helps!

SERVE YOURSELF SMALLER PORTIONS

From Chapter "Change How You Eat Food"

As food portions have increased in size over the last 2 decades, we have responded by eating more. It's now the norm for people to place great mounds of food on their plates and eat foot-long sandwiches. For example, below are pictures of food portions that were served 20 years and those that are served today. Can you guess how many calories are in today's portions?

Guess how many calories are in today's portions?



20 years ago 5 cups



TODAY 11 cups



20 years ago
1 cup of spaghetti
with 3 small meat balls
500 calories



TODAY
2 cups of spaghetti
with 3 large meat balls

270 calories

•

Today's huge portion sizes are wreaking havoc on our waistlines and wallets! Research shows that the more food we put on our plates, the more we will eat! Therefore, when I place the equivalent of 1½ raw food meals on my plate, I will consume all of it. This happens because we are more sensitive to how much food is on our plates than the nutrient density of our food. Plus, the extra food that we are eating, is food that we could have saved for later! Just imagine if you saved one-quarter of your food everyday, three times a day. That would amount to at least one free meal a day without making any other changes! Now, I know what you may be thinking: "What if I am still hungry?". Well, research tells us that when you serve people 25% less food, they don't report any differences in hunger or fullness. This is great news! Try this experiment for a day and see what happens! Serve yourself and then remove 1/4 of the food from your plate. Do this all day and see how you feel! Use the worksheet on page TBD for this experiment.

Consider trying a more subtle experiment of eating on smaller plates. As portion sizes have increased, so have plate and bowl sizes to accommodate them. It's very easy to notice that you are giving yourself less food when you use a large plate, but you barely notice the difference when you use a smaller plate (see below). I tried this a few years ago when I replaced all my 12" plates with 8" plates. And guess what? I overate less!



11-inch plate

8-inch plate

STRATEGY 5 PLAN IT OUT!!!!!!!!

From Chapter "Grow Your Own"

It can be so tempting to buy a few vegetable or fruit plants at the grocery store, return home, and plant them into the ground. However, often when we do this, our plants don't grow very well or they simply die. This happens because we haven't planned out how to take care of these plants. We don't even know if we are in a position to take care of the plants we purchased. Do we have the right soil, the an adequate amount of nutrients in the soil, the right amount of sun exposure, and enough time to take care of the plants, etc. The benefit of creating a garden plan is that it forces you to outline exactly what you want to grow, when you will grow it, what materials you need, whether amendments to the soil are needed, and how much sun and water your plants will need. Plus, when you have a plan, it is easier to find a gardening book that will fit your needs. There are so many books out there, and having a well-thought out garden plan will help you sort through all the books to find the perfect book for you.

Step 1. Decide what you want to grow. The first task is simple and fun: using the worksheet on pages 68-70, list all of the plants that you would like to grow right now. Remember to keep it small. After you finish making the list, go back through it and indicate the time of year its needs to be planted, the amount of sun exposure needed (i.e. how many hours), type of soil required (e.g. pH), and the amount of water required for each plant. Also consider the type of protection your plants will need. Because there are a lot of pests that can potentially harm your plants, just consider the major pests for now. Keep in mind that some of these pests will be animals like rabbits and groundhogs. An easy, though time-consuming, solution can be to put up a fence, and in the case of groundhogs, to make sure that the fence goes 6-inches deep into the soil. Hanging aluminium pans is a great deterrent for ground hogs and birds as well. You can find more of this kind information on the Internet, or by looking through your seed packets or gardening books. To help you get started, I have provided this information for several "easy-to-grow" fruits and vegetables in the table below.

Simple Plants to Grow

Name	When to Plant	Sun & Temperature	Soil	Water	Major Pests
Tomatoes	Early Spring	Sun to Full Sun >45 degrees F	Any type pH: 5.5 to 7	Normal to moist	Aphids, Cutworms, Hornworms, Flea Beetles, Nematodes
Romaine Lettuce	Spring, Summer, Fall	Full Sun in spring/fall; Partial Shade in Summer	Rich, well-drained, loose loam pH: 6.2-6.8	Keep moist, frequent short watering	Slugs, Aphids, Leaf Hoppers
Strawberries	Early Spring	Full Sun	Light, dry, well-drained pH: 5.8 to 6.5	Frequent, thorough watering; 1-2 inches of water per week	Slugs, spider mites, birds, deer

Step 2. Decide where you CAN grow your garden. Once you have your list, you will be in the perfect position to choose the location of your garden. The biggest factor in choosing your garden's location is the amount of sunlight it receives. Although the soil condition and rate of rainfall are important, you can easily fix these by amending the soil with compost or watering your garden more. It is practically impossible to add more sunlight. If you have mostly sun loving plants on your list like tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and fruits, then you will need an area that receives at least 6 hours of sun exposure a day. However, if leafy greens like romaine, kale, and/or collards, dominate your list, then an area with less sun exposure would be best. To determine the amount of sun exposure that an area receives, simply count the number of hours of direct sunlight it receives on a sunny day. The same goes if you plan on growing a container garden (shown on next page). Be sure that the location you plan to place your containers meets your plants' sun requirements. If you would like to grow your garden indoors, such as an herb garden, then you will need a windowsill that receives a lot of sunlight and you may even need add additional lighting such as an indoor grow light.

So far, I have talked about gardening as if you had a space for one. But what happens when you don't have space for a backyard garden or even a container garden. Two great options are to participate in a community

garden or to rent a small plot of land. Community gardens provide opportunities for local residents to grow their own fruits, vegetables, and flowers. Though the guidelines vary, in general, a community garden is a public space owned by local governments and not-for-profit associations that are maintained by the gardeners themselves. Some community gardens allow you to have individual plots for personal use, while others are collectively grown and shared. To find a community garden near you, visit the American Community Gardening Association at www.communitygarden.org. The second option for gaining access to land to grow a garden is to rent a small plot of land from the Cooperative Extension office at your nearby university or college. For example, the Cooperative Extension office at Penn State offers 30' x 30' plots for only \$10 for the whole growing season. They may also offer a Master Gardener program, where you can learn how to grow fruits, vegetables, and flowers. For example, the University of California (UC) Cooperative Extension office in Los Angeles county (http://celosangeles.ucdavis.edu/Common_Ground_Garden_Program) offers Master Gardener and Victory Gardener programs, provides opportunities to participate in community gardens, and helps to support several gardens at local schools and homeless shelters.

Step 3. Find the perfect fit. Now that you have your list and garden location, it's time to evaluate whether you can actually grow the specific plants on your list in your garden location. If your list contains sun-loving plants but the location of your garden doesn't receive at least 6 hours of sun, then remove these plants from your list or choose another garden location. If only one part of your garden receives a lot of sun, then plan to put your sun-loving plants there. You may also have plants that require specific soil conditions such as blueberries, which require a more acidic soil; however, if the necessary changes can't be made to fit your plants' requirements, remove these plants from your list. Also, consider whether the water conditions of your garden location fits the needs of your plants. It may be that because of where your garden is located (e.g., dry climate with a lot of sun exposure), your plants will require frequent watering. If you cannot provide enough water to meet their needs, consider removing the water-loving plants from your list and growing more drought-tolerant ones instead (or finding drought-tolerant varieties of your original plants). It's better to grow what will be successful than to waste the space, money, and time on trying to grow a plant that will grow poorly and only produce one to two fruits (or leaves).

Step 4. Be practical. At this point, you have selected the plants that you want to grow. Now, let's focus on deciding what you need to grow. Is your list too long? If this is your first garden, keep the list short. Think of it this way: you can either learn from growing 2-3 plants really well or growing 6-8 plants poorly. Next, think of all the materials you will need to buy to grow those plants. Remember that buying a plant is the cheapest part, so leave room for the additional expenses that may come up. And, think about how much time you have. You may only have a few hours a week to devote to your garden, but this may not be enough for a large garden. Be realistic with how much time you have, otherwise, your plants will be neglected and grow poorly.

WORKSHEET CREATE YOUR OWN GARDENING PLAN!

This is the most important step that you can take towards creating the garden of your dreams. Creating a garden plan will force you to make choices up front about what to grow, when to plant it, where to plant it, what soil amendments to make, how often to water it, and how to protect it. In other words, a gardening plan will help you reap the most from your efforts, money, and time.

This activity is organized into two parts. In the first part, "What My Plants Need", you will list the plants you want to grow and their growing requirements in the worksheet provided on page 70. Provide the following information in the table:

- **Plant name.** Provide the name of the fruit, vegetable, or herb that you would like to grow.
- When to plant. List the time of year when your plants need to planted.
- Sun & Temperature. Write down the sunlight and temperature requirements of your plant. Does it need to grow above a certain temperature like tomatoes? Does it need 6 hours of full sun like watermelon?
- **Soil Conditions.** Does your plant have specific soil requirements? Does it require a certain pH or moist soil conditions?
- Water Conditions. List the water conditions that your plant prefers. Does it need more or less than 1-inch of water per week?
- **Major Pests/ Other Requirements.** What are your plant's major pests? Does your plant have any other requirements (e.g. needing physical support)?

In part 2 of the activity, "How I Will Keep My Plants Happy", write down all the ways you plan to meet your plants' requirements in the worksheet provided on page 71. Provide the following information in the table:

- Week/Month to plant. List the week and month that you will plant your plant.
- Sun & Temperature. Write down the planned location of your plant. Be sure to choose a spot where their sunlight needs will be met. Also, indicate how you will protect your plant from very cold and very hot weather.
- **Soil Conditions.** List the soil amendments that you will make to nurture your plant. Also, indicate if your soil will need compost.
- Water Conditions. Write down how often you will water your plant. Also, indicate how will you water your plant (e.g. by hand, with soaker hoses).
- Major Pests/ Other Requirements. Indicate how you will protect your plant from their major pests. Also write down what you will do to meet any additional needs of your plant.

To help you get started with this activity, I have completed the first row in the worksheets (on pages 70-71) for growing scotia tomatoes, a wonderful variety of heirloom tomatoes that I like to grow in my garden (shown on right). An additional set of worksheets have been provided on pages 72-73.



What My Plants Need!

Major Pests/ Other Requirements	Hornworm, aphids, late blight, early blight	Physical support like a to- mato cage or bamboo stake		
Water Conditions	Very thirsty plants			
Soil Conditions	Any type, but likes to have a rich soil			
Sun & Temperature	> 45 degrees F Full Sun			
When to Plant	Early spring (after the last frost)			
Plant Name	Soctia Tomatoes			

How | Will Keep My Plants Happy!

Protection from Pests/ Other Tasks	Use compost to enhance plant's defenses. For late blight, mulch with straw to prevent soil from touching leaves. Pray for parasitic braconid wasps for hornworms. If I see a hornworm, pick it off. Buy tomato cages.		
Watering Schedule	1-inch of water every week. Install soaker hoses to conserve water and ensure that it reaches the roots.		
Soil Ammendments	Add compost when plants are transplated. Put down Straw for mulch- ing.		
Sun & Temperature	plant in a spot that receives 6+ hrs of sun, when it's > 45 degrees outside. If temps drop, cover plants.		
Week/Month to Plant	Plant in last 2 weeks in April or early May (make sure the last frost date has passed).		