



Steve Bogash

Horticulture Educator

TRELLIS SYSTEMS FOR TOMATOES



Penn State **Extension**

Why we trellis tomatoes

- Even determinate types are vines.
- Keeping the fruit and plant tissue off of the soil reduces diseases and increase packout %.
- Well-designed and built trellis systems reduce labor:
 - Pesticide applications are easier and more effective.
 - Harvesting is substantially easier

Trellis system negatives

- Expense of materials and labor to install.
- Costs to remove.
- Sometimes spray equipment must be modified to get adequate coverage.

Most basic: Cages



Industry Standard: Florida weave



Grape and cherry tomato challenges

- Largely indeterminate varieties
- Require almost daily harvesting
- Very long vines

Cherry tomato systems



Our first attempt using a modified raspberry trellis.

Cherry tomato systems



Cherry tomato systems



We used a standard vertical Florida weave as a comparison

Cherry tomato systems



This train wreck of a system clearly demonstrated the need to manage all of the weight of the plants and vines effectively.

Cherry tomato system



Cherry tomato system



Comments on the current system

- Relatively inexpensive to install.
- Avoids overly tall trellis's while still allowing the vines to grow to full length
 - Many growers top their indeterminates due to the long vines. This can reduce vigor and introduce diseases.
- Uses common farm materials except for the Hortonova mesh which is widely available from horticulture suppliers.

Golden Sweet cv. grape
tomatoes



This project has been funded by NE SARE

Additional support was provided by : Franklin County PA
Commissioners, Penn State Research Farms, Penn State Cooperative
Extension, & Dickinson College Farm.

THANK YOU.



Penn State **Extension**