

About an Idaho's Bounty Producer

Hagerman High School Greenhouse
150 W. Lake street
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Are those Hagerman tomatoes organic?

(from Daniel Knapp, our Hagerman High School producer)

You may have asked this question. While the technical answer is no, we use many organic and sustainable practices. The first concern many people have is whether or not we use pesticides. We have learned a lot about controlling insects in the last 5

years. The first year we used conventional sprays. Then after some training and research on beneficial insects we started using them last year. We were not very successful that year and ended up removing our crop. However, we learned many things from this experience and had enough success that we were willing to try it again. This year we have had a lot more success, have not sprayed any tomatoes or herbs, and have released 5 different insects including, encarsia formosa, aphipar, lady bugs, thripex, and green lacewings.

So what about the genetics? Our tomato seed comes from a company in Holland, a leader in the hydroponic industry that has bred tomatoes using traditional selective breeding methods for years. Our herbs are from cuttings that come from a greenhouse in California grown by themselves and are not sprayed with any pesticides, nor are they a genetically engineered product.

How about fertilizers? We have the same delivery method as a hydroponic operation but the fertilizer itself is not organic because it has been manufactured and processed into a nitrate form. We benefit by not having to struggle with the inconsistencies and impurities in the organic fertilizer industry that is hampering the organic tomato market. Manufactured fertilizer gives us the insurance that it is clean and pure and we do not have to worry about what else is

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