

Tomato Growth Cracks



These tomatoes are suffering from "growth cracks." The skin on tomatoes can develop cracks that split in circles around the stem which can spread outward from the stem scar. Cracks typically appear as fruit matures. The earlier it happens, the deeper the cracks become. It occurs when conditions drastically change the rate of growth, such as wide fluctuations in temperature and moisture (dry weather followed by heavy rains). High nitrogen and low potassium can also result in cracking. While you can't control the temperature, you can control the amount of water and fertilizer they receive. Some varieties are more susceptible to cracking than others, but if you provide proper nutrition and timely, adequate irrigation, you can reduce the likelihood of growth cracks.

(Tomato Disorder: Physiological fruit problems, Karen Delahaut and Walt Stevenson)

Splitting 101

There are two types of cracks on tomatoes: vertical splits, where the radial cracking extends from the top of the fruit to the bottom, and concentric splits (most common on large, heirloom tomatoes) where cracks form around the stem at the top of the fruit.

