

Gardeners' thoughts turning to heirloom tomatoes



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MORSELS

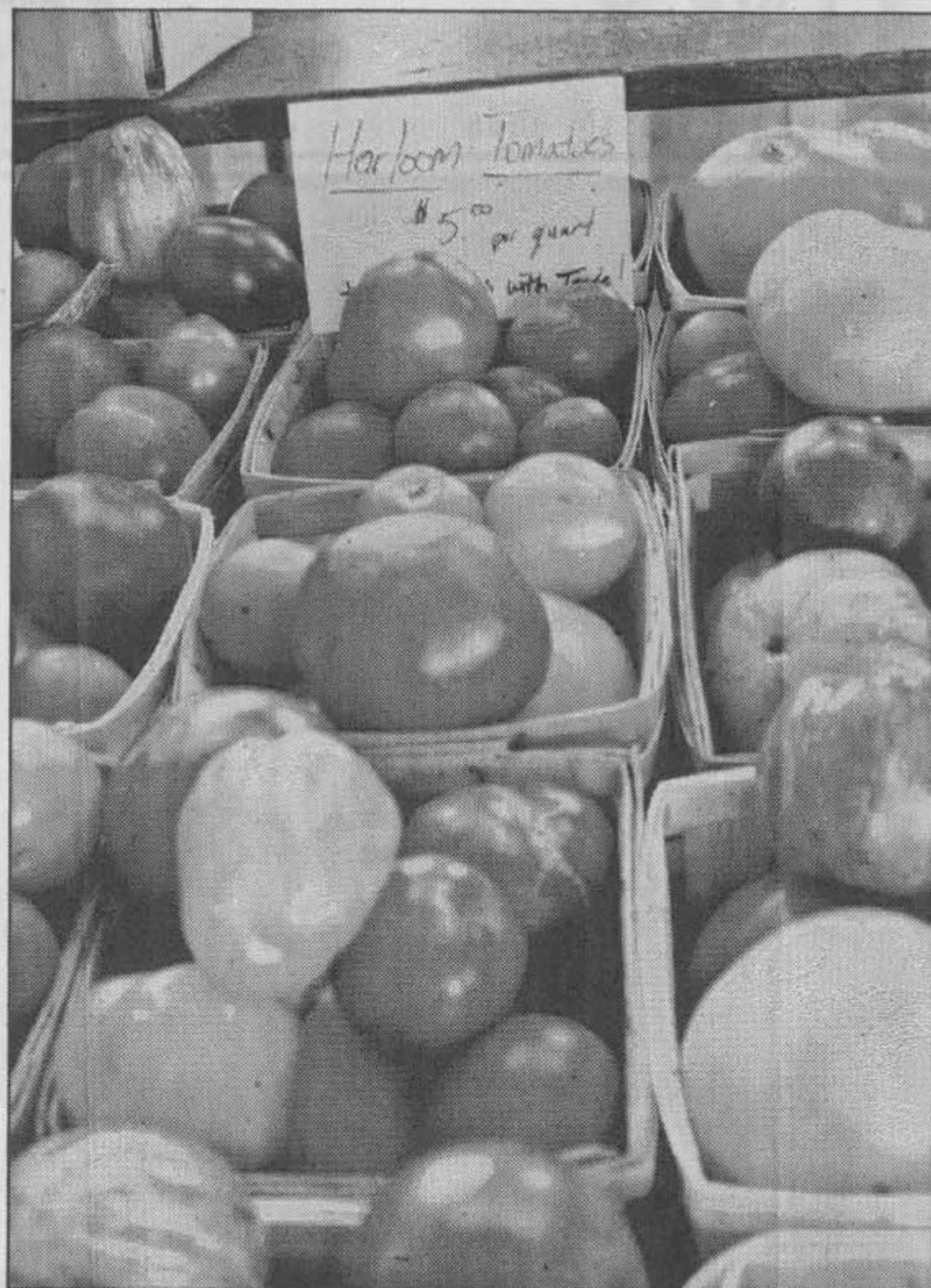
Recently, when I visited the Old Mill Museum in Dundee, Mich., where the Smithsonian Institution's traveling exhibition, "Key Ingredients: America by Food" and the accompanying Michigan Foodways exhibit is being featured through March 16, I was given a little packet of heirloom tomato seeds from the World War II era.

Heirloom tomatoes were featured in the 'Key Ingredients' exhibit

The seeds are from Leon Spalding of Petersburg, Mich. "He has grown these tomatoes since World War II. He made friends with one of his German guards. When he returned to the United States, he came back with some of the seeds," said Meg Heinlein, project director.

He's been growing these tomatoes ever since. It is a tomato that comes out deep pink, and is large and oblong in shape. "We've grown it here at the Mill. It is a meaty type with few seeds. The seeds were grown in Monroe County so little packets could be given at 'Key Ingredients.'"

This reminded me that gardeners are gearing up for spring



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Heirloom tomatoes come in many varieties.

planting of their gardens, and heirloom tomatoes are increasingly popular. The flavor, juiciness, color, and size are so much better compared to store-bought varieties that are shipped from across the country.

There are many heirloom options.

TomatoFest Garden Seeds announced that "black" tomatoes rank high in the Top 10 list

of favorite heirloom tomatoes going into 2008. The Top 10 favorite heirloom tomatoes are: Paul Robeson (purple/black), Cherokee Purple (purple/black), Brandywine (pink), Amana Orange (orange), Marvel Stripe (red/yellow striped), Julia Child (pink), Black Zebra (green/purple striped), Black Cherry (purple/black), Kellogg's Breakfast (orange), and Aussie (red).

For information, call 831-625-6041.

The Cook's Garden catalog 2008 is described as the premiere seed source for European garden vegetables such as Snacker's Delight Grape Tomato, Ladybug Tomato, Balcony Tomato, and Brandy Boy, a 16-ounce pink beefsteak with heirloom flavor. For information, call 800-457-9703.

Historic dinner

Sauder Village is having a Historic Dinner at 5:30 p.m. Feb. 18 at the Barn Restaurant. Some recipes are from the Lauber family, one of the first five European families who settled in German Township near current day Sauder Village. The menu includes roast pork, chicken fricasse, root vegetables, Velma Lauber's Rivel "Ribley" Soup, salad with Aunt Fannie's Cabbage Dressing, cheese, an assortment of breads, and a dessert sampler, including Apple Butter Pie, Christena Lauber's Doughnuts, and Election Cake (because it's Presidents' Day).

Dinner is \$30 per person. Pre-payment and pre-registration are required. Call Andi Erbskorn at 419-466-2541 or 800-590-9755.

Sample chocolate

The fifth annual Chocolate and Wine Tasting will be at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 21 at Katzingers Delicatessen at 475 South 3rd St. in Columbus. Participants learn about the history of chocolate and its production, from bean to powder to bar. Tasters will sample and compare several chocolates of milk, semisweet, bittersweet, and white chocolate. Vanguard Wines will be chosen to complement those particular chocolates.

Cost is \$23.95 per person. Reservations are required. Call 614-228-3354.