



HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY!

Thank you to all of those who have served our Country.

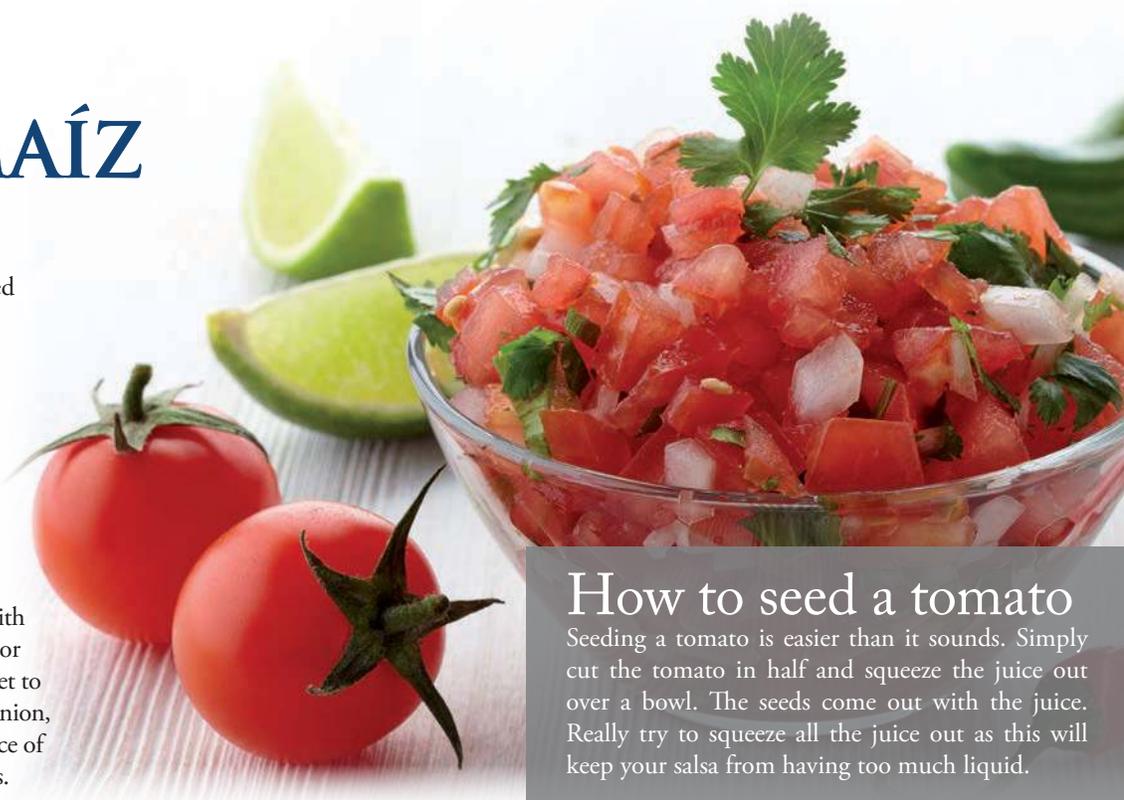
SALSA DE MAÍZ

Ingredients:

2 lbs. tomatoes, seeded and coarsely chopped
3 ears fresh corn
1 red pepper, chopped
¼ red or Vidalia onion, chopped
1 jalapeno, finely chopped
1 tbsp. cilantro, finely chopped
1 lime
Salt

Instructions:

Cook the corn, then remove corn from cob with knife. Chop ingredients above either by hand or with a food processor. If using the processor, set to pulse. Combine tomatoes, corn, red pepper, onion, jalapeno, and cilantro in a large bowl. Add juice of one lime. Salt to taste. Serve with tortilla chips.



How to seed a tomato

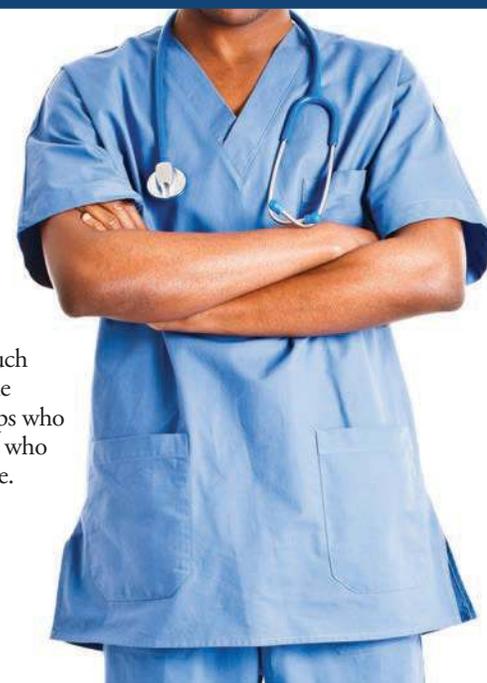
Seeding a tomato is easier than it sounds. Simply cut the tomato in half and squeeze the juice out over a bowl. The seeds come out with the juice. Really try to squeeze all the juice out as this will keep your salsa from having too much liquid.

Four decades later and AGENT ORANGE is still harming Vets

Agent Orange was used extensively by the United States in the Vietnam War to clear forest cover and kill crops. The U.S. program of defoliation, codenamed Operation Ranch Hand, sprayed more than 19 million gallons of herbicides over 4.5 million acres of land in Vietnam from 1961 to 1972. It was found later that exposure to Agent Orange led to many health problems, including tumors, birth defects, rashes, psychological symptoms, and cancer.

Hypertension can now be added to that list. A new study found that vets exposed to Agent Orange are at a much greater risk of developing hypertension (high blood pressure). The study was published by VA researchers in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine. They found that members of the Army Chemical Corps who handled Agent Orange in Vietnam had a higher rate of hypertension than those who did not. Corps members who served in Vietnam but did not handle the chemical also had a higher rate than their peers who served elsewhere.

The Veterans Administration (VA) must decide if hypertension caused by exposure to Agent Orange should be added to the list of diseases that entitle veterans to receive compensation. Hypertension is among the most common ailments not only for veterans but for aging Americans generally. If it is added to the VA's list of presumptive diseases, it could prove to be costly to the organization. Costly or not, taking care of those who put their lives on the line for our country is the right thing to do.



Jackson & MacNichol **COMMUNITY CONNECTION**

A referral is the greatest professional compliment we can receive. If you have a friend, neighbor, or family member who is in need of legal representation with the VA, please consider referring them to our firm. We will do our best to provide the highest possible level of service and deliver winning results.

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VA Q&A *When one person has a question about the Veterans Disability claim, there are probably many more people with the same question. That's why we print answers to common questions in our newsletter. If you have a general question about Veterans Disability, send it to us and you may see it in a future issue.*

Q How long will the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) take to decide my claim?

A The time for a decision to be made on an individual claim varies but could take months or even over a year. Many times the initial decision is a denial, which can be appealed. Appeals can sometimes be stuck in a massive backlog of cases for years.

While this answer may be discouraging, there are things you can do to make sure your claim moves through the process as smoothly as possible, minimizing delays. First, when filing VA Form 21-526, Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension, with your VA Regional Office, make sure to include your discharge papers (DD 214), dependency records (marriage certificate and children's birth certificates), and all medical records related to your injury/condition. Second, if you claim is initially partially or completely denied or you are awarded a rating that is too low, contact a VA-accredited attorney to help you through the process. Their experience navigating the Federal bureaucracy and VA claims process can be invaluable in making sure your appeals is handled in a timely fashion and reaches a successful conclusion.

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