

# *Something strange is going on in my garden...*



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**This is a comment I hear often.** I've often muttered the same words regarding my own gardening efforts. There are many unexplained things that happen in the garden, but that mystery is part of the intrigue and enjoyment. This year, I planted a favorite tomato of mine called 'Brimmer Pink,' sometimes just called 'Brimmer.' I only started a few plants. We didn't offer it on our lot this year—I guess it was an oversight by me. I planted one plant at home, in a fifteen gallon pot, and four others directly in the ground in our little test garden at Milaeger's. My plant at home is the strange one. Its now well over eight feet tall, but the lowest fruits on the plant are at seven feet! I've never experienced anything like that. The plants in the ground, just a few miles away, were planted about a week later. They're all five feet tall, and one of them now has twenty-two pink tomatoes on it, starting just a few inches from the ground. I have no explanation for this. Apparently, any flowers that occurred lower on the tall plant failed to get pollinated. I have no idea how many flowers there were, I wasn't monitoring the flowers very closely.



**Tomato 'Brimmer Pink'**

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Overall, my tomatoes are doing very well. One is a "saladette" tomato, fairly small, the size is somewhere between a golf ball and a tennis ball. Its skin is notably thick, so there is no cracking. One day last week I picked 36 ripe tomatoes off of one plant! Unfortunately, I misplaced the label on this one. I remember it was in our Vintage Veggie collection, but after reviewing our list I can't find one that fits the description. One more mystery...



**Mystery Tomato. Single day harvest on one plant!**

My cucumber plants are petering out. I'm to blame for this. I was out of town for a bit and failed to have someone harvest the cukes on schedule. If you harvest the fruit at the correct time, the plant "thinks" its goal of producing seeds has been interrupted, so it produces more flowers. But since no one picked the cukes, the plant stopped producing new flowers. The neglected fruit got too large and has been turning yellow, a sure sign that its inedible. I eventually picked the yellow fruit and discarded it, and now I'm waiting to see if the plants might produce more flowers.



**Pepper 'Volcano'**

This is a good year for peppers. I'm growing three kinds and they're all proliferating. Most of my plants are a new variety I discussed in a previous blog. Its called 'Volcano.' Not as hot as the name indicates, its somewhere in the 3,000-4,000 Scoville unit range, about the same as a jalapeño. This is a Hungarian type pepper, about 7" long, tapered, turning brilliant red when fully ripe. All peppers turn color when they are fully ripe, but they can be picked

earlier if desired. Peak nutritional value is when they are fully ripe. One thing we've noticed is the variability of heat. This is common with many hot peppers, no matter how extreme their heat. Different peppers on the same plant can be wildly different, and different parts of the individual fruit will vary, too. The hottest parts are the seeds and the membrane holding the seeds. Discovering these idiosyncrasies are part of the fun of gardening!

Please email me ([kevin@milaegers.com](mailto:kevin@milaegers.com)) with your questions and comments!