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## Tomatoes - the elixir of youth: the virtues of lycopene illustrated by the "Red Gold Tomatoes from Europe" project promoted by ANICAV

*"Red gold" is an important ally when it comes to health.*

NAPLES, Italy, Nov. 14, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- **Good, red, juicy and versatile.** The prince of mealtimes all over the world: **tomatoes**. They are a staple of the Mediterranean diet, but also a source of nutrients and vitamins, and above all **lycopene**. This hydrocarbon gives tomatoes their red colour, and helps the body defend itself against free radicals, preventing diseases related to cellular aging. This is why **tomatoes are considered an ally for good health and an elixir of youth**. So says the international project **"Red Gold Tomatoes from Europe"**, supported by ANICAV (Italian Association of Canned Vegetables Industries) and co-funded by the European Union, which promotes consumption and supports the export of **Italian organic preserved tomatoes to Sweden**.



**Lycopene** is known to have important antioxidant, cardioprotective and anticancer properties. Tomato pulp contains 11mg of lycopene per 100g, and there are 54mg per 100g in tomato skin. A high level of lycopene in the blood is associated with a **low incidence of certain cancers**, particularly prostate cancer. Tomatoes are rich in **vitamin C** (fundamental for the immune system); according to the WHO (World Health Organization), we require at least 45mg daily to protect against disease. **100g of ripe tomatoes contains 25mg, while 100g of processed tomatoes contains 43mg.**

Tomatoes can be used in **natural cosmetics** too: apply a mixture of tomato juice, glycerine and salt for soft and smooth hands, or make a **beauty mask with tomato extracts** for toned skin. And for teenagers, creams prepared with tomatoes **can treat acne**.

Tomatoes are low in calories - **only 18 per 100g**. They provide about 1g of protein per 100g, are full of water and are therefore an effective **diuretic**, if eaten raw and without salt. **Tomatoes have a very special characteristic: cooking improves the bioavailability of lycopene** and enhances their antioxidant effects. Kids can snack on a delicious tuna and tomato sandwich and tomato juice. Remember: tomatoes must be properly red and ripe; otherwise, they do not contain lycopene - that is so beneficial. Try this tasty recipe:

**Swedish-style salmon (gravlax), organic datterini cherry tomatoes and basil focaccia**

<https://redgoldfromeurope.eu/recipes/swedish-style-salmon-gravlax-organic-datterini-cherry-tomatoes-and-basil-focaccia/>

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