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Question:

How do I make sure I buy healthy transplants?

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Answer::

First, you're better off buying transplants from a garden center than from a grocery store or big-box store, where they may or may not get adequate watering or other care. Look for bushy, compact plants that have healthy green leaves. Check the roots, too, by gently dumping a plant out of its pot while holding the top of the rootball between your fingers. If you decide to buy larger plants, pick off any fruits that have already started forming. This redirects the plants' energy into producing roots, which it will need for the long haul. If the nursery or garden center you usually shop at only offers seedlings in market packs, and you don't want to grow six plants of a single cultivar, try one of these options:-Shop at a local farmers' market in spring. Local

growers often offer vegetable seedlings for sale.-Shop for seedlings online. There are Internet companies that sell single transplants.-Buy market packs of all the cultivars you want to grow, and share excess seedlings with friends and neighbors. Or see if a local community gardening group, garden club, or food pantry would be able to use the extras.-Ask if the nursery will let you "switch out" cultivars in a market pack.-Buy all the cultivars you want to grow, and toss the extra plants on the compost pile.Reprinted from The Veggie Gardener's Answer Book Copyright 2008 by Barbara W. Ellis, with permission from Storey Publishing. Creative Commons photo credit: Lord Bute

Question Details (optional):

<p>I don't want to bother with seeds this year, so how do I make sure I buy healthy transplants?</p>

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