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## **The Dread Tomato Addiction**

by Mark Clifton

Ninety-two point four per cent of juvenile delinquents have eaten tomatoes.

Eighty-seven point one per cent of the adult criminals in penitentiaries throughout the United State have eaten tomatoes.

Informers reliably inform that of all known American Communists, ninety-two point three per cent have eaten tomatoes.

Eighty-four per cent of all people killed in automobile accidents during the year 1954 had eaten tomatoes.

Those who object to singling out specific groups for statistical proofs require measurements within a total. Of those people born before the year 1800, regardless of race, color, creed or caste, and known to have eaten tomatoes, there has been one hundred per cent mortality!

In spite of their dread addiction, a few tomato eaters born between 1800 and 1850 still manage to survive, but the clinical picture is poor—their bones are brittle, their movements feeble, their skin seamed and wrinkled, their eyesight failing, hair falling, and frequently they have lost all their teeth.

Those born between 1850 and 1900 number somewhat more survivors, but the overt signs of the addiction's dread effects differ not in kind but only in degree of deterioration. Prognostication is not hopeful.

Exhaustive experiment shows that when tomatoes are withheld from an addict, invariably his cravings will cause him to turn to substitutes—such as oranges, or steak and potatoes. If both tomatoes and all substitutes are persistently withheld—death invariably results within a short time!

The skeptic of apocryphal statistics, or the stubborn nonconformist who will not accept the clearly proved conclusions of others may conduct his own experiment.

Obtain two dozen tomatoes—they may actually be purchased within a block of some high schools, or discovered growing in a respected neighbor's back yard!—crush them to a pulp in exactly the state they would have if introduced into the stomach, pour the vile juice and pulp into a bowl, and place a goldfish therein. Within minutes the goldfish will be dead!

Those who argue that what affects a goldfish might not apply to a human being may, at their own choice, wish to conduct a direct experiment by fully immersing a live human head\* into the mixture for a full five minutes.

\* It is suggested that best results will be obtained by using an experimental subject who is thoroughly familiar with and frequently uses the logic methods demonstrated herein, such as:

(a) The average politician. Extremely unavailable to the average citizen except during the short open season before election.

(b) The advertising copywriter. Extremely wary and hard to catch due to his experience with many lawsuits for fraudulent claims.

(c) The dedicated moralist. Extremely plentiful in supply, and the experimenter might even obtain a bounty on each from a grateful community.