

Pomegranate

DID YOU KNOW
POMEGRANATES WERE
BROUGHT ALONG IN
DESERT CARAVANS
BECAUSE OF THEIR SWEET,
CRAVABLE JUICE?

WHAT IS A POMEGRANATE?

Pomegranates are large, pink fruits that grow well in areas with hot, dry summers. This fruit is filled with bright red seeds that have a sweet, juicy, and sometimes acidic flavor. Some pomegranates can contain up to 1,000 seeds per fruit! The seeds are full of antioxidants and are rich in vitamin C, potassium and vitamin K. Pomegranate fruit can help fight cancer, arthritis and diabetes. The pomegranate (*Punica Granatum*) is a member of the Lythraceae family. A pomegranate plant can be grown as a small tree or a shrub.

PLANTING POMEGRANATES

Pomegranates grow best in full sun and well-draining soil. When planting, space each plant roughly 12-15 feet apart in rows that are 15-20 feet apart. Be sure not to crowd the plants too close together as lack of sunlight will slow the growing process. After planting, be sure to regularly water your pomegranates because they need consistent watering to produce rich fruit. Once your plant puts out leaves for the season, watering can be cut back to once a week or whenever the dirt becomes dry an inch below the top of the soil.



CARE AND HARVESTING

Once the plant begins to mature, fertilize with nitrogen. To do this you can use roughly one to two cups of ammonium sulfate. Be sure to fertilize annually. As the pomegranate grows, trim off dead branches and thin it out to maintain its major, fruit-bearing branches. Pomegranate trees will produce fruit about three to four years after planting. Pomegranates ripen from mid-summer all the way into late October. Because the fruit stops growing after being picked, only harvest the fruit once they have reached full maturity. To harvest, cut them as close to the branch as possible. Don't pull the fruit off!

COMMON PESTS AND DISEASES

Pests

The most common pests among pomegranates include whiteflies, thrips, mealybugs, stink bugs and scale insects. Other insects include moth larvae, which attack the tree, and termites, which infect the trunk. To control these pests, apply an organic insecticide like Spinosad to your plant in late spring through summer.

Heart Rot

Heart rot is one of the most common diseases that can infect pomegranates. This disease is caused by the fungus *Rhizopus arrhizus*. Heart rot infects the fruit and causes the seeds to brown and become infected with mold. The fruit will rot and become inedible. It is important to remove infected fruit from your tree. Treating with copper fungicide hasn't proved to help eliminate the rot, but there are a few precautions you can take. Do not overwater. Remove dead or dying fruit to keep your tree free from developing mold. Prune away branches that touch each other to allow good air flow.

POPULAR VARIETIES

Al Sirin Nar: Glossy bright red fruit. Vigorous growing.

Giant Kazake: Cold-hardy to about 5 degrees Fahrenheit. Yellow skinned. Sweet-tart flavor.

Dwarf Nana: Small 2" fruit. The plant grows to about 2- ft at full height.

Parfianka: Large, red, sweet fruit. Great for fresh eating. Vigorous grower.

Sharp Velvet: Produces large crops of deep red fruit. Sweet fruit, with little acidity.

Slavatski: Produces large fruit that is pale pink in color. Cold hardy to 5 degrees Fahrenheit.

Spanish Sweet: Produces large deep red fruit. A strong flavor that is both tart and sweet.

Suhr Anor: Fruit has a mild yellow-pink color and very sweet tasting.

Wonderful: Vigorous growth patterns. Produces large, red, very sweet fruit. Not cold hardy.

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