

Just
the
FACTS



POMEGRANATE

JUST FRUITS & EXOTICS

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INTRODUCTION

Pomegranate juice is a true delicacy, with a flavor that is a cross between strawberries and raspberries. It's great by itself with a little sugar and shaved ice. It can also be made into jelly or a fantastic fruit wine. There's a tasty reason pomegranates were called the nectar of the gods.

USES IN THE LANDSCAPE

Pomegranates grow to approximately 12-15 feet tall. The attractive shrubby plants are deciduous, and have glossy dark green leaves. Flowers are flaming orange-red, and may grow singly or in clumps. Add a pomegranate to your shrubbery border. Interplant with blueberries for a fruitful hedge. Pomegranates are self-pollinating, so you can plant only one if you wish. For a hedge, plant 6-9 feet apart and let suckers fill in the gaps.

PLANTING AND CULTURE

SITE SELECTION

Well-drained, sandy loam soils are preferred, but peaches, pomegranates will grow on many soil types if good drainage is provided. Pomegranates will grow more vigorously and produce more fruit in full sun. Avoid frost pockets - trees may be damaged by unseasonable frosts.

SOIL PREPARATION AND PLANTING

Pomegranates prefer alkaline soil (pH 6.5 to 7.0 or higher). If you are in doubt about the acidity of your soil, take a soil sample to the Cooperative Extension Agent in your county for a soil test. Adjust soil pH as necessary.

Dig a planting hole approximately twice as big as the pot and twice as deep. Enrich the planting hole with peat moss, compost or pine bark mixed with soil dug from the hole (50:50 mix). Remove the plant from the pot, gently loosen the root ball and place in the planting hole. The pomegranate should be planted **at or slightly above** the same level at which it grew in its pot. Fill the planting hole with the mix of soil and organic matter; gently tamp it in. Water thoroughly to settle the roots and eliminate air

pockets. Do NOT put fertilizer in the planting hole. Only apply fertilizer if it is the correct time of year (see Fertilization section below).

If desired, construct a water basin around the base of the tree approximately 36 inches in diameter. Mulch in spring and summer with approximately 4-6 inches of mulch.

FERTILIZATION

We use and recommend the Espoma line of organic fertilizers. Espoma's Citrus Tone is a good choice for pomegranate trees. When not available look for an organic mix that contains an analyst of roughly 5-2-6. Make sure they contain iron, zinc, manganese, magnesium, molybdenum, copper and boron. These minor elements are very important to plants and most soils are low in these elements. Application rates vary according to type and age of plant, so read the instructions on the bag and fertilize accordingly. Be sure to spread the fertilizer evenly under the entire canopy of the plant avoiding a 2-inch area around the trunk. Water or rake in. For Zones 8a-10, fertilize 3 times each year in February, May and late July/early August. Never fertilize after August as this will promote new growth when the plant needs to go dormant.

WATER

The first year is a critical time for the establishment of a new pomegranate. Water thoroughly twice a week on light soils and once a week on clay soils. Soak the entire root system deeply. Pomegranates should receive at least 1 inch of water each week for best growth and fruit production. Fruit may drop prematurely if insufficiently irrigated during dry spells.

PRUNING AND CARE

Pomegranates tend to be bushy and sucker from the root. For best fruiting it is wise to train the tree to 3 to 5 suckers. Choose well spaced out suckers and remove additional ones as they emerge. Prune out crossing and crowded branches to maintain light within the canopy. Mature trees are pruned in early spring to remove crowded, dead and damaged wood. Remove sprouts and suckers as they appear.

Pomegranates have few pests and diseases. Scale mites can be controlled with sulfur dust in June while scale insects can be controlled with dormant oil during winter when leaves are not present. A neutral liquid copper spray controls leaf blotch.

VARIETY LIST- ALL POMEGRANATES ARE SELF POLLINATING.

CHRISTINA This variety was found growing in Port St. Joe Florida by Bill Mahan. Named after his wife Christina. It is a beautiful, deep red-skinned pomegranate, with pale pink seeds and very juicy. One of the few pomegranates we have seen to bear heavily in the humid south. Very cold hardy.

LARKIN An heirloom from Marianna, Florida. This one fruits reliably and is sweeter than **WONDERFUL** and tarter than **CHRISTINA**. A great gift from another great customer.

RUSSIAN #8 This one has a strange name as the donor who brought us the cuttings lost the name tag! The mother tree came from Russia and was the 8th one in the row, so Russian #8 was born. It's a great pomegranate and the sweetest one we carry.

SHARI'S Another gift from a great customer, Shari's has a tart flavor and ripens from August into October. Juicy red seeds and a deep orange skin.

WONDERFUL Old fashioned variety - the one most commonly carried in grocery stores. Ruby red fruit with deep pink seeds. Tangy sweet flavor. More cold hardy than most.