

Passion Fruit

(*Passiflora edulis*)



Classification

- Genus: *Passiflora*
- Species: *P. edulis*

Family: *Passifloraceae*

- Many cultivated passions exist, but only 2 (yellow/purple) are widely cultivated.

- The yellow fruit is generally larger, while the purple has a higher proportion of juice and is more bountiful in aroma and flavor .

Geography

- Native to Brazil, Paraguay, and northern Argentina
- Cultivated in the Tropics and subtropics, but doesn't grow well in intense heat
- Annual rainfall should be around 35 inches
- Nematodes and snails are partially responsible for the short life of many passion fruit vines

Description

- Climbing vine that clings by tendrils
- Leaves are alternate, 3-lobed, and finely toothed (3-8 in.)
- Single flower that is 2-3 inches wide and prefers humid conditions for pollination
- Fruit is 1-3 inches wide and can appear dark purple to light yellow



Cultivation

- Prefers soil with a fairly neutral pH
- Vulnerable root system that requires regular watering and excellent draining
- Carpenter bees are the best for pollination
- Plant should be cultivated along a fence or balcony
- Begins to bear fruit after maturity, which may take 1-3 years

Plant Uses

- Fruit is used in a variety of desserts and drinks including: Cheesecake, yogurt, ice cream, cordial drinks, and cocktails
- Aids in alleviating anxiety
- Used to make fruit preserves in the Dominican Republic
- When in syrup form, it's used to marinate/glaze meat and vegetables

History

- Flourishing fruit in Coastal areas of Queensland before 1900
- In 1880, Hawaii planted the first purple passion fruit seeds
- Ecuador is the main exporter of Passion Fruit to the Western World
- 16th century Spanish Catholics named it “flower of the five wounds”
- No commercial passion fruit plantations left in Hawaii

Additional Information

- The flower of the passion fruit is the national flower of Paraguay
- Fruit received its name because flowers of the plant looked like the crown of thorns placed on Christ's head
- Excellent source of fiber
- Juice is high in ascorbic acid and carotenoids

References

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passiflora edulis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passiflora_edulis)
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- https://bioweb.uwlax.edu/bio203/s2012/bauer_bail/facts.htm