



Fact Sheet

Passionfruit



The genus *Passiflora* contains over 400 species, mostly evergreen and semi evergreen, tendril climbing vines, primarily native to tropical South America.

Position:

Passionfruit prefer a sunny, sheltered well drained site. Being a vine it will require support such as trellis or wire for the vine to grow along.

Soil Preparation:

Soil preparation is essential to achieve best results. Prior to planting thoroughly dig in half a bucket of animal manure over an area 60cm x 60cm to a depth of 20cm. Then dig in a further 3 buckets of animal manure and spread evenly over an area approximately 3 metres from the vines' base.

Planting:

Tap the plant from the pot, plant in normal manner and water in well. If planting a grafted variety ensure that the graft is kept above ground level. Any shoots that appear on the vine below the graft should be removed with a sharp knife.

Watering:

Keep the soil moist several metres from the base of the vine as the fibrous roots extend outwards. Mulching around the plant will reduce soil evaporation.

Spraying:

Aphids attack new spring growth, these can be sprayed with a pyrethrum based spray. Should small holes appear in the leaves, it is likely to be caused by earwigs, spray with Carbaryl. Brown spots on leaves, stems or fruit can be controlled by spraying Bordeaux fungicide spray in Autumn and Spring.

Maintenance:

Normally no pruning is necessary during the first two years. It is important though to ensure the vine is trained over the trellis. Any pruning in later years should be done in early spring by removing old laterals. With pruning the main objective is to allow light into the vine thereby promoting healthy growth, hence the vine will bear fruit for a longer period. Pruning should NEVER be undertaken in winter as new growth may be damaged by frost. Fertilise with an annual dressing of complete fertiliser in August, such as Yates Gro Plus.

Harvest:

The fruit is ripe when it will fall off the vine with a gentle shaking or when it breaks off at a touch.

Woodiness:

The main disease of passionfruit is 'woodiness' or 'bullet' which results in thick, distorted fruit with woody rinds and little pulp inside.

The disease is carried from plant to plant by insects. There is no known cure and the only thing to do is pull out the plant, burn it and replace it with a new plant.

*One Nellie Kelly vine will cover up to 20 square metres,
whilst Banana Passionfruit will cover even more.*

Varieties:**"Nellie Kelly"**

The most popular variety sold and grown. They were developed in the early 1930's and became a registered trademark in 1953. Grafting black passionfruit onto various rootstocks had previously been carried out however with limited success as vines in colder regions continued to be lost to frost. A new rootstock was introduced from overseas which produced a frost resistant vine with higher fruit yielding qualities, producing a crop of firm, ripe delicious black fruit.

"Banana Passionfruit"

(Passiflora mollissima)

Vigorous hardy vine tolerant of cool conditions, will tolerate light frosts when established. Large pink flowers are followed by banana-like fruit, somewhat tart to the palate with a soft yellow skin.

"Panama Gold"

New vigorous variety for a warm position. Bears extra large sweet yellow passionfruit in abundance through Autumn to Spring.

"Seedlings"

Still occasionally available are seedlings of the black passionfruit strain known as "Norfolk Island".

FACT: *Passiflora is from the Latin passus (suffering) and flos (flower), literally the Flower of Passion so called by the early Catholic Spanish priests in South America who regarded the plants features as symbols of the Crucifixion.*

