

Sweet Granadilla



Common Names: Sweet granadilla, grenadilla

Scientific Name: *Passiflora ligularis*

Climate: Warm and moderate

Plant Description: The sweet granadilla is a herbaceous plant that grows like a vine. Its roots are fibrous and branched and grow to depths between 20 to 40 cm. The stem is cylindrical, yellow to green in color when young, and light brown when adult.

Each branch has nodes and internodes and in each node there is a whole leaf with a short petiole crown and next to it are two stipules from which the flower buds come out. As the flower buds develop, the flower formation phase begins. For fertilization, it needs to receive pollen from the flower of another plant.

The fruit is a large berry with a hard skin, almost spherical in shape, six to eight centimeters in diameter. It has a greenish or slightly yellow color when it is almost ripe. When the fruit is fully ripe, it is an intense yellow and in most cases it has whitish spots. The fruit contains about 200-250 seeds wrapped in a transparent pulp that constitutes the edible part. The seeds are attached to a white placenta. They are black and flat in the shape of a shield.

It is native to the Andes, mainly Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela. It grows as far south as northern Argentina and as far north as Mexico. It lives at altitudes ranging from 1700-2600 meters above sea level.

Cultivation: Sweet granadilla needs to be planted in full sun and pruned frequently because it can be invasive and cause damage to other plants, and it also makes harvesting easier. Avoid overwatering as it could increase the propagation and spread of fungi.

Deep soil preparation is important because this plant develops shallow root systems in compacted soils. They are sensitive to excessively moist soil conditions and need good drainage. It is better to avoid clay soils (mud).

Granadillas are grown mainly from seedlings. When using seed, be sure to use ripe fruit seeds selected from healthy plants. The seed and pulp must be separated with water. The seeds are dried in the shade and planted in seedling trays or bags filled with a well-prepared soil mix. To increase germination, the seed along with the pulp can be placed in a plastic container and left to ferment for between one and three days. Then it is washed well, dried and planted as soon as possible. The seeds can be stored in closed containers at 13 ° C for about four months.

To transplant to the field, it is necessary to select only seedlings that have dark green leaves and that are healthy. Seedlings should be ready for transplanting three to six months after sowing the seed. The optimal time for transplantation is in August or September. Generally you have to leave one or two meters between plants. Taking into account the effect of viruses and soil-borne diseases, one meter between plants can ensure high production in the short term. The average life of a healthy sweet granadilla plantation is about three years.

Depending on the time of transplanting, the first fruit is usually ready for harvest six to nine months after planting. Around 18 months after planting, the crop should have reached its full potential. After that, there are two main crops annually - one harvest from November to January, and another during June and July.



Uses: The flower is used to make perfumes and the

peel has great potential in the preparation of concentrates for animals. It has digestive and diuretic properties and it is recommended for patients affected by gastrointestinal ulcers. It contains healing substances and works as an antispasmodic sedative. It helps sleep, counteracts reflux in both adults and babies and has therapeutic action in patients with hiatal hernia. Being rich in vitamin C, it helps to strengthen the immune system. The pulp is the edible part of the fruit and has a mild, sweet taste. It is also used to make jams, jellies, juices, and cakes.

Pests and Diseases: Granadilla is affected by a variety of fungi. The best way to avoid them is to ensure that it is planted in full sun and not soaking the soil. The affected plants must be destroyed. To avoid thrips and spider mites that attack sweet granadilla, frequent pruning and crop rotation is important. Soapy water can be applied to the affected parts in both cases.

References:

<http://www.arc.agric.za/arc-itsc/Leaflets%20Library/Cultivating%20granadillas.pdf>

[https://www.ecured.cu/Granadilla_\(fruta\)](https://www.ecured.cu/Granadilla_(fruta))

<http://www.agrolalibertad.gob.pe/sites/default/files/manual%20de%20granadilla.pdf>

<https://www.huila.gov.co/loader.php?lServicio=Tools2&lTipo=descargas&lFuncion=descargar&idFile>

En español: Granadilla

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