

Jujube

DID YOU KNOW
JUJUBES ARE
OFTEN CALLED
CHINESE DATES?

WHAT ARE JUJUBES?

Jujubes, eaten fresh, are small, crisp, apple-like fruits. They are often called "Chinese dates" because when dried, they are sweet and more like a date in texture. Jujubes are one of the easiest fruit trees to grow. They are also packed with nutrition. Jujubes are high in vitamin C, fiber and potassium, and reportedly have impressive health benefits for the nervous system, immunity and digestion.

PLANTING

Jujubes should be planted after the summer heat when the tree is going dormant in the fall. You can also plant in early spring. If you live in a warm climate where the ground does not stay frozen, you can plant during the winter. Jujubes need full sun and well-draining soil. They are incredibly vigorous, so soil amendments are not usually necessary. Dig a hole a little bigger than the pot and place your plant in it. Backfill with soil and water thoroughly to eliminate any air pockets. Make sure to water regularly for the first two weeks after planting to ensure your tree's survival. Plant jujube trees 10 - 15 feet apart.

MAINTENANCE

They have very few pest and disease problems and are drought tolerant once established. The first year, you will want to water when the soil feels dry two inches below the surface. If fertilization is needed, an organic nitrogen amendment such as blood meal, worm castings or fish emulsion can be used in the spring prior to budding.

HARVESTING

Most jujubes can be eaten right off the tree. Once the skin starts to develop brownish spots, they can be picked and eaten. Fresh jujubes taste similar to a crispy, dry apple. Certain varieties like the Lang, taste better dried. If left on the tree for a few more weeks, they will dry out and become a dark red color, tasting like a sweet, soft dried fruit.



POPULAR VARIETIES

Li:

Ripening date: Sept. 4 - Oct. 15
Pollination: Self-fruitful
USDA zones: 5-10

Round shaped fruits are larger than Lang. Reddish brown, dry and wrinkled, sweet and chewy (like dates) when fully ripe in early fall. Attractive, easy to grow tree: hardy, drought resistant, virtually pest and disease free. Requires long, hot summer.

Lang:

Ripening date: Sept. 29 - Oct. 10
Pollination: Li
USDA zones: 5-10

Pear-shaped fruits are reddish-brown, dry, wrinkled, sweet and chewy (like dates) when fully ripe in early fall. Attractive, easy to grow tree: hardy, drought resistant, virtually pest and disease free. Requires long, hot summer.

Honey Jar:

Ripening date: August-October
Pollination: Self-fruitful
USDA zones: 6-10

Extremely sweet, juicy, small to medium sized fruit. Compact tree-form.

Shanxi Li:

Ripening date: October
Pollination: Partially self-fruitful
USDA zones: 6-11

Largest of the popular jujube varieties (over 2 inches), round shape. Apple-like flavor, sweetens when dried.

GA-866:

Ripening date: September-October
Pollination: Partially self-fruitful
USDA zones: 5-10

Two-inch elongated fruit is exceptionally sweet with an apple-like flavor.

Sugar Cane:

Ripening date: September-October
Pollination: Self-fruitful
USDA zones: 6-10

Round fruit is smaller than Li. Very sweet, crunchy flesh. Tree is precocious, hardy, drought resistant, virtually pest and disease free. Requires long, hot summer.

Contorted:

Ripening date: August/October
Pollination: Partially self-fruitful
USDA zones: 6-10

Interesting ornamental, twisted branching. Round-shaped fruits are eaten firm and crunchy or room-dried to date-like chewy sweetness., Easy-to-grow, hardy, drought resistant, virtually pest and disease free. Requires long, hot summer.

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Website:

[bobwellsnursery.com](#)

Email address:

customerservice@sorellefarms.com