

LOQUAT

Japanese Plum, Japanese Medlar

Eriobotrya japonica

Roseaceae

ECHO® PLANT INFORMATION SHEET

Origin

China and Southeast Asia.

Uses

Loquat produces a firm yellow or orange fruit which ranges from tart to sweet in flavor. The fruit is eaten fresh or can be frozen for later use in jams, jellies, preserves and pies.

Cultivation

Loquat trees can easily be grown from seed. However, when trees mature and bear fruit, they should be selectively thinned to retain the best fruiting specimen. Seedlings can be used as rootstock and should bear fruit in 5-6 years. They grow best in tropical or subtropical climates at elevations between 3000 and 7000 ft. Loquat will bear fruit regularly, up to 100 lbs. per year even when at a distance from other trees of its own kind. Fruit size can be increased by removing some fruits when they are small. Fruit size and quality can also be improved by removal of some branches to improve exposure to sunlight.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Loquats should be ripened on the tree for best flavor. Each fruit will contain 1-6 seeds in the central cavity.

Pests and Diseases

Loquat trees are susceptible to the fungus which causes leaf spotting and fruit rot, but this can be controlled with copper sprays. The larva of the Caribbean fruit fly can be a problem in some areas. Also, the bacterium *Erwinia amylovora*, can destroy twigs and branches but can be controlled by prompt removal and burning of the diseased wood.

Cooking and Nutrition

Loquats are usually eaten fresh from the tree. However, they can be cooked and made into jams, jellies preserves and pies.

References

Morton, J. 1987. Loquat. p. 103-108. In: Fruits of warm climates. Julia F. Morton, Miami, FL.

<http://ecocrop.fao.org/ecocrop/srv/en/cropView?id=1002>