

CROP PRODUCTION GUIDES

Papaya, Pawpaw

Carica papaya Family: Caricaceae

Description

Papaya is a short-lived, fast-growing tree growing 2-10m in height. Papaya trees are either male or female. The male trees do not produce fruit but are needed for fertilising the flowers on the female trees.

Uses: Both the ripe and unripe fruits can be eaten. The young leaves can be cooked as spinach.

Cultivation

Papaya can be grown in well-drained alkaline soil (pH 6-6.5), in frost-free areas. They are drought-resistant but will produce better fruit if they are given irrigation every two weeks during the dry season.

Rotation plan: Papaya are perennials.

Soil improvement: Prepare planting holes 3m apart. Do not add manure or compost to the holes. Liming may be necessary on acidic soils. When the plant is growing apply compost or compost tea every two months from the end of August to December/ January. Keep the trees mulched year-round.

Planting: Papaya can be easily raised from seed removed from fresh fruit, washed, and dried. Plant the seeds directly into containers in August if irrigation is available. Germination takes 2-3 weeks. If planting directly into lands, plant 5 seeds per station.

Transplant the seedlings when they are 15-20cm tall. Plant 5 seedlings per station. When they flower, thin-out the seedlings leaving one male plant to twenty females. The male flowers are smaller and longer than the female flowers. They are produced in clusters on long stalks. The female flowers are larger (fatter) and grow on short stalks coming out from the main trunk of the tree where the leaf is attached.



Plant care

Weed control: Remove weeds by hand when the plants are young.

Irrigation: Water the trees every two weeks during the dry season.

Pests and diseases: Aphids may attack the trees during hot, wet times. Powdery mildew may attack the leaves.

Harvesting and processing

Packaging and labelling

Package your products in bags supplied by the buyer and use the correct labels. Store organic products in separate stores marked "Organic Store".

No other products or inputs (chemicals) should be kept in the Organic Stores.

Cropping timetable

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Year 1												
Lane preparation												
Apply compost												
Apply liquid												
compost												
Plant into lands												
Growing												
Harvest												
Year 2												
Apply compost												
Apply liquid												
compost												
Plant into												
lands												
Growing												
Harvest												
Year 3												
Apply compost												
Apply liquid												
compost												
Plant into												
lands												
Growing												
Harvest												