

Passionfruit

Passionfruit are perennial vines, native to Brazil. The seedling black-purple passionfruit and the banana passionfruit are the most commonly grown varieties and can bear prodigious crops within 2 years of planting.

Grafted vines are available and these have advantages worth considering. Nellie Kelly has large black fruits and its rootstock confers good cold tolerance and wilt disease resistance to the plant.

New hybrid vines now available in Perth are "Panama Red" and "Panama Gold".

Panama Purple, is a newer variety, with huge red purple fruits with a silver speckle in the skin. The Pulp is aromatic, sweet and abundant.

Panama Gold shares all of the characteristics of large size and long cropping with its purple sister. The only difference is the luscious golden colour.

PLANTING AND GROWING PASSIONFRUIT

Plant when the danger of frost is over. All passion vines will establish quickly in fertile soil, so be generous with soil improvers like Pure Peat, well rotted cow or sheep manure or Bio-ganic. Good drainage is essential. Soil that is waterlogged even for short periods increases the risk of root rot. Choose a sunny wind protected site

TRELLISING

You need to provide a strong support for your vine as in full fruit it exerts a considerable weight. Passionfruit can be trained to grow up and cover a pergola or along wires attached to garden walls and fences. A single vine can easily spread to cover an area 3 metres long.

If planting in the open, run your trellis north/south to maximise sunlight exposure. If growing against a fence, plant on the north facing side. Vines planted on a southern wall run up and over the other side to give most fruit to the neighbour. While this is good for neighbourly relations its probably not the reason you planted a passionfruit in the first place.

FEEDING

Once established, passionfruit need regular feeding and deep watering to prosper. Slow release fertilisers such as Osmocote gently feed the vine for 3 to 6 month per application.

Alternatively, once a month feed with Waldecks Premium All Purpose Plant Food to promote rapid growth and strong fruiting performance.