

ILORIN SWEET POMEGRANATE GROWING GUIDE

(New Locally Developed Variety in Nigeria)



Description

The Ilorin sweet variety of pomegranate is a locally developed variety that was developed through the method of clonal selection over a period of 3 years. The cloning method used is known as Air Layering.

The Ilorin Sweet pomegranates is resistant to Root knot Nematodes.

The Ilorin sweet variety is a very sweet and hard seeded variety, it produces very large fruits packed with powerful polyphenol anti oxidants and lots of other healthy nutrients. The color of the Arils (seeds) is pink.

Tree Size: trees can grow up 5 meters when planted in the ground and up to 3.5 meters when planted in a container. Trees will live more than 30 years with normal care.

Fruit Size: Medium to Large / Extra Large

Fruit Weight: 350 grams to 700 grams

Fruit Color: Green when uripe, as it approaches ripening stage color changes to yellow, pink or red. Variations in color when ripe is due to exposure to the sun rays, fruits that are shielded from the sun are yellow while fruits that are exposed to the sun are red.



Inside the Fruit of an Ilorin Sweet Pomegranates



Arils (seeds) of the fruit

Planting Environment

The Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate can be planted in pots / containers or in the ground. Start with a pot size of 10 liters for young seedlings then change to a larger container of 20 to 40 liters when the plant is 6 months old. **Ensure your Pots/containers have holes underneath.**

Planting Materials

Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate should be planted as Air layered seedlings propagated from mature plants, this is to ensure that you get seedlings that will bear fruit within a year and also seedlings that will have the same characteristics as the parent tree.

Soil Types

Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate require soils that drains well and also rich in organic matter, loamy soil is a very good example. Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate that will be planted in pots or containers need soils that drains very well. Planting Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate in pots or containers using a soil that drains poorly will cause the plant to be stunted or cause the plants to die.

Do not apply fertilizer to your Ilorin sweet pomegranates until after about 3 weeks after transplanting into the soil or into the pot / container.

Sunlight Requirement

Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate requires sunlight hours of at least 6 hours a day.

Water Requirements

For trees planted in Pots / containers you need to water your Ilorin sweet pomegranate tree every day. Below is the recommended quantity of water for different Pot / Container sizes.

7 to 15 Liters Pot/container requires 1 liter of water daily

20 to 30 Liter Pot/container requires 2 Liters of Water daily (This should be increased to 4 liters in the dry season)

40 to 60 Liter Pot/container requires 4 Liters of Water daily (This should be increased to 6 liters in the dry season)

80 to 100 Liter Pot/container requires 8 Liters of Water daily (This should be increased to 10 liters in the dry season)

For trees planted in the ground, you should water once every 5 days except during the dry season where you will need to water every 2 or 3 days. For young trees 4 liters of water will be fine, for older trees 10 liters of water is fine.

Fertilizer and Nutrient Requirements

Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate requires fertilizers that have a higher level of Nitrogen and other Macro and micro nutrients. The best fertilizers for Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate are either organic fertilizers like Chicken Manure or in-organic fertilizers that has all the Macro and Micronutrients.

If your Ilorin Sweet Pomegranates is planted in a pot, only apply organic fertilizers to the soil and in-organic fertilizers as a foliar spray on the leaves. Apply chicken manure (ensure its well composted) every 4 weeks and also apply a foliar fertilizer with Macro and micro nutrients every 4 weeks too.

For Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate planted in containers, ensure you water them daily (Depends on the weather), Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate planted in containers requires more water than Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate planted in the soil.

The recommended fertilizer for the Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate is **Candel Foliar Plus Fertilizer**.

Dosage for the application of Candel Foliar Plus is 9ml per Liter of Water

Candel Foliar Plus organic fertilizer should be applied to the leaves and the roots every 4 weeks. This fertilizer contains all the necessary micro nutrients and macro nutrients. It must however be supplemented with composted chicken manure to ensure that important micro nutrients like calcium and Zinc are supplied to the plant. Do not use fresh chicken manure, fresh chicken manure has a very high level of ammonia which will kill the tree.

Pest & Disease Management

Ilorin Sweet Pomegranates like all other varieties of pomegranates are regularly infected by insects as well as fungal diseases. Common pests that attack Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate are Thrips, Leaf footed bugs, Aphids, White flies, Mealybugs, Mites, and fruit sucking moth.

Organic Pesticides like neem oil and insecticidal soaps can be used however this will not kill the pests rather it simply chases them away for a brief period. In-organic pesticides are the only solution that kills the insects, their eggs and larvae. Pesticides should be applied once a month to prevent infestation.

Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate like all other varieties of pomegranates are also regularly infected by fungi most especially during the raining season where the splashing of water and the damp atmosphere makes it easy for fungal spores to spread. Common Fungal diseases of Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate are Alternaria Leaf spots, Tip die back, Fruit rot, Anthracnose, Bacterial blight., Heart rot disease.

Organic fungicide like neem oil helps to prevent Anthracnose, however In-organic fungicides are the best choice since they have both preventive and curative capabilities. Fungicides should be applied every 2 weeks to 3 weeks During the rainy season applying fungicides every 2 weeks will prevent infection from Fungi.

Contact us on calls/WhatsApp 08185976675 for Pest and Disease management solutions for the Ilorin Sweet Variety of Pomegranates.

Fruiting

Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate grown by seed takes about 3 to 5 years before they start bearing fruits, some seed grown trees may have flowers in their second year however this flower will most probably not develop into fruits. Also, commercial harvest from seed grown Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate occurs in the 6th year.

Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate grown by cuttings, air layering, and grafting takes about 6 to 18 months before they start bearing fruits. Commercial harvest from trees grown from cuttings, air layering and grafting occurs in the 2nd year.

To ensure you buy an air layered seedling only purchase Ilorin Sweet variety from www.africangardening.com.

Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate trees are self-pollinating which means you do not need another tree for pollination. However if you plant another variety of pomegranate beside the Ilorin sweet, you may have cases of cross pollination between the 2 varieties which may develop desirable or undesirable fruits.

Pomegranates produces 2 types of flowers, male flowers and female flowers (Hermaphrodite). The female flowers have male pollens that allows self-pollination without male flowers. The shape of the male flowers is different from the shape of the female flowers. The 2 flower types are shown below, only the female flowers can develop into fruits.

The Ilorin Sweet Pomegranates fruits all year round, average annual yield is about 50Kg of fruits per year



MALE FLOWER (Notice the bell shape)



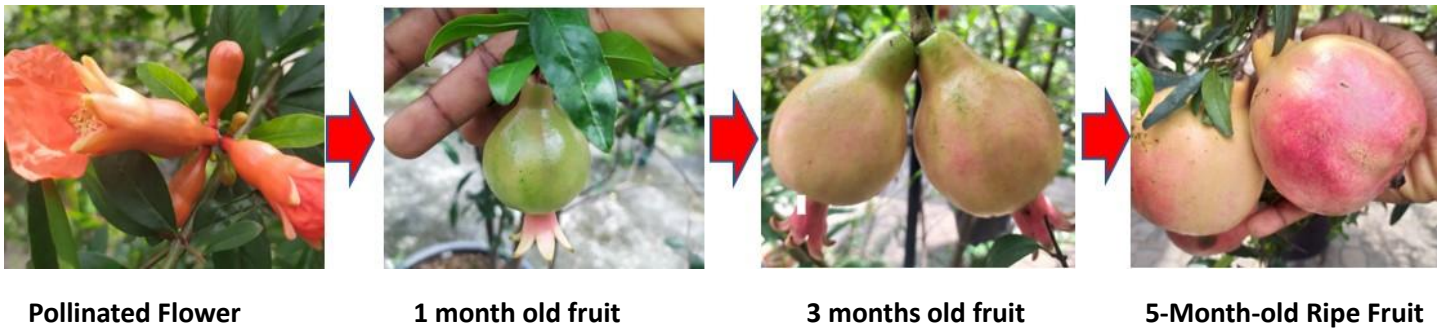
FEMALE FLOWER (Notice the Vase shape)

Harvesting of Fruits

The duration from flowering to harvesting for the Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate is 5 months. Ripe fruits are either yellow, Pink or Red in color, the color of the ripe fruits depends on the exposure of the fruits to the sun for this particular variety. The ripe fruits that are shaded from sunlight will be yellow while the ripe fruits that are exposed to the sun will be either pink or red. Unripe fruits will either be green all through or have patches of green.

Use a gardening scissors or pruning shears to harvest the fruit. Do not remove the ripe fruits with your hands, removing fruits with your hand may damage the branches.

The Ilorin Sweet Pomegranate fruits have a shelf life of 1 month without refrigeration and up to 6 months in a controlled refrigeration system.



The tree spacing for planting of multiple trees is 5meters x 6 meters between trees and 5 meters between rows.

ENJOY THE FRUITS OF YOUR LABOUR WITH THE ILORIN SWEET POMEGRANATES



For questions and enquiries kindly send an email to shola@africangardening.com or call / WhatsApp 08185976675.