



## Passionfruit - Panama Red

*Gerry McMahon, Senior Technical Officer, DPIFM Darwin*

**Site Selection:** Site should have well drained, fertile, loamy soil. Effective windbreaks are essential.

**Ground Preparation:** Rows should be mounded to increase soil depth, and good drainage is essential. Add organic matter with composts or manures.

A vertical or 'T' trellis is most commonly used. Spacings between the rows should be 3 m, to allow vehicle access and 4– 6 m between plants.

At planting a thick layer of organic mulch should be applied to prevent water loss and weed growth. Replace mulch regularly to maintain soil structure.

**Planting Material:** Seeds are true to type, select from good fruit. Seedlings are available from most nurseries.

**Irrigation:** Micro-jets or drippers are used, placing two per vine. Keep soil moist but not wet, monitor with tensiometers or by observation of the soil profile. Water daily as mature vines will require up to 140 L/vine/week at peak times, it is essential vines do not suffer water stress, as this reduces yield. Be aware of the water quality as passionfruit is very salt intolerant.

**Nutrition:** Have a soil analysis done six months before planting and adjust pH to 5.5–6.5. Base fertiliser of 60 g/m<sup>2</sup> 14N :14P :12K, 60 g/m<sup>2</sup> Superphosphate, 200 g/m<sup>2</sup> dolomite and poultry manure at planting.

Mature bearing vines need monthly application of 200 g/vine of 10N:3P:10K. Mature vines also require a trace element application, especially boron (2 g/m<sup>2</sup> every three months).

For commercial vines, fertiliser requirements should be based on leaf and soil analysis.

**Pests:** Red scale, Queensland fruit fly, mealybugs, hemispherical scale, passionvine mite, fruit spotting bug, green vegetable bug, passionvine bug, thrips, aphids, borers, and birds.

**Diseases:** Alternaria spot, fusarium wilt, brown spot, septoria spot, phytophthora blight, anthracnose, scab, cucumber mosaic virus, and passionfruit woodiness virus.

**Pruning:** Train young vines up to the top wire and remove side shoots. Removal of dead or diseased foliage, and cutting back any lateral that touches the ground is the only pruning required, or replant after two to three years.

**Harvest:** Fruit is available six months after planting. Pick at full colour. Potential yield is up to 20 t/ha.

**Post Harvest:** Handle carefully to avoid skin damage. Fruit begins to lose moisture after two days at room temperature. Fruit can be stored at 7°C and 95% humidity for two weeks.

**Reference:** <http://www.horticulture.nt.gov.au>

<http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/thematiclists/1178.html>

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