PLANT FACT SHEET

Citrus sinensis (L.) Osbeck

GENUS *Citrus* **FAMILY** Rutaceae

COMMON NAMES Orange

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Herb, Spice, Flowers

The fruit is eaten fresh, and the juice used in drinks. They are also added to salads and made into wine.
The juice is canned, bottled, and used in ice cream and jellies.
The peel is candied and used for flavouring. It is made into marmalade.
The flower petals are eaten as a vegetable.
The roots are used to flavour soup.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen tree up to 8-10 m high. It spreads to 4 m across. The stem is short, stout and spiny. It has a dense, rounded crown. The leaves are dark green, sword shaped and tapering towards the tip. They are 5-15 cm long. The leaves have a sweet smell when crushed. The leaf stalks have narrow wings and the stalk is jointed to the blade. The flowers are white and have a scent. The flowers have 5 petals and occur either singly or in clusters. The fruit often remain green colour and don't turn orange when ripened below 600 m altitude in the tropics. The fruit are about 9 cm across. They have 10-14 segments.

HABITAT

A subtropical plant. Not suited to very wet areas. Not suited to high altitudes. In PNG it grows between sea levels and 1,800 m above sea level. Seeds won't grow below 13 °C. They need a well drained, fertile, sandy soil. They are drought and frost tender. Trees need temperatures above 3-5°C to grow. In Brisbane Botanical Gardens. It suits hardiness zones 9-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Trees are often grown from seeds but these do not breed true. Seeds grow most easily between 27°C and 32°C. It is better to use budded plants. Plants can also be grafted. Green fruit can be treated with ethylene to give an orange colour, if people think an "orange" fruit is not supposed to have green colour!

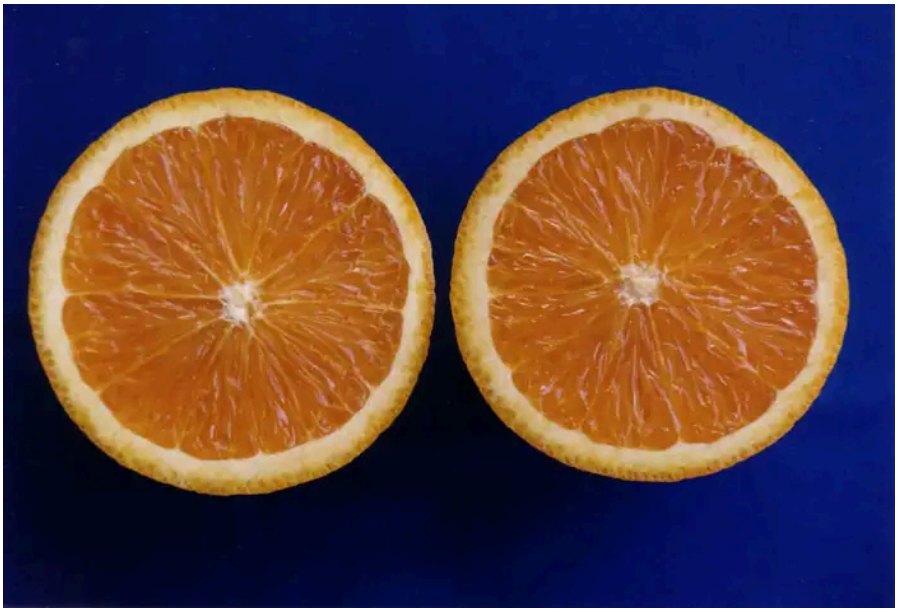
Harvesting and Seed Production

Grafted trees produce in 2-3 years. Seedling trees take 3-5 years to fruit. Fruit take 6-8 months to mature after fruit set. A good tree can produce 100 fruit in a year. Fruit can be left on trees for several weeks after ripening for storage.

NOTES

There are 20 Citrus species. Several hybrids have been formed.

PICTURES



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