

Kiwis

A large family of vines, Kiwis makes beautiful ornamental plants and produce delicious fruit with ten times the vitamin C content of lemons. They are easy to grow and are free of pests and diseases. Kiwis are vigorous vines. Excellent for a privacy screen, they will rapidly cover a fence and, with support, will cover a wall or steep slope. They can spread up to 30 feet. The Kolmokitais have pretty tri colored foliage.

Pollination

All varieties except 'Issai' need both male and female plants to produce fruit. One male can pollinate up to 8 females. The fuzzy Kiwi male is the best pollinator and can pollinate the fuzzy or arguta Kiwi female. The arguta male can pollinate the arguta or fuzzy female because bloom times partially overlap. However it is generally best to plant a male and female of the same species.

Planting

Fuzzy Kiwi, Hardy Kiwi and Silver Vine Kiwis all like sun while the Arctic Beauty variety prefers shade. Fuzzy and Hardy Kiwis produce longer summer canes and require some wind protection to avoid damage to the canes. All Kiwis need fertile well drained soil and should be fertilized annually. When planting Kiwis, Fuzzy and Arguta varieties should be planted 12 - 15 feet apart, Issai and Kolmokitais should be planted 8 feet apart. When planted, the vines should be pruned back to 4 or 5 buds. From these a main stem should be selected and staked to grow up to the top of the arbor or trellis.

Bearing Age and Harvesting

'Issai' Hardy Kiwi and Arctic Beauty varieties usually bear fruit the year after planting. Other Hardy Kiwi varieties, Silver Vine, and Fuzzy Kiwis begin bearing 3 - 4 years after planting. When mature, Fuzzy and Arguta varieties are very productive, capable of producing 100 lbs of fruit. Kiwis usually ripen in October. Fruit should be harvested after the first frost. Picked while still hard, they can be stored for months in a refrigerator or a cool dry area and put on the counter to soften. Arctic Beauty ripens in August.

Kiwi Varieties

Fuzzy Kiwis (*Actinidia deliciosa*)

Hayward (Female) - this is the variety commonly found in super markets. Prized for its large size, delicious flavor and productivity. Hardy to 0 degrees F

Sannichton (Female) - Ripens earlier than Hayward and hardier. Heavy producer of large, sweet fruit. It is easy to peel. Hardy to 0 degrees F

Fuzzy Male - These bloom over a long period and are good pollinator for Fuzzy and Arguta females, but not for Kolmolitas. Hardy to 0 degrees F

Hardy Kiwis (*Actinidia arguta*)

These vines produce clusters of oblong Kiwis the size of large grapes. Lacking the rough typical Kiwi skin, these fruits can be eaten whole. The green fruit is similar to the fuzzy Kiwi in flavor but is sweeter and easier to eat. The vines and fruit, unlike the fuzzy Kiwi are hairless. All types are hardy to - 30 degrees F

Annasnaja (Female) - The easiest to grow and the most productive of all the Hardy Kiwis. It is the most popular variety for commercial growing. It produces round to cylindrical ½ oz. fruit with a very sweet, fabulous, fruity flavor. It is ready to harvest in mid-late September.

Male arguta - The pollinator for Annasnaja, Jumbo and Ken's Red female. The male doesn't produce fruit. It will also pollinate Saanichton or other fuzzy female Kiwis.

Issai (Self Fertile) - A self-fertile Hardy Kiwi from Japan, Issai bears heavy crops of sweet, delicious, medium to large size fruit. Less vigorous than other varieties of Hardy Kiwi, Issai is ideal for gardeners with limited space. Issai needs regular watering and fertilizing to produce good crops. If you have room, planting a male pollinator will produce more reliable and heavier crops.

Arctic Beauty Kiwi (*Actinidia kolmokitai*)

Arctic Beauty is the hardiest of all the Kiwis. It's unique, light and airy foliage is splashed in the spring with green, white and pink variegation. Grow on a north facing wall or fence. The male plant has more variegation than the female varieties. Less vigorous than the Hardy or Fuzzy Kiwi, it is easy to grow on a fence, arbor, trellis or even in a container. Arctic Beauty fruit is quite delicious, about the size of a large grape, with smooth skin and lime green flesh. Hardy to - 40 degrees F.

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