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Dragon Fruit - *Hylocereus undatus*



A dragon fruit is the fruit of several cactus species, most importantly of the genus *Hylocereus*. It is native to South and Central America, belong to perennial epiphytic plant. It is also commercially cultivated in Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Israel as well as Sri Lanka.

Now dragon fruit is also popularizing in Sri Lanka. It can be cultivated low country wet zone,

intermediate zone as well as dry zone with the irrigation facilities. Department of Agriculture is conducting research to improve the cultivation.

Three types of Dragon fruit species.

1.Red colour fruit coat with white colour flesh



2.Red colour fruit coat with red colour flesh



3.Yellow colour fruit coat with white colour flesh



Uses

Dragon fruit is important as a fruit as well as ornamental plant. Ripen fruits can be used directly to consume. Also it can be used for produce jam, ice cream, jelly, fruit juice as well as wine. Dragon fruit buds can be prepared as a curry.

Dragon fruit increases the digesting power of the foods. Also it has ability to control cancer, diabetics, high cholesterol as well as blood pressure.

Nutritional value

The typical nutritional value per 100g of ripen Dragon fruit is as follows

Nutrition	
Amount	
Water	82.5- 83 g
Protein	0.159- 0.229 g
Fat	0.21- 0.61 g
Fiber	0.7- 0.9 g
Carotene	0.005- 0.012 mg
Calcium	6.3- 8.8 mg
Phosphorus	30.2- 36.1 mg
Iron	0.55- 0.65 mg
Vitamin B	1 0.28- 0.043 mg
Vitamin B	2 0.043- 0.045 mg
Vitamin B	3 0.297- 0.43 mg
Vitamin C	8.0- 9.0 mg
Thiamin	0.28- 0.30 mg
Riboflavin	0.043- 0.044 mg
Niacin	1.297- 1.30 mg
Ash	0.28 g
Other	0.54- 0.68 g

Ripen fruits are rich in vitamins.

Climatic Conditionn

Dragon fruits can tolerate poor soil conditions and temperature variations.

Tropical climate is good for dragon fruit cultivation. The optimum temperature range is about 20 - 30 oC. Also it needs about 500 1500mm annual rainfall with alternate dry and wet climatic condition. It need good sunlight, but not suitable for long period. At that time shading is important.

Soil and Water

Good drainage system is important to dragon fruit cultivation. 10-30% sandy soils with organic matters provide good condition for plant growth. Sandy soils also suitable for dragon fruit cultivation.

Preparation of Planting Material

1. Planting of cuttings Common method



2.5 cm long and 2.5 cm wide. It is used to produce seedlings. It is a very popular plant used. Because





rapidly growing, but susceptible to diseases and



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Dragon fruit flowers bloom at night, from April to May, and are the most beautiful of the



They are eaten as a fruit, and are also used in smoothies and other dishes.