



Urban Harvest
Gardening for good.

Jujube

Category:	Temperate; deciduous
Fruit Family:	Stone fruit (drupe)
Hardiness:	Easily withstands winter temperatures
Light:	Full sun
Size:	30'H & 15'W; varies by variety; may be pruned to desired height & width
Soil:	Well-drained soil required; will not tolerate wet feet
Planting:	Plant during dormancy in Jan – Feb; container specimens can be planted year-round

Jujubes are a reliable producer of small, pitted fruit with a mild apple flavor. Introduced in Texas around 1875, they have survived all over Texas for more than a century. They are low maintenance, partially self-fruitful, and reliably productive year after year.

Care of Jujube Trees

Planting: Plant in full sun in an area with good drainage. Choose a location where you can mow around them to keep root suckers in check. The trees are very upright, so they can be planted 4' or 5' from each other or structures. Dig a hole that is wide and deep enough to easily accommodate the root system, spreading the roots out, if possible. The graft scar line should be a couple of inches above the soil when you finish planting. Backfill with existing soil only, using no amendments. Water in well, and if the soil is dry, water every day for a few days unless it rains.

Pruning: Jujubes do not have to be pruned for production. They can be kept to 10 feet by pruning carefully in winter, making it possible to harvest fruit at its best, just before it starts falling.

Production: Two varieties will improve production but one plant will produce a lot of fruit. Jujubes may take five years or more to bear.

Watering: All fruit trees should get consistent water in the first few years. Watering can come from rain or a hose. During the first year, if the soil under the mulch is dry, provide the tree with about 7 gallons of water per week, preferably once a week. Water slowly. This can be a little more than 3



minutes with a ½” hose and 1 ½ minutes with a 5/8” hose. Remember to account for rainfall when determining how much to water with a hose.

Fertilizing: We recommend an organic program for fruit trees in the home landscape. For a small number of trees, use a slow release organic fertilizer, available at local independent nurseries. If you have a large number of trees, or a small number of trees and a limited budget, you can use cottonseed meal, available at nurseries and feed stores. Use the application rates for one or the other as shown below. Fertilizers should be broadcast under the entire canopy space of the tree. An organic mulch of compost and native mulch, or well-rotted leaves should be maintained at all times as part of your nutrition program.

Slow release organic fertilizer: 1st year – ½ cup; 2nd & 3rd years – 3 pounds. Apply in February or March. Mature trees do not require heavy fertilization.

Cottonseed meal: 1st year – 1.5 cups; 2nd year – 3 cups; 3rd year – 6 cups. Apply in February or March. Mature trees do not require heavy fertilization.

Harvesting: Jujubes will start producing in 3 or 4 years, and the production can be very heavy. They are ready when they start to change color from lime green to a rust color. For best flavor, pick fruit in the early morning.

Using Jujubes: Jujubes can be eaten fresh or used in recipes where apples would be used. Ripe fruits have a mild apple flavor. They are delicious processed into what have been called Red Dates. To dry them, wash and remove stems. Discard any with soft spots. Place the fruit in a large pot and add water to cover. Place a plate on top to prevent fruit from floating. Boil them until just tender, and remove from heat. Pour off the liquid and rinse the fruit. Cut fruit in half and scoop out seeds. Add ½ cup sugar and 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon to a quart of sliced fruit. Stir together carefully. Put back on stove on low heat until sugar is melted and covers the fruit. Remove and let cool. Place fruit on a rack and dehydrate at once in a very low oven or in a dehydrator. Do not over dry jujubes – they should be like soft prunes. Place in a quart plastic bag and freeze. They will keep in the refrigerator for a few days, but will mold if left out at room temperature. For a treat, toast a pecan and wrap a jujube around it.

Varieties of Jujubes for the 2020 Fruit Tree Sale

Sugar Cane

Varieties of Jujubes for Southeast Texas

GA866: This is a UC Davis variety with large 1 ½” – 2”, elongated fruit very high in sugar content. It is described as having a sweet apple flavor that is wonderful when eaten fresh and is excellent candied or dried. It has attractive, glossy leaves and is very drought tolerant. The fruit ripens in September. Hardy to -10° F. Self-fertile. Production on the Gulf Coast has been spotty, so it should only be tried here by growers with a lot of space and an interest in growing several varieties. **150 chill hours**

Lang: Pear-shaped fruits are reddish-brown, dry, wrinkled, sweet and chewy (like dates) when fully ripe in early fall. Attractive, easy-to-grow tree: hardy, drought-resistant, virtually pest and disease free. Requires long, hot summer. Very low chilling requirement. Pollinized by Li.

Li: This fruit is almost round and 3-4 inches long. Round-shaped fruits are larger than Lang. Reddish-brown, dry and wrinkled, sweet and chewy (like dates) when fully ripe in early fall. Attractive, easy-to-grow tree: hardy, drought-resistant, virtually pest and disease free. Requires long, hot summer. Very low chilling requirement. Some people like to eat this cultivar green straight off the tree, but most prefer to pick the fruit when amber spots appear, or even wait until the fruit is completely brown. The fruit ripens well on a kitchen counter or in the refrigerator. Partly self-fruitful, or pollinized by Lang.

Sugar Cane: Extremely sweet fruit on a very productive spiny plant. The fruit is worth the spines! It is a very popular jujube because of its sweet apple-like flavor. Medium-sized fruit is round to slightly elongated. It ripens mid to late September. It is partly self-fruitful and was ranked tied for first among all jujubes by Southeast Texas' jujube guru, the late Sam Powers. **150 chill hours**