



Pomegranate: Planning the orchard site

1. Variety and Rootstock Selection

Choose variety and rootstock based on

- Suitability for growing zone
- Predicted market demand
- Market development, if planting a new cultivar
- Capability and capacity of packing house

Choose a variety that grows well and is in demand.



2. Site selection

Choose sites with

- Abundant water (through rain or irrigation)
- Winter temperatures more than -5 to -15 °C. Note: If frost occurs in spring just before or during bloom, the whole crop can be destroyed.
- Soils that are deep and fertile. Do not grow pomegranate on saline or alkaline soils.

Reduce the risk of frost by

- Avoiding low areas where cold air is trapped by surrounding hills or vegetation
- Making sure the ground is firm, moist and exposed to sunlight by removing ground cover or keeping groundcover low and not cultivating the soil during the cold months
- Planting on north-facing slopes to help trees bloom later

3. Soil preparation

Prepare soil by plowing, tilling or spading before planting. Incorporate organic matter (e.g., well rotted manure or compost) into the top 20-25 cm of soil before planting to allow for timely decomposition and release of nutrients. Apply lime if soil is below pH 7, at a rate of 4.5 kg lime per 9 square meters.

Apply inorganic nitrogen at the rate of 20-55 kg per hectare of actual nitrogen.

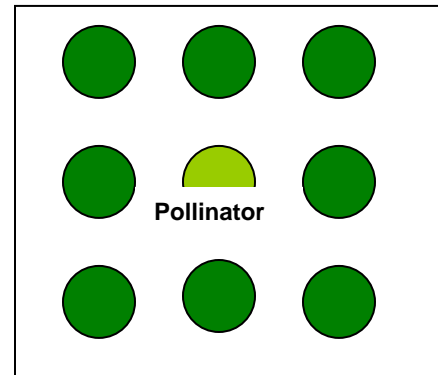
4. Weeds

Remove all weeds before planting.

5. Planting design

Self pollinating: Plant Pomegranates in solid blocks at spacings of up to 5-7 m between rows and 3-5 meters between trees in the row. Use closer spacing for bush forms, and where yields are expected to be higher (e.g., richer soils with adequate water and nutrition).

Cross-pollinated varieties. Plant pollinizers in equal numbers as the cultivars they pollinate, if the pollinizer produces desirable fruit. If the pollinizer fruit is of poor quality, plant 1 pollinizer to every 8 main crop trees, spacing the pollinizers evenly in the orchard (See figure). The most effective design with pollinizers is on a 3 x 3 tree square, with 9 trees and the center tree is a pollinizer; the pattern is every third row and every third tree.



If the pollinator tree has poor fruit, then use a 3 x 3 tree planting pattern with the pollinator in the middle.

Prepared by Louise Ferguson, Kitren GLozer and Mark Bell, June 10, 2008

For more information visit: International Programs www.ip.ucdavis.edu

Copyright © UC Regents Davis campus, 2008. All Rights Reserved.