Ministry of Food Production
Extension Training and Information Services Division

FACT SHEET

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Care and Maintenance of Mango Trees

INTRODUCTION

Mango (*Mangifera indica*) is grown under tropical and subtropical environments around the world.

Grafted mango plants usually take 3 - 4 years to bear while trees grown from seedlings take a longer period.

SELECTING THE VARIETY

Main varieties include: Julie, Starch, Graham, Spice, Rose and Vere.

Plant Julie seedlings approximately 9 m to 11 m (30 ft. - 35 ft.) away from fences and houses. Plant other larger varieties approximately 18 m (60 ft.) away.

SELECTING THE MANGO PLANT

All mango plants offered for sale at the nurseries would most likely be grafted. Choose plants which appear healthy and free from pests and diseases. Ensure that the mango plant is firm in the bag and has no excess roots coming out of the bag.



Figure 1:
Grafted Mango Seedling (Disease - Free and Healthy)

SITE SELECTION AND PLANTING

Mangoes grow best if planted at the start of the rainy season (early May). Select a site with direct sunlight. Mango trees can tolerate a fairly wide range of soil types, but the soil should be well -drained and have a pH of between 5.5 - 7.0.

PREPARATION OF SPOT FOR PLANTING

Dig a hole one and a half times as deep and two times as wide as the root ball (Fig. 2). Prepare a good soil mixture using 2 parts of soil to 1 part of manure and 30 g of a high phosphorus fertilizer such as 12:24:12 when filling the hole. (Especially for clay soils).

AT PLANTING

Remove the bag and trim off any broken or damaged roots. Place the root ball in the hole. Firmly pack the soil mixture in the hole and ensure that the top of the root ball is covered level with the ground (Fig. 3).



Figure 2:
Seedling Showing Root Ball of Plant before Planting



Figure 3:
Root Ball Covered Level with the Ground

NOTE: Avoid planting too close to buildings, power lines and neighbour's property

STAKING

Staking is recommended for mango trees planted in windy areas. Place stakes on the windward side of the plants.

PRUNING

Begin pruning when trees are about 60 cm (2 ft.) in height to obtain a shorter tree. Pruning young branches will stimulate the buds just below the cut to grow.

Select two or three side branches and cut off the remainder of the tree just above the top branch. This will encourage a vase-shaped tree with a well formed domed shaped canopy.

WATERING

In the tropics there is a wet season and a dry season. during the first two years, young trees should be watered every day or two for the first six weeks ensuring that the root ball does not dry out. USE the drip circle as a guide. Thereafter trees are generally only irrigated during the flowering and fruit development period.

FERTILIZER APPLICATION

Upon transplanting, do not place fertilizer in the planting hole as this can burn sensitive roots. Two weeks after, apply 28 g of a complete N:P:K granular fertilizer that has high nitrogen ((N) (e.g. 20:10:10) in a 30 cm (1 ft.) circle around the base of the tree. Ensure that the tree is well-watered after fertilizing. Continue applying 28g of this fertilizer every three months.

In the second year, fertilize every three months using 50 g per application of the 20:10:10 N:P:K fertilizer. Subsequently, use 100 g per tree of a complete fertilizer high in potassium (K) (e.g. 12:12:17+2). This should be applied three times per year using the drip circle as a guide. The tree will continue to produce efficiently up until 30 years.

WEED CONTROL

Weeds compete for water and nutrients in plants. approximately 90 cm (3 ft.) around the plant, weed free.

Mulch is any type of material that is spread or laid over the surface of the soil as a covering. Mulch can be used to control weeds in the first three years after transplanting and it helps retain moisture in the soil. The immediate vicinity around the plant, 90 cm (3 ft) can be kept weed free..

PEST AND DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Newly planted trees may be susceptible to insects and fungi attack. Inspect the trees on a regular basis to see if there is damage. Contact your Local Extension Office to get help in identifying and controlling any pests or diseases.

YIELD

Depending on the variety, your mango trees should produce just over 50 to 100 fruits in the first harvest (after 3 years). and increase to 600 by the third year. A well managed tree should yield 800 to 1000 fruits per tree.



Figure 4: Young Fruits on Tree

USES

Mangoes can be eaten ripe or green. This fruit is very low in Saturated Fat, Cholesterol and Sodium. They are a good source of dietary fiber, Vitamin B6, Vitamin A and Vitamin C. Green mangoes can be pickled and used as condiments; amchar, kuchela or semi sweet sauces. They are cooked in curry and used in many dishes.



Figure 5: Condiments

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