



Plant of the month
Dragon Fruit

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The facts!



Hylocereus undatus (white fleshed fruit)



Hylocereus costaricensis (red fleshed fruit). Also known as *H. polyrhizus*.



Hylocereus megalanthus (yellow skin and white flesh)



The facts!



Tips and tricks



- 1. Choose a suitable site:** Dragon fruit requires full sun exposure and well-draining soil. Choose a site with good air circulation, and avoid low-lying areas that may collect water.
- 2. Plant at the right time:** The best time to plant dragon fruit is in Spring. This allows the plants to establish themselves before the hot summer months.
- 3. Use well-draining soil:** Dragon fruit prefers well-draining soil that is rich in organic matter. If your soil is heavy or clay-like, consider amending it with compost or sand to improve drainage.
- 4. Provide support:** Dragon fruit is a climbing cactus that needs support to grow properly. Install a trellis or other support structure before planting.

Tips and tricks



5. **Water regularly:** Dragon fruit needs regular watering, especially during the hot summer months. Water deeply once a week, or more often in very hot weather.
6. **Fertilize regularly:** Dragon fruit is a heavy feeder, and benefits from regular applications of balanced fertiliser.
7. **Control pests and diseases:** Dragon fruit can be susceptible to a range of pests and diseases, including scale insects, mealybugs, and root rot.



The ecstasy....



*..and
the
pain!*



What went wrong?



1. **Overwatering:** Dragon fruit plants are susceptible to root rot, which can occur when the soil is consistently waterlogged. This can cause the fruit to turn yellow and drop off the plant.
2. **Underwatering:** Conversely, if dragon fruit plants are not watered enough, the fruit can become dehydrated and drop off prematurely.
3. **Inadequate pollination:** Dragon fruit requires pollination to produce fruit, and if pollination is inadequate, the fruit may not develop properly and may fall off prematurely.
4. **Pest or disease infestation:** Pest infestations, such as mealybugs or scale insects, can weaken the plant and cause fruit to drop off prematurely. Diseases such as root rot or anthracnose can also cause premature fruit drop.
5. **Environmental stress:** Dragon fruit plants are sensitive to environmental stressors such as extreme heat, cold, or drought. If the plant is under stress, it may drop fruit prematurely as a survival mechanism.

What have I learned from this??



- **Trimming:** flowers form on the ends of new season growth plus less congestion = bigger fruit
- **Fertilise/compost more regularly**
- **More regular watering during hot weather**





Thank you



Very happy for anyone to
share their own
experiences with Dragon
Fruit!