

# Dates Palm cultivation in desert

Dates are a perennial fruit tree and is very popular in North Africa and the middle East. A date is a stone fruit meaning it is a single seed surrounded by an other fleshy fruit. When dried, dates will be soft, sugar will condense and create great sweetness.

## Growing dates

Before growing dates, we need to first prepare seedlings. If the dates will be planted in large numbers and uniformity is needed, the dates seedlings can be obtained by tissue culture. The seedlings to need to achieve a given size before being transplanted.

When the seedlings are ready, the dates can be transplanted and planted at a distance of 1.5 meters between the trees.

Ensure that you have a source of water from which you can get water for irrigation especially if grown in arid areas.

Dates are perennial trees and take about 2 years to begin producing fruits.

## Dates pollination

In order for the dates to bear fruits, pollination needs to be done.

Pollination is done by transferring pollen from one male flower to a female flower of 2 different plants.

The pollen will be collected from the male flowers and screened/ sieved to prepare for the pollination process.

The pollen is then used to pollinate the female plants.

Since all that male plants do is pollination, farmers some times do not plant them and get the pollen from some other farmers to pollinate their trees.

## Harvesting of dates

After pollination, fruits develop in 1 month and can be harvested depending on the market demand. Some may harvest the

fruits when immature while others harvest the fruits when they have well matured and ripened.

After harvesting, the dates are dried and then sorted.