Passiflora edulis Passion Fruit

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Introduction
Passion fruit is an evergreen, flowering vine from Brazil that climbs by tendrils (Fig. 1). Its height and spread varies depending on the structure it climbs on. The flower is a nice purple and white and generally reaches a width of 3 to 5 inches. Each unique flower lasts about one day, appearing in the summer and early fall. The showy fruit grows 2 ½ to 3 inches long and is edible and often used in juices. It is quite tasty and is occasionally served fresh. The evergreen leaves are deeply cut into three lobes with entire margins.

General Information
Scientific name: Passiflora edulis
Pronunciation: pass-siff-FLOR-ruh ED-yoo-liss
Common name(s): passion fruit
Family: Passifloraceae
Plant type: vine
USDA hardiness zones: 9B through 11 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 9: year round
Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: screen; attracts butterflies; attracts hummingbirds; cascading down a wall
Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description
Height: depends upon supporting structure
Spread: depends upon supporting structure
Plant habit: spreading
Plant density: dense
Growth rate: fast
Texture: medium
Passion fruit is moderately drought tolerant and can be grown in different soils. This plant does require a position in the landscape that receives full sun for best flowering and fruit production. *Passiflora alatocaerulea* is widely planted and forms no fruit. There are many other exotic or introduced *Passiflora* species grown in tropical climates.

There are at least six native species of *Passiflora* in Florida: *incarnata, lutea, multflora, pallens, sexflora*, and *suberosa*. *Passiflora incarnata* is by far the most showy with pink and purple 4-inch-wide flowers appearing in the warm months. Although its natural range extends only slightly into south Florida, it can probably be grown in most of south Florida with little trouble. In most cases, this plant would be preferable over introduced species such as *Passiflora foetida*, which has become invasive in Palm Beach County and is spreading.

Passion fruit is propagated by seeds or cuttings.

**Pests and Diseases**

Nematodes can be a serious problem.

Caterpillars slow growth by eating foliage.

Passion fruit can be supported on a fence, trellis or arbor. Fertilize two or three times each year to maintain vigorous growth.