

# Passiflora edulis Passion Fruit<sup>1</sup>

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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.



Figure 1. Passion fruit

## 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



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## Description

**Height:** depends upon supporting structure

**Spread:** depends upon supporting structure

**Plant habit:** spreading

**Plant density:** dense

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** medium

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## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** lobed

**Leaf shape:** ovate

**Leaf venation:** palmate; pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** purple, white

**Flower characteristic:** summer flowering; fall flowering

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval

**Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches

**Fruit cover:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** yellow

**Fruit characteristic:** suited for human consumption

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig color:** green

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** medium

## Culture

**Light requirement:** plant grows in full sun

**Soil tolerances:** occasionally wet; acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** poor

**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

## Other

**Roots:** not applicable

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Invasive potential:** aggressive, spreading plant

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

## Use and Management

Passion fruit can be supported on a fence, trellis or arbor.

Fertilize two or three times each year to maintain vigorous growth.

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 alata* 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*, *multiflora*, *pallens*, *sexflorea*, 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.