



Easy Edible

Hardy Kiwi:

General info: Hardy kiwis (*Actinidia arguta*) are a climbing vine native to China. Hardy kiwis produce smaller fruit than commercial varieties, but they are also sweeter. The skin is often fuzzless and edible. Many consider the flavor of hardy kiwis to be better than fuzzy kiwis. Kiwis do require a pollinator. Generally, kiwis taste better when they are picked before they are ripe, and then allowed to ripen in a refrigerator.

Landscape uses: Climbing vine for arbors & trellises

Ornamental qualities: canopy of leafy branches; apple green leaves with red petioles; peeling bark & contorted trunk with age

Planting: Plant in a sunny area in well drained, rich soil. Choose a site protected from late spring frosts and summer winds. Plant 15-25' apart; two females on each end with a male in the middle. Be sure to have a sturdy structure for the kiwi to grow on because they can produce up to 100 lbs. of fruit each. An overhead structure like a pergola or t-bar trellis is ideal so the fruit will hang down beneath the vines. Harvesting will be easier when you can walk underneath. Plant at the same depth as grown in the pot. Water the soil after planting to help settle the roots and eliminate air pockets.

Pruning: Prune in winter to train the vines, and again in summer to control rampant growth. Prune out shoots that have produced fruit for 3 or more years, and any shoots growing around a main branch. Kiwis produce fruit on new shoots coming from the previous year's growth. Depending on the rate of growth, these spurs will need to be thinned every 5-6 years.

Male plants are vigorous growers and will need to be pruned immediately after flowering. Cut the flowering shoots back to new growth closer to the lead trunk. Do not prune during the dormant season so that maximum flowering is achieved.

Fertilizing/Watering: Supplemental watering is recommended during periods of drought to ensure proper fruit production. Lack of water can reduce fruit size, and cause fruit to ripen or drop early. Water regularly, but do not over water. Fertilize twice a year in March and June/July.

Varieties:

Kens Red (female): One of the largest smooth skin kiwi. Very prolific. Deep red skin. Red flesh is tangy sweet.

Anna (female): Tangy, sweet, pineapple-like flavor. Red blush on the skin, and beautiful emerald green flesh.

Hardy Male: No fruit. Grown to pollinate female kiwi vines.