Pepino

Solanum muricatum



Pepino fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 9a

Other Names: Pepino Melon, Pepino Dulce, Melon Pear

Description:

A unique, bushy variety sure to turn heads in containers and hanging baskets; produces 5" egg shaped fruit that are buttery yellow with striking purple stripes; sweet and mild, like a melon crossed with cucumber, delicious for fresh eating and preserves

Edible Qualities

Pepino is a perennial vegetable plant that is typically grown for its edible qualities. It produces buttery yellow oval fruit with purple stripes which are typically harvested when mature. The fruits have a sweet taste and a fleshy texture.

The fruit are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Eating When Cooked/Prepared
- Preserves



Pepino fruit and flesh
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Pepino will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round. While it is considered to be somewhat self-pollinating, it tends to set heavier quantities of fruit with a different variety of the same species growing nearby.

This plant is typically grown in a designated vegetable garden. It should only be grown in full sunlight. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America, and it is considered by many to be an heirloom plant.

Pepino is a good choice for the vegetable garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. Because of its spreading habit of growth, it is ideally suited for use as a 'spiller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the edges where it can spill gracefully over the pot. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.