

Pluot

(P.domestica x P. armeniaca) x P. domestica (Rosaceae)

Fast Facts:

Number of Growers: less than 45
Acres in Washington: less than 179
Per Acre Value: \$4000-\$6000

Description of crop:

A Pluot is the tradename for a fruit developed in the late 20th century by Floyd Zaiger and is the registered trademark of Zaiger Genetics. There is a movement in the industry to change the name of Pluots to plumcots. It is a hybrid cross between a plum and an apricot that exhibits more plum-like traits. The Pluot is derived from a half plum, half apricot hybrid called the plumcot. The ratio is 50% plum and 50% apricot. When you cross the plumcot with another plum, the result is a Pluot with a ratio of 75% plum and 25% apricot. Approximately 20 varieties of Pluots have been developed and bred by Zaiger Genetics with each variety containing a different percentage of plum and apricot parentage.

A Pluot is generally larger than a plum and its skin and flesh varies from red to purple to yellow to emerald green. It has an exterior skin that is shiny, round and smooth like a plum's but it can have a speckled appearance which is why they are sometimes known as dinosaur eggs or dinosaur plums. The Pluots flesh is extremely sweet due to their high sugar content. Pluots have an intense flavor with citrus overtones and nutritionally they are full of vitamins A and C. When they are ripe, the fruit will give to slight pressure when touched with your hand and they are very fragrant. Pluots should be handled with care and are hand harvested in July and August. When a Pluot has ripened, its skin will lose its shine. Consumers should avoid Pluots that are green, blemished or have broken skins. They can be ripened at room temperature and can be refrigerated for up to 5 days. Pluots are a stone fruit which are fruits of the botanical family Rosaceae that contain a single hard seed, called a stone, pit, or pip. They are grown on semi-dwarf trees that can grow 8-14" or about three-fourths the size of the standard plum tree. They are pollinated by any other Pluot or Japanese plum.

In Washington, Pluots are grown for local fresh markets. They are eaten fresh or cooked and can be used in jams, jellies, sauces, syrups and pies. For information on apriums, plums, or apricots go to: <http://www.snakeriver.org/wscpr/WSCPRBook.cfm>

Key pests:

The biggest pests are weeds in the orchard which compete with the crop for water, sunlight and nutrients. Tall weeds can block the sprinkler heads, encourage host sites for harmful insects and encourage mice populations. Common weed pests are: quackgrass, bindweed, shepardspurse and dandelion. The main insect pests are the peach twig borer, Oriental fruit moth, plum curl aphid, European red mite, leafrollers and leafhoppers. Diseases that affect production are bacterial gummosis, cytospora canker and shothole.

Key pesticides:

Stone fruits like Pluots are intolerant of many residual herbicides thus growers must apply herbicides more frequently for weed control. Weeds are controlled with Roundup and Gramoxone. Peach twig borer and leafrollers are controlled with Thiodan as a dormant spray, Dimilin pre-bloom and Bacillus thuringensis or Intrepid in the summer. Plum curl aphid and leafhoppers are controlled with Provado. Red mites are controlled with Acramite. The peach twig borer and the Oriental fruit moth are controlled through the use of mating disruption lures.

Critical pest control issues:

Some growers are finding it difficult to pollinate their trees even when using Pluot pollinators, bee scent and hand pollination. Wind can also be an issue on young fruit as it will scar it and affect its marketability. Growers need to be careful when spraying that they don't harm bees. They should choose disease and pest resistant varieties when available.

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Location

of Production: Adams, Chelan, Clark, Douglas, Mason, Okanogan, Stevens, Grant, Klickitat, Yakima, Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla counties.



Pluot Production in Washington State

Pluot



