

Kumquat

Botanical Name: *Fortunella margarita* (Rutaceae)

Common Name: Kumquat, Cumquat

Origin: Central China (Kumquat means 'gold orange' in China)

Distribution: Kumquats are commonly found in China, South and North Korea, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, Japan, the Middle East, Europe (notably Corfu and Greece), southern Pakistan, and the southern United States notably Florida, Louisiana, Alabama and California.

Australian Distribution: Mainly as a decorative home fruit tree.

Description: The Kumquat tree is slow-growing, shrubby, compact, 2-3 metres tall, with the branches light-green and angled when young, thornless or with a few spines. It has sweet, fragrant, small, white flowers, with dark green leaves. The outside of the fruit is edible and bitter/sweet, while the flesh is bitter/tart. Kumquats are yellow/orange and either oval or round in shape. The oval Kumquat is known as Ngami as planted in the Community Orchard. *Fortunella* is often considered as a subgenus of the *Citrus* genus, being closely related to oranges, lemons, limes, pomelos, grapefruit and mandarins.

Varieties: There are four varieties of Kumquats, two varieties being the most common: Ngami and Meiwa. The Ngami is oval-shaped and the Meiwa is more rounded. Meiwa is considered to be the sweeter of the two, yet Ngami is most commonly grown as it is a more vigorous, hardy and prolific producer. Other varieties are the Hong Kong and Marumi Kumquat

Culture: Kumquats grown from seed are often very thorny and inferior and so they are grafted or budded, using rootstock of other more suitable citrus fruit.

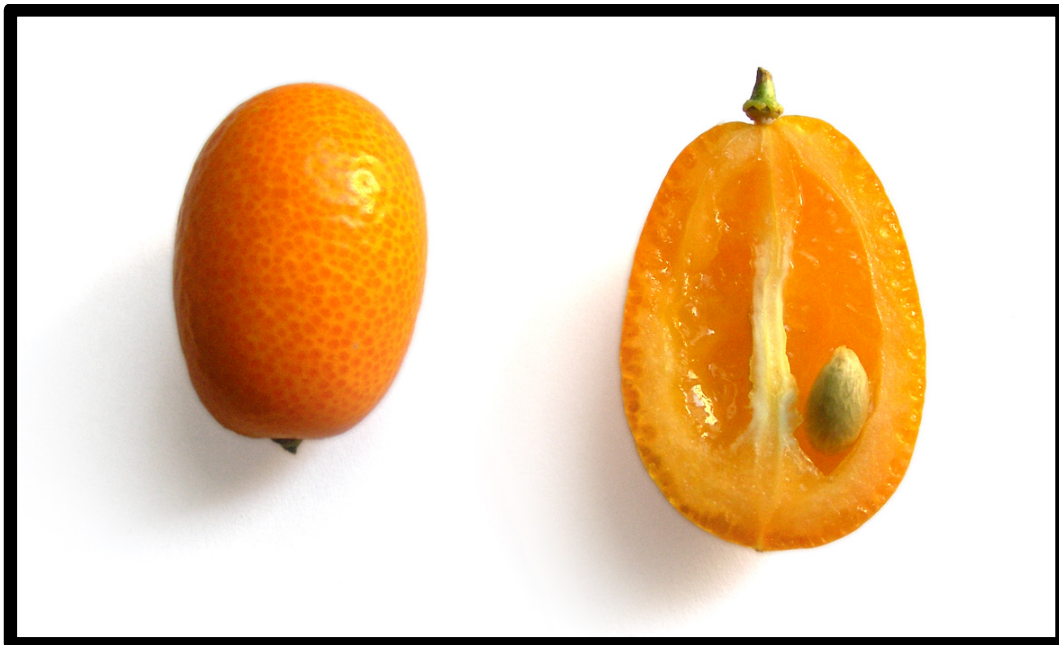
Pests and Diseases: Kumquats are also home to a number of Australian butterfly and moth caterpillars which have adapted to the introduced Rutaceae species. Some have become pests, feeding on the foliage.

Fruiting Season: In the Darwin region, all year round

Harvesting: The fruit is considered ripe when it reaches a yellowish-orange stage and has just shed the last tint of green. Kumquats are often eaten fresh. As the rind

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is sweet and the juicy centre is slightly acidic, the ripe fruit can be consumed fresh, sliced and added to salads, cooking, and preserves or as dried peel.



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