

Melon Tree, *Papaya*, *fifaiy*, *paw-paw*

GENERAL

Origin	: tropical
Vigour	: fast growing
Humidity	: semi-arid, very humid, extremely humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out
Maintenance	: moderate

CONDITIONS

Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium, high
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (1500 ppm)
Hardiness	: 0°C

SHAPE

Type	: tree
Height	: 3 m-8 m
Spread	: 1.5 m-3 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: pastel yellow
Size	: 3 cm - 4 cm
Period	: January - December

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: berry
Fruit size	: 20 cm - 30 cm
Toxicity	: produced for food, edible, fruit

Originating in South America, this evergreen tree, bearing the papaya fruit, grows to a height of up to 8 metres and is often seen on farms in and around Arriyadh where other fruit trees are being cultivated. Occasionally, it will be seen in a garden in the city. The large multi-lobed leaves up to 60 cm across are to be found at the top of the non-branched trunk where the delicious fruits grow throughout the year just under the crown of the leaves. Not very long-lived – perhaps up to 15 years – the papaya tree requires full sun, but appreciates light shade in Arriyadh, obtained from nearby palm trees, which also provide the necessary protection against wind. Trees will grow in most soils, but they must be well drained and irrigation should be regular. Propagated by seeds, they suffer from mealybugs and scale insects. *C. papaya* is useful as a specimen tree in a garden, but does not have any real landscape value.

