

SHRUB FACTS

Trifoliolate Orange, also known as the “**hardy orange**” or “**flying dragon**,” is a **deciduous shrub** that produces an unusually **sour, downy** fruit nearly considered to be inedible when raw—but medicinally beneficial and delicious when cooked. It's commonly juiced, made into marmalades, jams, jellies, or candied. Trifoliolate oranges are slightly smaller than more well-known, conventional oranges, and taste like a blend of lemon and grapefruit. **At 15-20 feet tall with densely tangled and thorny green branches, the shrub is** often planted as a natural barrier hedge. Its **palmate** leaves are **egg-shaped**, typically grow in threes, and smell spicy when crushed. Its fragrant and attractive flowers are white with a yellow stigma and anthers. Trifoliolate oranges are part of the rue or citrus (**RUTACEAE**) botanical family and originated in Northern China and the Korean Peninsula—although they have now spread and become naturalized in parts of the southern United States.

SEASONAL CARE

Trifoliolate oranges prefer direct sunlight but can tolerate shade. They are tolerant to sandy, loamy soil, and soil with high levels of moisture.

WINTER: This shrub is winter-hardy down to -10F! It'll lose its leaves in the winter, but the branches and thorns are evergreen.

SPRING: Flowers will bloom in early spring, followed by the leaves. Light pruning is optional, and mulching or hand-weeding solves its aversion to nearby soil cultivation.

SUMMER: The fruit will appear green while unripe. If extreme drought, additional watering may be needed—although trifoliates are drought and pest resistant.

FALL: The fruit will ripen, turning from green to yellow, ready to harvest in the fall when the fruit has a little 'give.'

NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS

If stored for two weeks after being picked, the hardy orange also can produce a small amount of juice that is rich in vitamin C (boosts immunity). The fruit contains phytochemicals like **coumarins** (antioxidant, increases blood flow). Other known beneficial qualities, utilized in Traditional Eastern Medicine, include **anti-inflammatory, anti-allergenic, and anti-emetic** (soothes nausea) properties. Some even process its thorns and stem bark to **treat toothache or viruses!**

STARTING FRUIT FROM SEED

Cold-stratify stored seeds for one month in the fridge. Store them in a container with a damp paper towel. After one month, sow in early spring in a greenhouse. Once large enough, place seedlings into **individual pots** and nurse them in a **greenhouse** for their first winter. Plant them in their permanent position in early summer. Suitable for sandy, loamy, or clay soils—preferring **well-drained**. Tough and tolerant, it can grow in nutritionally poor soil regardless of the pH quality. Prefers a hardiness zone from 6-10 and full-sun. **The shrubs will establish fairly quickly and fruit heavily--living about 25 years!** The shrub produces many seedlings at the base which can also be up-potted to establish new plants.

