Kaffir Lime

Citrus hystrix

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Makrut Lime, Thai Lime, Mauritius Papeda

Description:

Attractive foliage is displayed on this small, dwarf variety; the dense fruit and leaves are used for flavoring foods; protect from frost; great container plant for the patio or indoors in colder climates

Edible Qualities

Kaffir Lime is a medium-sized shrub that is typically grown for its edible qualities. It produces green oval fruit which are usually ready for picking from early spring to late winter. The fruits have a tart taste.

The fruit are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Cooking
- Juice-Making
- Sauces

Features & Attributes

Kaffir Lime features showy clusters of fragrant white star-shaped flowers with buttery yellow eyes at the ends of the branches from early spring to late winter. It has attractive dark green evergreen foliage. The glossy oval leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter. It produces green berries from early spring to late winter.



Kaffir Lime fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Kaffir Lime foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition. This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting birds, bees and butterflies to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Aside from its primary use as an edible, Kaffir Lime is sutiable for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Hedges/Screening
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Kaffir Lime will grow to be about 5 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It has a low canopy, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 50 years or more.

This plant is typically grown in a designated edibles garden. It does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. 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.

Kaffir Lime is a good choice for the edible garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.