PASSION FRUIT CULTIVATION

Introduction
Passionflower is a rustic, adaptable crop. The plant is a fast-growing perennial climber with a tough, woody texture; the fruit is a large, egg-shaped berry measuring up to 10cm across and weighing up to 90g.

The many varieties of passion fruit vary according to their coastal or forest location. Typical varieties are Hawaii, Brasil and Venezuela.

Growing
The passionflower grows in warm regions of 20-30°C temperature, with a minimum annual rainfall of 1,500mm.

Soils should be loose, well-drained and at least 1m deep, and without problems of salinity.

Blight and Disease
Blight: Plant lice, worms, citrus red mites (Panonychus citri), and green scale (coccus viridis, an insect pest of citrus plants.)

Disease: virosis (diseases caused by viruses)

Harvesting
The fruit is harvested eight months after planting.
The fruits are at optimum maturity when they fall from the mother plant.

Pruning
Over-frequent pruning is ill-advised, as this can diminish production and hinder the growth of the plant.

Pruning does reduce risk of blights and disease but should only be carried out when necessary, such as to prevent the plant growing too heavy or to cut back vegetation that will hinder picking.

Post Harvest
Windfall fruits should be gathered at least once a week, in order for them not to deteriorate.
The fruits should be in good condition, without bruises, insect holes or phyto-pathological infection.

Once gathered, place the passion fruits in a cold, dry place: 4-6°C, with a high level of humidity.

To give the fruits a smooth and even appearance, seal them in plastic bags.
The main problem with exporting passion fruit is a significant shrinking (loss of weight), causing the outer skin to wrinkle.
Uses
The seeds and flesh are good to eat, the flesh suiting juices, ice cream and confectionery, and so on.

Passion Fruit is used industrially in tinned food, juices, jams etc. It is also used medicinally as a muscular relaxant.

Links
Passion Flower Seed Company & National Collection of Passiflora
http://www.passiflora-uk.co.uk/cultivation.shtml

Infonet Biovision
http://www.infonet-biovision.org/default/ct/199/crops

References and further reading
- **Passion Fruit Jam** Technical Brief Practical Action
  Recipe and method for the small-scale production of passion fruit jam.
- **Passion Fruit Juice** Technical Brief Practical Action
  Recipe and method for the small-scale manufacture of passion fruit juice.
- **Estudio económico productivo del Perú**. PERU ACORDE, 2003.
  Study of Peru’s production economy

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This document was translated by Edward Stevens for Practical Action from the Spanish document *Cultivo de Maracuyá Ficha Técnica 29*, Soluciones Prácticas
La ficha describe de manera clara y sencilla información sobre el manejo adecuado del maracuyá en relación al tipo de suelo, cosecha, etc.

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