

Dates

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Introduction

Phoenix dactylifera, commonly known as date or date palm, is a flowering plant species in the palm family, (Arecaceae) cultivated for its edible sweet fruit called dates. They have been used since the ancient times. The species is widely cultivated across Northern Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, and is naturalized in many tropical and subtropical regions worldwide. Date palms differ from other fruits because they have four botanical phases of development after cultivation. Those stages are Kimri, Khalaal, Rutab and Tamr. In agrarian communities, dates can serve as rich sources of cheap food as well as energy for the growing population, thereby improving food security. They contribute to health by providing carbohydrates (including soluble sugars), proteins, lipids as well as minerals and certain essential vitamins to the body.

It is also known to be rich in polyphenols and functional dietary fiber that help to maintain the digestive tracts. Antimutagenic, antioxidant, anticarcinogenic and anti-inflammatory bioactivities have been attributed to the contribution of polyphenols. With the continuously increasing demands for natural, cheap and nutritive food, creating more awareness about the health benefits of fruits such as dates could help to increase their commercial and nutritive importance.

Table. 1 Scientific Classification

Kingdom	Plantae
Division	Magnoliophyta
Class	Liliopsida
Order	Arecales
Family	Arecaceae
Genus	Phoenix

Species	P.dactylifera
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Nutritional Health Benefits of Dates:

Dates are rich in polyphenols. These compounds provide a wide variety of health benefits, such as better digestion, diabetes management, and even cancer prevention. While many dried fruits have high polyphenol content, dried dates are the richest source among many dry fruits. As dates also contain dietary fibre, which is the edible portion of analogous or plant carbohydrate that resist absorption and breakdown in the human small intestine with partial or complete fermentation in the large intestine. Dietary fiber offers some vital health benefits such as reduction in cholesterol present in the body by lipoprotein, or "bad," cholesterol levels, anti-obesity, less risk of developing enhancement of gut-health and bowels through faecal bulk as well as production of short-chain fatty acids and antidiabetic property. As when it comes to containing of phytochemicals in dates they are products of plant chemicals that are therapeutic in action when consumed as medicinal drugs or as a components of daily diets, As observed in most fruits, bioactive compounds like carotenoids, polyphenols majorly phenolic acids and flavonoids, sterols and tannins are observed in varying quantities in dates.

Different Types of Dates



Medjool Dates



Deglet Noor Dates



Khudri Dates



Mazafati Dates



Piarom Dates

Medjool dates

Medjool dates are a variety of dates enjoyed for their natural sweetness. They're larger, darker, and more caramel-like in taste than other common types like Deglet Noor. As tropical stone fruits, they have a single pit surrounded by edible flesh. Native to Morocco, Medjool dates come from the date palm tree (*Phoenix dactylifera*) and are now grown in warm regions of the United States, the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa. They're often sold dried but not dehydrated, making them soft and sticky. Their sugars become more concentrated as they dry, which further increases their sweetness.

Deglet Noor dates

The Deglet Noor is a medium sized date with a narrow elongated oval shape. They range in color from straw yellow to amber toned with a slight translucent exterior. Their texture is considered semi-dry and often described as having a slight snappy crunch. Compared to the Medjool, they have less sugar but offer a complex sweetness with a nutty finish likened to browned butter and cashew. Deglet Noor dates are a rich source of fiber, iron, potassium, B-vitamins, flavonoids and antioxidants. Deglet Noor dates are available late summer and fall.

Khudri dates

Khudri dates are larger in size relative to other dates. Khudri is quite popular date type because it is not unique to any particular country, hence you'll find it in quite an array of quality types with this date Khudri dates are soft and dark in color, the date is also referred to as Khadrawi and Khadrawy. The meaning of the word in Arabic translates to the color green due to the fact that when the date is in its Rutab state it is very green in color. Apart from the fact that dates are a good source of natural sugars, Khudri dates are very rich with magnesium, and also a great source of fiber so they very supportive to a healthy digestive system.

Mazafati dates

Mazafati date or mozafati and Bam date; also called muzati in Balochi) is a cultivar of the palm date. It is a dark, soft, fleshy and sweet date of medium size, about 2.5–4.5 cm (1–2 in) with a relatively high moisture content of between 32-35%, varying with the time of harvest and the location of the grove. Mazafati is a cultivar of the palm date. It is a dark, soft,

fleshy and sweet date of medium size, about 2.5–4.5 cm with a relatively high moisture content of between 32-35%, varying with the time of harvest and the location of the grove.

Piarom dates

Piarom is a cultivar of the palm date. It is large, with thin, black-brown skin. It is one of the semi-dry date varieties. Many Piarom dates are produced in the vicinity of Hajjiabad, Hormozgan in southern Iran. They have a unique sweet taste and natural aroma. Their thin, wrinkled skin that fully clings to the meaty flesh and their dark brown color makes them recognizable from other types of dates. With less than 15% moisture, Piarom dates fall under the semi-dry category.

Conclusion

Dates have a long and rich history. They are staples in the middle east. They are healthy and rich in nutrition. As in above there's some important information about dates in this short space. Though these information are not fully covered about dates but this will help in knowing and briefing about the very dry fruit of dates.

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