



UNIVERSITÀ  
CATTOLICA  
del Sacro Cuore



MILANO



FONDAZIONE  
ROMETO ED ENRICA INVERNIZZI

PRODUZIONE DI CIBO APPROPRIATO: sufficiente, sicuro, sostenibile

## GUAVA (Fam. Myrtaceae, *Psidium guajava* L., syn. Tropical Guava)

### PLANTING

Tropical and sub-tropical fruits plants are evergreen and they arrive from the nursery in container or with a root ball. So to planting out it is necessary prepare a hole with the soil broken up below and to the sides to allow root penetration. The hole may have the diameter double of the diameter of the container but at least about 60 cm width, 60 cm length and 60 cm depth, in this way plants should be planted at the same depth as they were in the container.

Generally it is beneficial to dig in a small amount well-rotted manure or granular fertilizer, below the root zone. Plants also benefit from organic compost being mixed with the soil above the layer with the fertilizer: in this way the roots are not in direct contact with its. Add water directly to the top of the root ball to ensure the roots are kept moist, while keeping the trunk as dry as feasible. And, finally, control that the graft is not covered by the soil (fig. 1).

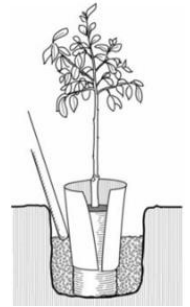


Fig. 1

### BEST LOCATION AND TREE SPACING

Tropical guava grows best in full sun. It is not very wind tolerant if grown from cuttings or have been air-layered, and the whole tree can topple over. And it is fairly salt tolerant, so could be grown in maritime locations. To enhance fruit flavour, grown the trees where warm autumn temperatures are likely. If possible, allow 5-8 m between trees, with wider distances in areas where trees grow vigorously: they can reach 7-10 m of height (fig. 2).



Fig. 2

### PRUNING

Guava trees can be pruned to a vase shape with 4-5 main scaffold branches (fig. 3). Encourage branches with wide angles, which allow light to penetrate and fruit to form better. But in general pruning is not intensive both in young and mature trees. It is important to remember that fruits are borne on new growth, so pruning interventions does not interfere with next year's crop. Shaping the tree and removal of suckers or damaged stems is often all that is needed, though trimming off the ends of the main stems will encourage new lateral growth, which will produce more fruits. The other possibility is that trees become too top heavy and dense, produce too much fruits and their branches are liable to be damaged: this could be avoid by branch thinning.



Fig. 3

### FRUITING BIOLOGY

Flowers are produced in spring-summer in sub-tropical regions but also for most of the year in tropical regions. They are hermaphrodite, so trees are self-fertile but cross pollination can increase fruits production.

### FRUIT USES

Fruits are round-oval pear shaped (fig. 4). They are used fresh or in some cases cooked. But if they are cooked the vitamin C content will be destroy. They also have good levels of vitamin A and potassium, the seeds contain about 14% of aromatic oil.



Fig. 4