
PAPAYA AND PAPAW INFORMATION SHEET

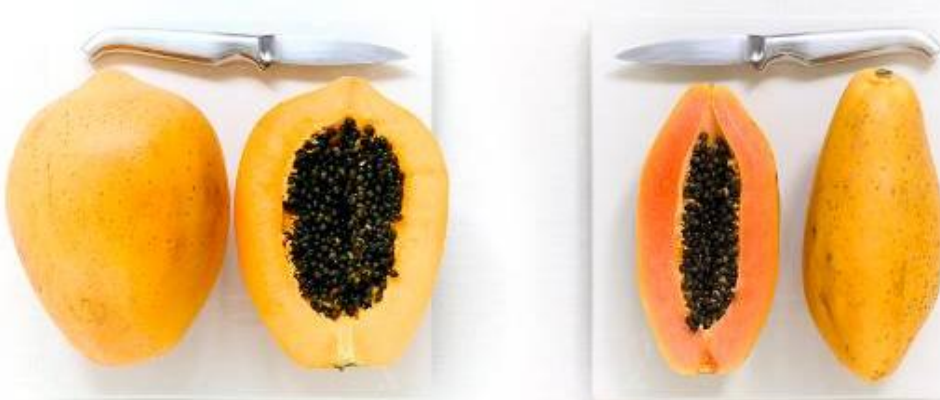
THE FACTS

Australian papaya and papaws are an exotic, tropical fruit with a juicy, sweet flavour.

Consumers have long been confused about the difference between these fruit and the fact is that while they are the same species *Carica papaya*, the fruit known as papaya looks and tastes quite different to the fruit known as papaw.

The differences generally are –

- **Papaw:** Distinct yellow flesh and tends to be a larger fruit
- **Papaya:** Orange to red flesh and usually a smaller oval or pear shaped fruit



Both fruits are harvested all year round with production peaks during autumn and spring.

15,000 tonnes of papaya and papaw are produced annually. Although production fluctuates from year to year, it is forecast to increase in 2005.

Production annually tends to be split as follows;

- **Yellow papaw: 60 %**
 - **Red papaya: 40%**
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SELECTION, STORAGE AND SERVING HINTS

Selection

Papayas and papaws are harvested when most of the skin is yellow-green. Dark green fruit will not ripen properly off the tree, even though it may turn yellow on the outside.

After several days of ripening at room temperature, they will be almost fully yellow and slightly soft to the touch.

The papaya and papaw is a fragile fruit that is easily damaged. It needs careful handling to prevent skin blemishes and bruising. Light, superficial blemishes, found on most fruit, may be disregarded as they often result from leaf rub or in some instances wind abrasion which does not affect the internal eating quality of the fruit.



Storage

Papayas and papaws can be ripened at room temperature and are ready to eat when the skin is yellow and slightly soft to the touch. They can be stored in the fridge for a few days once ripe.



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Serving

Papayas and papaws are often sliced and eaten on their own...Squeeze fresh lime or lemon on the ripe fruit to make it that little bit extra special.

To slice and serve follow the four easy steps.....



1. Starting from the base and cut the fruit in half;
2. Scoop out the black pips from the inside (*hint... don't throw these away, as they can be used / eaten);
3. Place fruit skin side down and slice length ways in thin strips, and;
4. De-skin each fruit strip by carefully gliding a knife under the fruit and chop in cubes to your preferred thickness.

Papaya and papaws are also perfect served and/or cooked with a myriad of other foods, in both savoury and sweet dishes, hot and cold drinks. Complementary flavours include: cinnamon; nutmeg; lemon; orange; honey; vanilla; apricot nectar; lime; mint; almonds; orange; passionfruit; ricotta; fruit toast; maple syrup and yoghurt.

HARVESTING

Papaya and papaws are a soft-wooded, perennial plant that lives for approximately five years. It normally grows as a single stem up to 4m high.

A labour intensive crop, papaya and papaws require harvesting and packing at least once a week all year round. Due to the heat, harvesting and packing is required twice a week in the Northern Queensland regions.

As they grow best in warmer climates, papaya and papaws are predominately grown in Northern Queensland areas including Innisfail, Mareeba, Proserpine, Yarwun, Gympie and the Sunshine Coast districts, as well as in the Northern Territories and Western Australia.



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HEALTH BENEFITS

Papaya / papaw contains a wide variety of vitamins and minerals necessary for wellbeing.

- Just one average slice (150g) provides more than twice your daily requirement for vitamin C, plus vitamin A (essential for good growth and vision), calcium, iron, carbohydrates and a wealth of protective antioxidant carotenoids.
- It is low in sodium and kilojoules, papaya is also fat free.
- Papaya has a lower glycemic index for longer lasting energy.
- Including papaya in your diet can add a valuable source of fibre. Fibre helps keep you regular.
- Papaya contains papain, a natural enzyme that helps with the break down of proteins.
- The soft texture of the fruit and its rich quantity of vitamin C makes papaya an ideal first fruit for babies.

A major problem in our diet today is that we only partially digest the protein in the foods we consume. The proteolytic action of papain, (an active principal enzyme found in papaya) can help break down the protein (carbohydrates and fats) and help reduce lymphatic congestion.

The papain in the mature green papaya or papaw works to break down various protein foods so that individual amino acids are produced and auto-intoxicating or other undesirable, undigested substances are avoided, ultimately aiding quick absorption by the body.

Since papain acts impartially in acid, neutral and alkaline mediums, it is extremely valuable for anyone who has weak or sensitive digestion due to enzyme deficiencies that have developed over the years. Papain is harmless to living tissue and is a must for the maintenance of a healthy intestinal tract.



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Papaya / Papaw Nutritional Values Per 100g edible portion only

Water	89.3g
Energy	123 kJ 29 kcal
Protein	0.4g
Fat	0.1g
Carbohydrate (total)	6.9g
Carbohydrate (sugar)	6.9g
Dietary fibre	2.3g
Cholesterol	Nil
Sodium	7mg
Potassium	140mg
Calcium	28mg
Magnesium	14mg
Iron	0.5mg
Zinc	0.3mg
Beta-carotene	910ug
Thiamin	0.03mg
Riboflavin	0.03mg
Niacin	0.3mg
Vitamin C	60mg (171% of RDI)
Vitamin A Eq.	150 µg

Source: **FSANZ**

Per 120g edible portion only

Glycemic index	56 (low to moderate)
Glycemic load	4.6 (low)

Source: University of Sydney / www.glycemicindex.com

DID YOU KNOW !

- Its papain makes raw papaya / papaw an excellent meat tenderiser.
- Green papaya or papaw are often eaten as a vegetable and often in savoury dishes like Asian salads
- In the West Indies, young papaya and papaw leaves are also cooked and eaten like spinach.
- Papaya or papaw tea
If you come across papaya or papaw leaves they can be used as a refreshing tea. Chop up three leaves and cook in one litre of water. Simmer until the water is reduced to half, strain and store in the refrigerator. For preventative measures it is used much the same way that the Japanese drink green tea.
- Papaya or papaw pepper
The seeds may be dried in a dehydrator then ground in a mortar and pestle and used like pepper.

Sources:

Queensland Government – www.dpi.qld.gov.au / www.harmonic-health.com

California Rare Fruit Growers – www.crfg.org / www.rejoiceinlife.com