

Title Postharvest physiology and handling of tamarillos (*Cyphomandra betacea*)
Authors Portela, S. I.
Citation Avances en Horticultura Vol: 4 (1999, publ. 2001); 40-50

Abstract

The tamarillo (*Cyphomandra betacea*) is a red, dark red or yellow-skinned, depending on the type, berry; with a succulent pulp and two locules with many seeds surrounded by a mucilaginous, juicy tissue with a sweet-sour flavour. During development it follows a simple sigmoid growth curve and during ripening it behaves as a non-climacteric fruit. Tamarillos are commercially mature at 21-24 weeks after anthesis. Maturity is indicated by colour, firmness, juice content and soluble solids content. The optimum storage conditions are 3.0-4.5 deg C and 90-95% relative humidity; below 3.0 deg C the fruit is affected by low-temperature disorders and above 4.5 deg C fungal decay increases markedly. The development of fungal rots during storage is the most important cause of postharvest losses and it is controlled with a hot water dip (50 deg C for 8-10 minutes) in combination with a postharvest fungicide and wax treatment. Other factors that affect fruit quality are its susceptibility to several viruses that cause the skin to mottle and the presence of 'stones' of silicates in the flesh, the cause of which is not determined. This review highlights research needed to improve production and postharvest handling of this fruit.