

# Pomegranate Juice fight cancer and Prevents many other disorders

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The pomegranate is valued for its delicious juice as well as its nutritive and therapeutic qualities. Some like to eat its seeds while others like to drink pomegranate juice. It is believed to have its origins in northern Africa and western Asia from where it spread to other tropical and subtropical regions of the world. It can tolerate extreme temperatures.

Wild forms of the pomegranate grown in areas of Kashmir and Murree Hills, being sour, are utilised to make anaar dana, which is used in pulse and vegetable dishes in the subcontinent. Among the Muslim countries, Afghanistan, Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States are noted producers and exporters of fresh pomegranates. Other major producers are India, Pakistan, China and USA.

Pomegranate can be propagated from seed, but seed pomegranate fruits are inferior in quality, hence 40m-long cuttings from a one-year old branch of the pomegranate tree and air (another method of propagation) are mostly practised to ensure desired results. The cuttings, after a year of planting, are re-transplanted in orchards and the tree starts bearing fruit in three years.

Year	Punjab	KPK	Baluchistan	Total
2008-09	2,208	264	11,022	13,494
2009-10	2,191	276	10,831	13,298
2010-11	1,910	224	10,809	12,943
2011-12	1,747	223	10,822	12,792
2012-13	1,614	233	9,339	11,186
2013-14	1,785	234	10,820	12,839
2014-15	1,790	234	10,885	12,909

Source: Agriculture Statistics of Pakistan - 2014-15 Government of Pakistan

Pomegranate fruit has good staying quality and can be kept in cold storage for two to three months without any harm to its quality. Pomegranate juice is a panacea for high blood pressure and cardiac patients. The juice can also fight cancers and prevents many other disorders. The edible parts of pomegranate fruit is 52% of total fruit weight, comprising 78% of juice and 22% seeds.

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## Production

In Pakistan, Baluchistan is the main producer of pomegranates, although Khyber Pakhtunkhawa and Punjab are also producing pomegranates in isolated areas on a small scale. Total area under Pomegranate cultivation is 12,909 hectares with the production of 45,907 tonnes in 2014-15. The tree is bushy, with thorny branches, and grows to a height of five meters with brilliant orange flowers. It can be grown in a variety of soils, but for commercial cultivation well-drained and loamy soil is considered the best. The round, melon-sized fruit is full of many tiny red or white seeds, tightly packed artistically in thin, papery sacs in a brown, hard rind. Province-wise of area and production of Pomegranate are shown in Table-1 and Table-2.

Pomegranate is rich in calcium, phosphorus, iron, vitamin C, and folic acid. It is an anti-oxidant, blood thinner, reduces systolic BP and heart related problems. It is believed to help prevent Alzheimer's disease and gives protection to arteries. One glass of pomegranate juice daily is considered ideal to remain in good health.



## Export

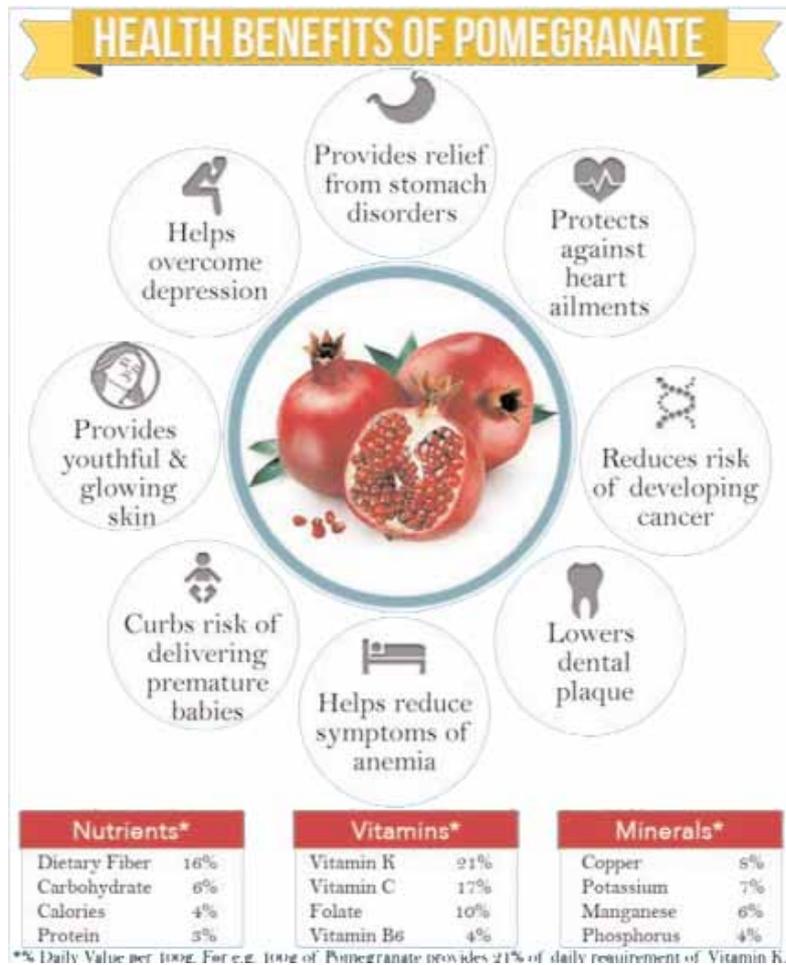
Export of Pomegranate from Pakistan increased from Rs 7.547 million in 2014-15 to Rs 7.916 million in 2015-16, thus showing an increase of 5%. Pakistan mainly exports Pomegranate to Saudi Arabia, UAE, Canada, Oman, Kuwait, USA, and Afghanistan.

UAE is the largest importer with market share of about 60% while Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan are second and third largest importers with shares of 38% and 10% respectively. Balochistan is famous for the high quality of Pomegranate.

The top five importing countries Pomegranate are the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Oman and Afghanistan with import valued at Rs \$8.73 million. Country-wise export of Pomegranate from Pakistan are given in Table-3.

Recent research has shown that pomegranate juice helps to reduce fat around the stomach, risk of stroke, kidney disorders and regulates frequency of urine. Pomegranate has the power to treat jaundice and cough. The juice of the young leaves is styptic and was given to young children suffering from dysentery by grannies. Bark of the trunk expels intestinal worms and also reduces enlarged spleen. The juice is also used to make jellies, beverages and hot and cold sauces for seasoning of cakes.

Pomegranate is a fruit with multiple benefits and worthy of our appreciation and is available in the market from September to February. Kandhari or Kabuli seeds are pulpy, juicy and rated as one of the best quality. Pomegranate seeds are sold by street fruit sellers with a lacing of spices to make it tasty.



Pomegranate cultivation in Pakistan, due to some favourable pockets in the country, needs encouragement. New germplasm need to be imported from the

same climatic regions to fit in our climate. Problems like cracking of the fruit are common and need control measures to increase production at home and export

Fruits are one of the oldest forms of food known to man. According to The "Holy Quran", the fruits like grape, date, fig, olive and pomegranate are the gifts and heavenly fruits a God.

Pomegranate (*Punica granatum*L.) belongs to the Punicacea family. It is a popular fruit growing well under semi-arid mild-temperate to subtropical and naturally adapted to regions with cool winters and hot summers, and an impor-

**Table-1: Area Under Pomegranate (Hectares)**

Year	Punjab	KPK	Baluchistan	Total
2008-09	15,667	1,038	43,604	60,309
2009-10	15,353	1,374	35,214	51,941
2010-11	13,304	1,211	35,031	49,546
2011-12	11,859	1,167	35,072	48,098
2012-13	11,038	1,072	32,606	44,716
2013-14	11,250	1,075	34,606	46,931
2014-15	11,019	1,078	33,810	45,907

Source: Agriculture Statistics of Pakistan - 2015-16 Government of Pakistan

## Exclusive on Pomegranate

tant fruit in Pakistan. Pomegranate is widely distributed in the tropical and subtropical regions of the world, even if its importance in the world-wide trade is still limited. The pomegranate is one of the oldest known edible fruits grown in many subtropical countries, especially in the Mediterranean region and also growing extensively in Iran, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia and in the subtropical areas of South America.

Pomegranate (*Punica granatum*L.) is becoming more popular because of its healthy properties (antiatherogenic, antioxidant, antihypertensive, etc.), which have been widely shown. Generally, the edible parts of pomegranate are used for the preparation of canned beverages, jelly, jam, paste and especially fresh juice which can be obtained from the arils or the whole fruit.

The pomegranate plant inherently develops numerous trunks. In orchards, plants are normally trained to a single trunk, forming a large shrub or small tree, and reaching a height of 12 to 20 ft at maturity. Trees may be trained to multiple trunks in colder areas, to reduce risk of total tree loss. The pomegranate plant is more or less spiny and deciduous, with small, narrow, oblong leaves with short stems.

In nature, wild pomegranate trees are reproduced by seed and thus there is a vast population in the regions where pomegranate is found. Pomegranate can be easily grown by cuttings and suckers and this has enabled to pass over the valuable genetic materials for centuries. The pomological and chemical properties of pomegranate varieties reveal signifi-

cant variations [6, 7]. Fruit cracking is one of the physiological disorders wherever pomegranate trees are grown. It may be due to moisture imbalances as this fruit is very sensitive to variation in soil moisture. Prolonged drought causes hardening of peel and if this is followed by heavy irrigation, the pulp grows and then peel grows and cracks.

Pomegranates have originated from Iran. It is cultivated in Spain, Egypt, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, Japan, Russia, America, and India. Maharashtra State is the leading producer of pomegranates in India. In India more than 0.1 million hectares of area is under pomegranate cultivation presently. In Maharashtra pomegranate is cultivated in the districts of Solapur, Nasik, Ahemadnagar, Pune, Sangli, Dhule, Latur, Usmanabad, Jalna, Parbhani, Aurangabad, Beed and Satara.

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**Table 3: Country-wise Export of Pomegranate from Pakistan**

Quantity: Tonnes  
Value: Rs. 000

Country	2015-16		2014-15	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
Afghanistan	7,200	774	8,149	2,471
U.A.E	46,721	4,690	18,752	2,961
Saudi Arabia	12,820	3,048	1,643	193
Belgium	2,400	203	701	51
Bahrain	1,573	136	2,014	150
Canada	1,880	157	--	--
Kuwait	2,200	209	1,800	114
Oman	2,270	203	528	50
U.S.A	1,123	173	26	3
All Others	3,695	1,677	9,009	1,554
<b>Total</b>	<b>81,882</b>	<b>7,916</b>	<b>42,622</b>	<b>7,547</b>

Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

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