

## Canary Island Date Palm

### *Phoenix canariensis*

#### Plant Description:

This is the largest palm used in Florida landscapes reaching heights of 50 to 60 feet and trunk diameters of 3 to 4 feet after many years. It is a longed lived evergreen perennial tree with blooms in spring or early summer, followed by orange date-like, ornamental fruits in summer and fall. This impressive tree is too large for most residential landscapes, having leaves up to 15 feet long and heavily armed petioles.

Mature Size: 50 to 60 feet in height with crown spread of 20 to 25 feet

Growth Rate: Slow

Plant Habit: Single trunked tree

Plant Spacing: 25 to 30 feet

#### Ornamental Characteristics & Uses:

Foliage Color: Medium green

Flower Color: Cream-colored  
(Inconspicuous)

Bloom Time: Spring – Early Summer

Attracts Wildlife: Nectar and pollen source for bees

Uses: Best used as a street tree or as a free-standing specimen in large lawn spaces and large commercial building landscapes.



## **Growing Requirements:**

Cold Hardiness Zones: 8 – 10

Hardy Temp: Leaves will burn in upper teens to around 20° F, while the terminal bud can survive near 0° F.

Exposure: Full Sun

Water Needs: Low to Moderate (after establishment)

Soil Tolerances: Drought tolerant and moderately salt tolerant, prefers sandy loam but tolerates most well drained soils.

Soil pH: Prefers slightly acid (6 to 6.5)

Maintenance: Easy/Low

## **General Care & Growing Tips:**

Use of “Palm Special” (4-1-6-2 ratio of N-P-K-Mg) fertilizers will prevent Magnesium deficiency and other nutrient related problems. Prune only to remove obviously dead leaves that are hanging below the horizontal. Be cautious of large dangerous spines on leaf petioles.

## **Common Pests:**

Palm weevils may attack stressed trees which is best avoided by careful handling during transplanting and adequate watering during establishment. Stressed or damaged trees are subject to Ganoderma root rot which forms a conk at the base of the tree, but is best avoided by prevention of damage and care not to over water. Susceptible to lethal yellowing disease. Minor pests include palm leaf skeletonizer caterpillars and leaf spots during periods of high humidity.

**Reference:** Gilman, E. F. and Watson, D. G. (1993). *Phoenix canariensis*: Canary Island Date Palm. University of Florida. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/st439>

*This fact sheet was written by Dr. Kyle Brown, Baker County Master Gardener, and edited by Alicia Lamborn, Baker County Horticulture Agent.*