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Early apricot varieties are already on the market

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In the Silistra region there are over 27,000 decares of apricot plantations. At the Apricot and Agriculture Experimental Station in Silistra, a collection plantation of 500 varietal samples is cultivated, 11 of which have been bred there. This year's crop has been almost completely destroyed by prolonged rains, low temperatures and frosts. Despite the severe climatic conditions, the first apricots – early varieties – appeared on the market this week, at a price of 3 BGN per kilogram.

The prolonged March rains and large temperature amplitudes have caused irreversible damage to almost 80% of the apricot crop. The adverse climatic conditions have impeded the processes of pollination and fertilization of the trees, as well as caused loss of blossom in the later varieties, reported the Apricot Experimental Station in Silistra.

Apricot and Agriculture Experimental Station in Silistra

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Although it is administratively part of the Agricultural Academy, the Apricot and Agriculture Experimental Station in Silistra is registered under the Commercial Act and is not entitled to a budget and subsidies. The funds for maintenance and scientific research must be provided from its own revenues. In the Silistra region this is difficult, even though apricots are among the traditional fruit species grown in the Danubian Dobrudzha area.

In recent years the researchers from the Apricot and Agriculture Experimental Station in Silistra have bred two new apricot varieties – “Drastar” and “Istar”. The apricot is a fruit with incomparable taste qualities, which is also actively used in natural medicine due to its rich content of vitamins and minerals.

Apricots – a tasty fruit or natural medicine

The apricot (Prunus armeniaca) is a plant species from the family Rosaceae. The homeland of the apricot is Northeastern Armenia. Wild apricot is still found in Central Asia, Dagestan, and Northeastern Armenia. In the Himalayas it grows even at an altitude of 4,000 m above sea level. As a cultivated species it has been grown in Armenia for 3,000 years, from where its distribution began – Persia, Asia Minor. It reached Europe only in the 1st century, but for a long time it was grown only in monastic and princely gardens. In Bulgaria the apricot became a fruit crop after the Liberation. The most popular varieties are Silistra (for compote), Kishinev Early, Hungarian, Roxana and others.

Apricots contain:

niacin (vitamin B3), necessary for muscle elasticity;

folic acid (B9), important for the process of blood formation and cell growth;

pantothenic acid (B5), necessary for vitality, fat burning, and beautiful hair;

vitamin C, supporting the immune system;

vitamin B17, also known as amygdalin. In alternative medicine it is used in cancer therapy.

The 2,500 IU of carotene contained in just 3 apricots represents half of a person’s daily requirement of vitamin A. Carotene protects against the harmful effects of free radicals, which is why apricot is particularly beneficial for smokers.

potassium, necessary for the functioning of the heart muscle;

iron and copper, which together with folic acid make the apricot an ideal fruit for people suffering from anemia;

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magnesium, thanks to which apricots quickly and for a long time lower elevated blood pressure;

Furthermore, magnesium in combination with phosphorus is beneficial to the body during intensive mental activity, which is why apricots increase mental performance and improve memory.

The apricot slows down the ageing processes of the body, stimulates cardiac activity and strengthens the heart muscle, stimulates cell formation and improves blood composition, and helps with throat and nasal problems and with asthma.