Advice for growers

**Planting**

Like its parents, Elstar and Delcorf, Zari is a strong grower. Avoid planting the trees too deep (point of occlusion 15 cm above the ground).

The planting distance is 1 M to 1.25 M in a row. Avoid close spacing on fertile ground.

Don’t prune the tops of the trees after planting. Low, heavy branches can be pruned to avoid blind wood development.

Strong and steeply inclined branches should ideally be cut back to 1-2 cm straight away; bend out the other branches in the first years after planting.

**Pruning**

Steep branches bear little fruit. It is best to cut them back to 1-2 cm to encourage growth of flat one-year branches.

In orchards with strong growth it is advisable not to prune permanent branches in the one-year wood as this creates even more growth. In such orchards, always prune down to one shoot, making sure you do not cut one-year wood.

Pruning into one-year wood can be useful in orchards with weak growth, e.g. after severe replanting problems.

**Pollination**

Zari is a late bloomer. To ensure a good overlap between the flowering periods of Zari and its pollinators, we recommend combining Golden Hornet with Hillieri or Malus Evereste. You will also need to plant enough pollinators. We recommend planting more pollinators than usual.

**Fruit setting**

Because Zari is a vigorous tree, there is a chance that too few flower buds will form. And if pollination is poor, fewer fruits will set, which will also result in stronger growth. In addition, some growers have observed poor fruit setting on rich soil. For these orchards we therefore strongly recommend applying 0.50 l/ha Novagib or 300 cc Promalin (19g/l Giberellic acid 4+7 and 19 g/l 6-Benzyladenine) to induce fruit setting. When such an application is not allowed, root pruning can be used as an alternative.
Fertilisation

Before planting
To get the trees off to a good start after planting, we recommend working 40 units/ha of nitrogen in the form of mushroom compost or a similar organic fertiliser into the soil before planting. This also improves the soil structure. Because mushroom compost releases nitrogen slowly, only a half dose of N (20 E/ha) should be applied in the spring. As mushroom compost increases the risk of magnesium deficiency, we recommend an application of kieserite shortly after planting.

Second year of growth onwards
Zari is a vigorous tree, so nitrogenous fertilisers should be used sparingly.
In orchards with a good fruit yield, an additional application of potassium fertilizer at the beginning of July can result in even better colour.
In orchards with a weak yield, it is best not to apply additional potassium so as to avoid bitter pit (calcium deficiency).

Picking
The picking time of Zari is around the same as Delcorf and its mutants. Zari should be picked when the blush turns bright red striped and the background colour is yellow-green. At that time the starch index is 3 – 4 (Eufrin scale 1-10). Despite this high starch content, Zari is perfect for picking when this colour is present. Zari is therefore picked by colour and not by starch index!

If you have any questions after reading this advice, do not hesitate to contact any of the following:

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*NB: The use of the phytopharmaceutical products referred to in this advice is subject to authorisation and may not be permitted in your growing area.*