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Differences in Phoenix dactylifera cultivars...is the 'Deglet Noor' Myth True?

South Coast Growers does not seem to think so and here's why

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It is said that the Phoenix dactylifera '*Deglet Noor*' will not perform in Florida. We at South Coast Growers have spent a great deal of time researching this above statement and feel that while in very certain instances the above statement may be true, in most instances, the statement is false and YES the '*Deglet Noor*' will perform in Florida and here is why. There are three commonly sold Phoenix dactylifera cultivars. These are Phoenix dactylifera '*Deglet Noor*', Phoenix dactylifera '*Medjool*' and Phoenix dactylifera '*Zahidi*'. Each of these cultivars has proven to perform well in Florida landscapes. The fact that they are so closely related is a good indicator of their response to various disease problems present in Florida. We have spoken with pathologists on both coasts as well as noted palm experts and can find no empirical evidence that one cultivar performs better than the other, with two minor exceptions. The first is anecdotal and involves the observation, by people in Florida, that the '*Deglet Noor*' may perform better inland. We have not found any studies that would indicate this and we must rely on the observations of those growing and caring for them. One reason may be the varying degrees of care the trees receive at different locations. The second difference in performance involves a disease called "false smut" (you can read about it in the Compendium of Ornamental Palm disease and Disorders, APS Press, 2004). Unfortunately all three commonly sold cultivars are susceptible. The '*Medjool*' is less susceptible than the '*Zahidi*' and '*Deglet Noor*' but the fact remains that they are all susceptible. With proper treatment the disease can be controlled and perhaps a preventative program would be in order for all the palms under your care. Management suggestions for the disease can also be found in the previously named publication.

It is often quoted that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Such is the case with the '*Deglet Noor*' variety of the date palm. In California these palms are seen in many landscapes with their full head and they strike an imposing figure. With proper care this look can also easily be achieved in Florida landscapes. Please take the time to look at our photos of '*Deglet Noor*' examples on our website <http://www.southcoastgrowers.com/degletnoor.htm>

About South Coast Growers

South Coast Growers specializes in specimen, or mature palm trees and is a leading supplier of Phoenix dactylifera palm trees originating from the California desert. South Coast Growers has been in business since 2002 and has operations in both California and Florida.

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