

SFA

Seeds for Africa

Syagrus romanzoffiana

Soak the clean queen palm seeds in a bucket of cool, fresh water for eight to 10 hours before sowing. Prepare a planting container for each seed while they soak.

Fill 4-inch containers with a mixture of equal measures of peat and perlite. Leave the top 2 inches empty. Pour water into each container until it drains freely from the drainage holes.

Place the queen palm seed on the surface of the peat mixture. Gently press it into the surface until the bottom one-fourth of the seed is buried. Add soil around the sides until the seed is three-fourths buried.

Spread a single layer of perlite over the surface of the peat mixture so the visible portion of the seed is lightly covered. Pour water into the containers to settle the perlite onto the seed.

Place the potted queen palm seed on a warming mat outdoors in a lightly shaded spot. Set the warming mat's temperature to 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Cover the pots with a clear plastic dome to hold in the heat.

Check the moisture level daily and add water whenever it feels barely moist 1/4 inch below the surface. Maintain constant, light moisture in the peat mixture during germination.

Watch for germination in three to four months. Maintain the same warm, humid conditions until the seedlings grow to 1 inch tall, then remove the dome and warming mat.

Transplant the queen palm seedlings into 6-inch containers filled with a mixture of equal parts potting soil, sand and perlite once they produce at least one mature leaf.

Overwinter the pots in a bright, sheltered area where temperature stay above 75 F during the day, such as inside a cold frame or against a south-facing wall. Shield them from direct sun to prevent stress.

Transplant the young queen palm trees into a permanent bed with sandy soil in spring once soil temperatures reach 68 F. Space multiple trees at least 15 feet apart.

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