

# Thanks for visiting The Litchi Orchard!

Litchis are very much a symbol of summer on the KZN North Coast, and we are honoured to be able to provide visitors to The Litchi Orchard with their annual 'litchi fix' 😊

## LITCHIS FAQ'S:

### Q: Do we offer 'pick-your-own' litchis?

No, unfortunately not: Our trees are very large and require long ladders to reach the fruit. There is the danger of people injuring themselves or getting stung by bees and wasps. Please do not help yourselves to litchis off the trees – this is theft 😞

### Q: When can I get my hands on some litchis?!

The litchi season usually runs from approx mid-Dec to mid-Jan. We pick and sell them fresh, so we generally only have litchis available for sale from 10am onward on picking days. Please note that we can only pick the litchis as and when they ripen. They do not ripen off the tree and sometimes we have to wait a few days before picking again. Often we will run out of ripe litchis during a sales day. There is nothing we can do about this – when they are finished for the day, they are finished! Please see the end of this flyer for how to keep updated on availability.

### Q: How do we sell the litchis? Do we grade them?

We sell our litchis in 2kg bags or boxes, direct to the public, and as fresh as possible. We don't export our litchis. They can only be bought direct from The Litchi Orchard. We only sell A-grade litchis in our bags and boxes – these are simply the best litchis we have available. We cannot select individual litchis to make a pack for you. Sometimes there will be a few blemished litchis in your pack, though we always add a few extra to cater for this possibility.

### Q: How are the litchis picked, packed and sorted?

Litchis are very delicate fruit and we thus pick them by hand, using ladders. There is an art to picking them without damaging the skin. The litchis are then sorted, taken to the pack-shed, re-checked and then packed into bags or boxes, ready for sale.

### Q: Do we sell litchis in 'bulk'? Can I place an order?

If we have an oversupply of litchis, we may sell some in bulk. We then sell them per 20kg only, and buyers must bring their own containers. We cannot say if we will have available until we have actually started picking in December. What you should do is leave your name & number at our litchi shop, and we will call you if we have available. No guarantees. Our priority is always to supply our retail customers who are buying 2kg bags first.

### Q: What is the price of the litchis?

We cannot say exactly what the price will be until we have started picking in December. Litchi prices are very dependent on supply and demand!

### Q: Do we sell entire trees for picking? Can my family buy the entire crop?

No unfortunately not. We only sell in 2kg bags or boxes, or as a bulk sale per 20kg.

**Q: How many trees do we have?**

Here at The Litchi Orchard we have around 300 trees. We also source from other local orchards.

**Q: What is the shelf-life of picked litchis?**

Litchis definitely need to be eaten as fresh as possible! They are simply not the same even a day after being picked. Keep them cool (i.e. in the fridge) and eat within 3 days ideally.

**Q: Why don't all the litchis have small pips? Why are some of the litchis in my bag still green?**

Unfortunately many litchis do not have small pips. The way to tell a great litchi with a good chance of a 'chicken-tongue' pip, is if it is large and has a slight heart shape. We try our best to pick the litchis as ripe and sweet as possible. Even though some litchis in the packs may appear green, these are often sweet.

**Q: Where do litchi trees originate? What variety of litchis do we have here? How old do litchi trees get?**

The litchi is indigenous to China. The variety we have is known as HLH Mauritius. There are many other varieties available, though this is still the favourite in SA. In China there is a tree which is well over 1000 years old and still bearing fruit! Many of our trees here at The Litchi Orchard are 90 + years old!

**Q: Do the monkeys give us trouble with the litchis?**

Yes, the monkeys are as addicted to the litchis as we all are! We spend a great deal of time chasing them away. Unfortunately they will steal litchis no matter what, as will the birds.

**Q: What is 'alternate-bearing'?**

Litchis are known to be alternate-bearing trees. This means that they generally produce a good crop one year and then a poor crop the next.

**Q: Is theft a problem? Are the litchis sold at the toll gates stolen?**

Yes it has long been a problem. Some of the litchis sold on the freeway and at the toll gates are stolen, although many traders come and purchase from us in bulk and then resell. We issue these honest traders with an invoice, proof of which should be requested when buying on the freeway.

**Q: Do we sell young litchis trees for planting?**

Please enquire at Muddy Boots Nursery at The Litchi Orchard.

**FOR LITCHI AVAILABILITY UPDATES PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

**[www.litchiorchard.co.za/litchis](http://www.litchiorchard.co.za/litchis)**

**AND CLICK THE LINK TO JOIN OUR WHATSAPP GROUP 😊**