Persimmon Seed Stratification

Persimmon seeds require **3–5 months of cold, moist stratification** to break dormancy. Seeds should never be allowed to dry out or be soaked in water. Even soaking for more than a few minutes can severely damage certain seed lots. These seeds have never been soaked or allowed to completely dry out.

Excessively wet storage media should also be avoided. The media should remain consistently moist, but never saturated. Cold, moist stratification means maintaining adequate moisture, not excessive wetness, at refrigerator temperatures or in a protected outdoor environment, while ensuring an ample supply of oxygen.

There are several ways to accomplish this. One method is refrigerator storage at **35–42°F**. Persimmon seeds require oxygen and will consume it during stratification. Therefore, storing them in a sealed container without adequate air exchange should be avoided. If using a sealed bag or container, there must be sufficient air volume, and the container should be opened periodically to exchange the air.

Other storage methods are acceptable as long as the necessary moisture, temperature, and oxygen requirements are maintained. Solid containers, such as canning jars or plastic food-storage containers, can also be used successfully if these conditions are met.

One option is to drill a 1/8-inch hole in the lid and store the container in the refrigerator, away from direct airflow or drafts. This allows for some air exchange while helping prevent the growing medium from drying out. Containers with larger openings, such as a 1/2-inch hole, can also work when kept completely away from moving air produced by refrigerator fans or other sources. Even so, periodically check and gently shake the container to help ensure oxygen reaches the bottom. Lightly mist the growing medium if necessary to maintain proper moisture levels.

Whenever possible, it is best to use a separate refrigerator rather than the kitchen refrigerator. Ripening fruits and vegetables release gases, particularly ethylene, which can potentially interfere with proper seed storage. Keeping seeds separate from stored produce helps minimize this exposure.

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