

SARDI – DRYING APRICOT VARIETY

Grower Information Guide

RiverCot 3

(Syn 37752)

South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI)

'RiverCot 3' was developed at SARDI's Loxton Research Centre (LRC) in the Riverland of South Australia. A spectacularly flavoured, very sweet apricot with balanced acidity, it is firm and robust with a precocious good cropping habit. This variety is considered mainly for drying because of its plain appearance and tough skin. However, it has great flavour and has scored highly in consumer sensory panels for a good eating experience, so the fresh market may not be beyond it. It produces dried fruit of exceptional quality.

All data presented in this guide refers to trees grown at the Loxton Research Centre (LRC) on Myrobalan H29C plum rootstock, unless specifically stated. Performance on other rootstocks is untested.



Fresh fruit of RiverCot 3 on young trees December 2017



Fresh fruit of RiverCot 3 on tree December 2016

The purpose of this Grower Information Guide is to provide information to help growers make an informed decision on the planting of this apricot variety.

RiverCot 3 is a protected variety. A signed non-propagation agreement is required before tree delivery. Trees are available for commercial planting from winter 2018.

Timing of blossom:	Early season (6 Sept)
Pollination:	Self-fertile.
Cropping:	Good, precocious & consistent.
Ripening period:	Early. 4 December (Story, 14 Dec; Earlicot, 18 Nov; Moorpark, 29 Dec)
Shape:	Roundish with compressed cheeks.
Fresh fruit size:	Medium to large (49mm av., 57mm max)
Skin:	Orange with a very slight speckled red blush.
Flesh:	Orange
Eating quality:	Very good.
Flavour:	Excellent.
Stone:	Large and very free.
Fruit firmness:	Firm at maturity.
TSS level:	High (19 Brix). Excellent for drying.
Cracking:	Possibly susceptible.



Fresh fruit of tree ripe RiverCot 3.

Dry ratio:	Very good (4.7:1).
Dried fruit size:	Large.
Dried quality:	Excellent.
Dried fruit colour:	Deep orange.
Dried fruit storage:	6-12 months at 25°C and 65%RH.

Table 1 History of ‘RiverCot 3’ trees on Myrobalan H29C plum rootstock in secondary evaluation at the Loxton Research Centre.

TREE AGE	HARVEST DATE	CROP	FRUIT SIZE (mm)	FRUIT SIZE (g)	TSS (°Brix)
2	25/11/15	Moderate	49	46	21
3	12/12/16	Moderate Heavy	50	66	19
4	4/12/17	Heavy	48	54	18



Dried halves of RiverCot 3 2016

The Tree: RiverCot 3 is a vigorous, upright, slightly spreading spur bearing tree. It benefits from an increase in the number of leaders (5-7) to better fill space, spread vigour and control extension when grown in “free standing V” type systems. It appears well suited to pedestrian orchards planted at 4.5m by 2.5m spacing. Keep trees open to prevent green shoulders and undue softening of fruit. Over pruning will cause excessive growth, shading and a drop in fruit quality.

In the consumer sensory panel results shown adjacent, fresh apricot Overall Eating Experience (OEE) was very closely correlated with scores for flavour.

Disclaimer

This variety is unproven in commercial production. Testing has not been completed over a range of regions, rootstocks and management conditions. Growers wishing to plant ‘RiverCot 3’ should exercise appropriate caution.

This variety will be supplied with no guarantee of any kind and the purchasers accept all risks in connection with their possession or use of the variety. The variety is supplied without warranty, express or implied, of fitness for any particular purpose.

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Table 2. History of RiverCot 3 results in consumer sensory panels for fresh apricot Overall Eating Experience (OEE)

HARVEST DATE	CROP	STORAGE (days)	OEE (X/150)	TSS (Brix)	FIRM (g/mm ²)
‘RiverCot 3’					
14/12/17	H	4	102	21.6	1.8
‘Earlicot’					
10/11/17	MH	9	56	11.3	2.6

The Fruit: RiverCot 3 is a superior eating experience fresh apricot, this can be seen in the fresh apricot OEE score of 102 presented above in a 2017/18 panel, compared to ‘Earlicot’. The fresh apricot is sweet with a balanced acidity and a slightly fruity complexity. Overall favour is excellent. Naturally elevated sugar levels enhance the consumer experience at higher cropping levels and less advanced maturities. The skin while plain is clean, often with a very slight speckled blush, it is slightly tough, sometimes with a slightly gritty mouth feel. Its high sugars levels mean the skin will russet with rubbing and handling in heat. This is not an issue when drying. It has shown consistent good dry ratios in the mid to high 4's, but does need to be ripened adequately to retain shape and not boat. A dried 2016 sample tested in 2017 rated 114 & 121 for eating experience and appearance compared to Moorpark at 89 & 96 respectively. This is also the highest scoring dried line tested to date. Limited grower experience has drawn the comments “large fruit with good colour, quite firm at full maturity, mildly rain resistant, loose stone when cut. Dries well with outstanding flavour (my favourite tasting apricot)”. 2017/18 testing on a cutting machine showed it cut well with few stones staying in and had very good alignment

This is an outstanding drying apricot that may also be useful for the fresh market.



RiverCot 3 sensory panel fresh fruit 2017/18