

Bountiful fruit heritage of Kerman Province



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● IRNA

Iranica Desk

The Hezar Mountain Range in Kerman Province offers stunning landscapes, pleasant weather, a rich diversity of medicinal plants, and a four-season climate that boosts both tourism and the cultivation of various fruit.

This pristine region, with its numerous waterfalls and lush forests, is truly worth visiting.

Kerman Province boasts the largest area under cultivation of fruit crops in the country and is considered the origin of numerous fruits throughout the year. Currently, gardeners in the highlands of Kerman are actively harvesting apples, pears, cherries, and other produce from cooler regions. Meanwhile, in the south and east of the province, freshly ripened dates and figs are being harvested, renowned for their exemplary quality, IRNA wrote.

Many may be surprised to learn that Kerman is also celebrated for its high-quality walnuts and almonds, particularly from the Bardsir, Baft, and Rabor. The province is well-known for its summer fruits, which include cherries, apricots, pears, nectarines, and peaches. However, Kerman is often primarily associated with its unique pistachios, dates, and melons, leading to an oversight of its cooler climate that produces seasonal fruits. This limited recognition may stem from a lack of information, the absence of supplementary processing industries, and other factors.

The cooler climate regions begin less than 10 kilometers from the UNESCO World Heritage site of the Lut Desert, particularly in areas like Sirch, Kuh-

payeh, and other parts of Kerman Province. This extends to various cities in the Hezar Mountain Range, especially in elevated regions, including districts such as Rabor and Orzueeyeh.

The springs in these areas are worth visiting, offering a pleasant summer climate that is not humid, and their beauty rivals that found in the northern parts of the country. In fact, certain locations in Kerman Province, such as Sekonj Village near the city of Mahaan, host cherry festivals that celebrate

local produce.

The regions surrounding the Hezar Mountain Range — from the city of Kerman to the heights of Jiroft, including Sarduiyeh, Delfard, and Jeb-albarez, as well as the districts of Baft and Robar, the Rayin district of Kerman, and areas in Bam like Dehbakhti — enjoy cool weather during the summer, contributing to the production of a variety of seasonal fruits.

Despite Kerman's status as the leading province

in orchard cultivation area, it ranks eighteenth in the country for production volume. The head of the Agricultural Jihad Organization of Kerman Province noted that the province produces 4,469 tons of cherries and 30,300 tons of apricots annually.

In an interview with IRNA, Ali Baqeri mentioned that the area dedicated to cherry cultivation in Kerman is 977 hectares, while apricot cultivation spans 5,167 hectares. He highlighted that most of these products, commonly referred to as *sarbaghi*, are consumed locally.

Baqeri also pointed out that the highest concentration of cherry cultivation is in Bardsir, whereas Rafsanjan and Bam have the lowest production areas. For apricots, the largest area under cultivation is in Baft, while Arzuiyeh has the least production in the province.

Baqeri discussed plans from provincial horticultural management aimed at enhancing productivity and improving both the quantity and quality of cherry and apricot orchards. Key strategies include removing unsuitable and low-yield varieties and replacing them with high-yield varieties. He noted that the average yield for apricot and cherry orchards in Kerman Province is 6.5 tons per hectare, emphasizing that most cherries and apricots are consumed fresh, with no processing facilities currently available for these fruits.

Kerman Province, located in southeastern Iran, is known for its rich history and diverse landscapes. With its unique blend of culture, history, and natural beauty, Kerman Province is a captivating destination for travelers.



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The Moayedi Icehouse in Kerman is a testament to the art and architecture of desert-dwelling communities, showcasing their adaptation and coexistence with the climate and warm summer ecosystem of the region, according to the deputy head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization of Kerman Province.

He explained the function of the Moayedi Icehouse, stating: "Icehouses were constructed on the outskirts of desert cities, featuring a large conical well with a channel at the bottom that transferred water from the melting ice into the well. The height of the surrounding walls prevented sunlight from reaching the icebox and its front pools, effectively preserving the cold." He added: The outer steps of the icehouse were used for maintaining and repairing the dome. Every year, a layer of mud and straw had to be applied to the exterior surface of the dome to protect it from rain and sunlight.

Icehouses were generally egg-shaped and had a depth and height of 15 to 20 meters; however, the Moayedi Icehouse has been filled due to a change in the use of its bottom. The height of the dome is designed so that during the summer the heat from sunlight rises, keeping the lower surfaces cool.

He went on to explain: "In front of the tall wall next to the icehouse, there were pools with a depth of 40 to 50 centimeters, connected to a larger pool.

Moayedi Icehouse showcasing engineering innovation in arid landscapes



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During the winter, they would fill the larger pool with water so that the smaller pools could be replenished, allowing the water in the smaller pools to freeze overnight."

The following morning, they would break the ice in the smaller pools and sprinkle them with water again, as smaller ice pieces freeze more effectively. This process would continue for a week. On the seventh morning, they

would move the ice pieces from the outer slope of the icehouse, which extended down to the bottom of the pit, allowing them to accumulate at the bottom.

The use of wheat straw between each layer of ice was a common practice to prevent heat exchange and the formation of large ice blocks for better clarity. After the ice accumulation process, which took between six to seven weeks, they would mud the

northern door and open the southern door in the middle of spring to access the ice.

Today, the Moayedi Icehouse is utilized for educational purposes by the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, offering arts and cultural classes, thereby continuing its legacy as a center for community engagement and learning.

