

Pomona

Pomona is the name of the goddess responsible for the protection and procreation of fruit in the ancient Roman world. The name Pomona, and the Latin word for fruit in general, *pomum*, are responsible for generating such modern English terms as *pomade*, *pommel*, *pomology*, *pomegranate* and *Pomona*, California.

Pomology, a word invented in 1818, refers to the branch of horticulture concentrating on the science and practice of growing fruit. *Pomade* was originally a fragrant ointment for the skin and hair prepared with lard and the pulp of apples. A *pomander* is a clove-studded apple or orange used as an aromatic.

The knob on the hilt of a sword is a *pommel*, as is the so-called “horn” of a western saddle. Both are named for their resemblance to an apple or a piece of round fruit. To *pummel* someone is to etymologically beat him repeatedly with something shaped “like an apple”—the fist, for example, or the pommel of a sword.

The fruit with the delicious, ruby colored seeds is the *pomegranate*, a name meaning “many-grained apple”. (The *granate* of this term is related to *grain* and *granular*.)

The city of *Pomona*, California, founded on citrus and olive enterprises, was named in 1875 by citrus cultivator Solomon Gates for the Roman goddess of orchards and fruit.