

<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in World History</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in Prune History</i>
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HOW THE PRUNE TRAVELLED THE WORLD

A BRIEF 4000-YEAR HISTORY

1) 9000 BC to 104 BC

Birth of Agriculture
The Fertile Crescent
The Phoenicians
The Silk Road
Greek Civilisation

2) 201 BC to 618 AD

The Mediterranean Basin
The Roman Empire
The Far East – Central Europe - Gaul
The Fall of Rome

3) 245 to 1532 AD

The Damascus Plum
Extension of Islam
The Year 1000
Discovery of the Americas

4) 1539 to 1640 AD

The Renaissance
The 16th Century
The Monks of Clairac
The Agen Prune

5) 1674 to 1796

The Age of Sail
The 17th Century
Opening up the world
The Prune Trade blossoms

6) 1815 to 1929

The Age of Steam
Plum orchards in 5 continents
The Prune Trade at its peak in the 19th Century
Overproduction

7) 1930 to 2000

Prunes around the world
World War Aftermath
The International Prune Association
The Year 2000

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9000 BC to 104 BC

Birth of Agriculture
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Greek Civilisation

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		9000 BC 5000 BC	Beginnings of agriculture over several millennia. Agriculture spreads from the ANATOLIAN plateaux in IRAN to the « Fertile Crescent » between the TIGRIS and EUPHRATES rivers, and as far as the valley of the River JORDAN.
		8000 BC	DAMASCUS – the world’s most ancient city is named in the Bible and other references, and inscribed on the pillars of the Temple of AMON in KARNAK (EGYPT).
5000 – 2500 BC	Neolithic Period	5000 BC	Earliest forms of irrigation in the Tigris and Euphrates Basin, helping to spread crop cultivation across the alluvial plains and fruit trees in irrigated orchards. Early evidence of hybridised plum kernels and Neolithic plum cultivation
4000 BC	Sumerian civilisation in the EUPHRATES Delta - Early CUNEIFORM script in SUMER, HIEROGLYPHIC script in EGYPT		
3000 BC	The Babylonians adopt early cuneiform script.	3000 BC	Early forms of the PLOUGH appear in MESOPOTAMIA and EGYPT : a ploughshare held steady by its handle and pulled by a pair of oxen harnessed to a shaft (swing plough).
2700 BC	The Great Pyramids	2500 BC	Plum stones in Swiss lakeside cities. Bronze Age begins
2300 BC	The Sack of TROY	2300 BC	Earliest plum stones found in the Alps, from small-sized plums similar to those dried in the QUERCY region in S-W France
1354 BC	TUTANKHAMUN		
900 BC	Greek alphabet. Phoenician civilisation.	800 – 700 BC	Continuing development of agriculture in the MIDDLE EAST : wheat and barley followed much later by cotton.
753 BC	Foundation of ROME – The Greeks in SICILY.	700 BC	Probably the first European reference to plum trees in the writings of ARCHILOCHUS POLLUX.

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740 BC	HOMER : The Iliad and the Odyssey.		
BC 600	MARSEILLES founded by the Phoenicians		
539 BC	Return of the Jews to PALESTINE after their exile in EGYPT		
520 BC	DARIUS reaches INDIA and SCYTHIA		
		484 – 430 BC	References to plums and prunes in HERODOTUS, who travelled throughout the Eastern Mediterranean Basin.
		460 – 450 BC	Teachings of the Greek physician HIPPOCRATES (460-377 BC) spread throughout Greece and the Mediterranean. Prunes referred to as ingredients in his DIAPRUN and CATHOLICON remedies.
400 BC	The Gauls spread through EUROPE	431 – 355 BC	References to prunes in XENOPHON. Both HERODOTUS and XENOPHON mention numerous plum trees in ARMENIAN and SCYTHIAN mountain settlements.
390 BC	The Gauls, led by BRENNUS, lay siege to Rome – legend of the Capitol geese. Celtic mercenaries recruited by Greek city-states.		
333 BC	ALEXANDER the GREAT reaches SYRIA, which becomes part of the GREEK world.		
329 BC	ALEXANDER reaches SAMARKAND, the valley of AMU DARYA (OXUS) and BAKTRA, opening up trade with China via the Silk Road.		
301 BC	Gaulish mercenaries in AFRICA at CARTHAGE.	300 BC	UME, the Japanese word for PLUMS, appears in Japanese poetry. Plum trees brought to JAPAN by Chinese monks as a gift to the Emperor
280 BC	Celtic invasions of GREECE and ASIA MINOR.		
241 – 219 BC	1st and 2 nd Punic Wars - SPAIN - ITALY –AFRICA - HANNIBAL - SCIPIO AFRICANUS.		
218 BC	Gaulish tribes bring help HANNIBAL to cross the Alps and invade ROME		
		201 BC	PUBLIUX VALERIUS CATO refers in his writings to the propagation of plum trees.

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201 to 618 BC

The Mediterranean Basin

The Roman Empire

The Far East – Central Europe

The Fall of Rome

Gaul

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200 BC	Celtic settlements established in GAUL.	200 BC	Earliest known ruins at AGENNUM (Agen), settled by the NITIOBRIGES or NITIOBROGES in the time of the GAULS.
190 BC	ROME drives the Gauls out of NORTHERN ITALY.		
150 BC 150 – 146 BC	ROME establishes authority in EGYPT and SYRIA. GREECE falls under ROMAN RULE.		
125 BC	Roman legions invade SOUTHERN GAUL.		
125 BC	Roman legions invade SOUTHERN GAUL.	125 BC	The years from 125 to 25 BC see the most intense activity in the Hermitage <i>oppidum</i> overlooking Agen
121 BC	SOUTHERN GAUL becomes the NARBONNAISE province, extending to a line between TOULOUSE and MONTAUBAN just 40 km from AGEN.	104 BC	Objects dating from this time, including PLUM STONES, found in the Hermitage wells (used as tombs) on the hillside overlooking Agen.
75 BC	SYRIA becomes a Roman province	70 - 19 BC	The Roman poet VIRGIL refers to grafted plum trees in his <i>Georgics</i> .
		65 BC	HORATIO QUINTUS HORATIUS describes black and yellow plums as in VIRGIL (65 to 8 BC).
63 BC 64 BC	JERUSALEM taken by POMPEY. The ROMANS enter SYRIA. SYRIA becomes part of Roman civilisation.		
59 – 58 BC	JULIUS CAESAR invades GAUL, which is finally conquered after 4 years of war.		
53 BC	GAUL rebels under VERCINGETORIX.		
50 BC	JULIUS CAESAR writes his commentaries on the GALLIC WARS.		
45 BC	Adoption of the JULIAN calendar, in which a year lasts 365 ¼ days. Established by the astronomer SOSIGENES of ALEXANDRIA, it was accurate within 11 minutes and continued in use until the 16 th Century.		
27 BC	Beginning of the ROMAN EMPIRE		Plums found throughout ROMAN possessions in the East and in EUROPE.
	Birth of JESUS – The Christian era begins		
17- 32 AD	TIBERIUS continues the policies of AUGUSTUS. JUDEA is once again a Roman Province.	23 – 79 AD	PLINY THE ELDER (23-79 AD) refers to prunes in his "natural history", as well as to the DAMASCUS

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			plum introduced into ITALY from SYRIA.
50 AD	The PONT du GARD aqueduct built by the Romans in the Narbonnaise Province of SOUTHERN GAUL.	40 AD	The Roman poet MARTIAL (40 to 104 AD) refers to the plum in epigrams 80 to 101. Martial lived in ROME from 64 to 98 AD.
73 AD	Chinese General BAN CHAO reclaims possession of the Central Asian oases after some sixty years, and reopens the Silk Road.	91 AD	LUCIUS JUNIUS MODERATUS COLUMELLA describes several plum varieties.
98 – 117 AD	After NERO's death, the Roman Empire reaches its apogee under TRAJAN.	100 AD	A mural painting in an inn at BALAGA, near Lake BALATON in HUNGARY, shows a woman's head crowned with a garland of red plums.
105 AD	Paper invented in China by an imperial official, CAI LUN	Late 100 AD	The Greek physician DIOSCORIDUS, also known as PIDANICUS, studies botany during extensive travels with the army. Refers to the SYRIAN plum and especially to dried DAMASCUS plums in an essay on their quality in his treatise on medicine.
122 – 137 AD	HADRIAN'S WALL built in BRITAIN near present-day NEWCASTLE. 117 km in length with numerous forts, the wall was built as a defence against invasions by BARBARIANS from the NORTH : the PICTS and SCOTS.	131- 201 AD	The Greek physician and philosopher Claudius GALIENUS studies medicine in PERGAMUM, SMYRNA and CORINTH. His treatise DE ALIMENTARIUM FACULTATIBUS includes a chapter on prunes.
		245 AD	The Roman emperor GAIUS AURELIUS VALERIUS DIOCLETIANIS (245-313 AD) has plum orchards planted along the banks of the DRAYA and SAVA rivers in CROATIA.
313 AD	MILAN EDICT: Christianity freely practised throughout the Roman Empire.		
410 – 418 AD	The WISIGOTHS take ROME, then invade AQUITAINE from the SOUTH.		
451 – 476 AD	HUNS arrive in France– End of the WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE	420 – 589 AD	Chinese artist LIN HEJING paints plum blossom
486 AD	CLOVIS defeats the Gallo-Roman general SYAGRIUS at SOISSONS		
585 AD	Syrian merchants ("SYRI") very active in the cities		

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	of Merovingian GAUL, trading mainly in spices, pepper, precious cloth and medicines. They receive King GONTRAN on his arrival in ORLEANS in 585. SYRI merchants of NARBONNE referred to in 589 as trading with the EAST.		
610 AD	Birth of ISLAM – MAHOMET’s mission to SIDNA	618 AD	In China, from the TANG Dynasty (618-907) to the QING Dynasty (1644 - 1911) the work of over 250 artists is devoted to illustrations of plum blossom.

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245 to 1532 AD

The Damascus plum

Extension of Islam

From the Mediterranean to Europe

The Year 1000

Discovery of the Americas

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632	Death of MAHOMET	632	Extension of ISLAM after the death of MAHOMET, up to the 13th century when Spain is reconquered by the Christians. DAMASCUS becomes the capital of ISLAM under the OMEYYADS, whose culture and knowledge of science, astronomy and chemistry spreads throughout the Mediterranean in translations of ancient texts : plums referred to in Arab medical treatises.
661	ALI, son-in-law of MAHOMET, assassinated by the founders of the OMEYYAD Dynasty which then holds sway for 750 years from the INDUS valley to the ATLANTIC. The murder of ALI causes a schism in ISLAM : ALI's disciples found the chi-ite religion, which has lasted to this day.		
639 – 669 698	The Arabs come to EGYPT, then reach CONSTANTINOPLE and CARTHAGE		
700	End of Arab conquest of NORTH AFRICA	700	According to MESUE DAMASCAE (famous Arab physician from DAMASCUS), syrup made from prunes relieves vertigo and vomiting, reduces fever and palpitations and cures drunkenness. Early attempts to treat hypoglycaemia with prunes.
711 - 713	Lightning conquest of SPAIN by the ARABS.	700	Name of a purgative concoction known as HAMECH's remedy inscribed on pharmaceutical jars dating from the Middle Ages to the 17 th Century. The ARMENIANS are said to have strengthened the purgative properties of plums by piercing plum tree trunks in two or three places to inject them with SCAMMONY or other resins with drastic purgative effects.
721 - 725	Arab penetration of France as the SARACENS cross the PYRENEES and push through south-western AQUITAINE as far as NARBONNE.		
732 - 733	Charles MARTEL defeats Muslim forces at the Battle of POITIERS. ABDAL RAHMAN IBN ABD ALLAH, Governor of SPAIN, lays waste to AQUITAINE and burns St Hilaire at the stake in POITIERS, thus sparking off a coalition of FRANKISH armies and the subsequent defeat of the Arabs. Their retreat to Spain signals the end of the		

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	Arab offensive against the West.		
773	Arabic numerals introduced (actually an ARAB borrowing from INDIA).		
800	CHARLEMAGNE crowned as Emperor by the POPE	790	CHARLEMAGNE includes plums in his list of fruits to be to be planted in gardens.
		900	Constantinus AFRICANUS, a famous physician of the SALERNO School (ITALY), which prospered throughout the Middle Ages, recommends the use of plums. A method for drying DAMASCUS plums to make prunes is described in a 12 th Century treatise of the SALERNO School.
		901 - 946	The fame of the SALERNO School of Medicine spreads throughout the Mediterranean, through the work of ROMUALDO GUARNIA, JEAN DE MILAN and TROTULA, a woman physician (10 th – 12 th centuries).
950 - 970	The THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS : first PERSIAN version and first ARABIC version. Arabic literary works of this time include illustrations of stills for distilling perfumes and chemical substances from flowers.		
		980 - 1037	AVICENNA ABUALS IBN SINA AL BIRUNI, known as the Prince of Islamic Physicians, born in Iran. Prunes featured as medicinal ingredients in his "CANON MEDICANAE" (the Arabic word for «prune » is "IGGJADS"). He undertakes clinical studies of various diseases, which influenced European medicine for several centuries. He was also a mathematician, astronomer and geographer.
		984	Smoked dried plums known as UME BOSCHI and dried plums marinated in salt appear in Chinese medicine.
1000	Windmills invented in PERSIA are established in	1000	IBN AL FAQUIM, a 10 th Century geographer,

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	SPAIN after the Muslim conquest.		celebrates the city of DAMASCUS and describes its geography, orchards and gardens.
1039	Church of SAINTE-FOY built in CONQUES in the Lot <i>département</i> of S-W FRANCE as a halt on the pilgrimage to SAINT- JACQUES OF COMPOSTELA in SPAIN	1003	SIMEON SETH (1003-1081), a Greek physician to Emperor CONSTANTINE (ROME) refers to the beneficial effects of prunes on the health of his master. Early approach to dietetics (promoting health through diet).
1050	First printing process (with mobile characters) invented in China.		
1065	The Song of Roland - Roland de RONCEVAUX		
1090	Chinese navigators discover the properties of magnetised needles, using them as a rudimentary compass.	1050	AL BURINI makes a list of fruits he recommends for cultivation in temperate areas. Writes a botanical history, analysing and describing flower structure. Refers to plum trees in Islamic and Spanish gardens, with a description of irrigation systems.
1095 – 1099	First Crusade. Crusaders return to JERUSALEM in 1099.		
1124	RAYMOND, Bishop of TOLEDO (SPAIN) commissions translations of Arab works into Latin. Through these, the School of TOLEDO rediscovers the classical works of GREECE.	1125	CHINA - LU YOU writes over 600 poems in praise of plum blossom.
1147 - 1149	Second Crusade.	1154	The famous philosopher, physician and geographer, ABOU ABDALLAH ES SCHRIF AL IDRISI of CORDOBA, travels throughout FRANCE, ENGLAND, NORTHERN AFRICA and the FAR EAST. In his Treatise on geography written for ROGER II of SICILY, with whom he co-founded the SALERNO School – one of the most influential centres of Mediaeval science – he describes the regions of DAMASCUS and LA GHOUTA, with their orchards, gardens, irrigation systems and streams, and the splendour of their plums and prunes.

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1152	ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE marries the future King of ENGLAND, HENRY II PLANTAGENET, Duke of NORMANDY and Count of ANJOU, who thus acquires AQUITAINE as one of his French possessions. The marriage creates lasting links between ENGLAND and S-W FRANCE.		
1163	Construction of Notre-Dame de PARIS.		
1189 - 1192	Third Crusade	1184	IBN JUBAYR of ANDALUSIA visits SYRIA and compares orchards in blossom surrounding DAMASCUS (la GHOUTA) to a halo around the moon (water flowing everywhere).
1202 - 1204	Fourth Crusade.	1200	In CHINE, salted prunes administered to soldiers as a tonic to speed up military operations.
1211- 1221	Fifth Crusade.	1200	The historian ASAKIR of DAMASCUS describes the principle of the irrigation system watering the gardens and city of DAMASCUS.
1220	Foundation of the Montpellier Faculty of Medicine.		
1228 - 1229	Sixth Crusade.	1204	The Crusaders bring new products to the West : rice, Damask cloth (embroidered silk), muslin, sugar, lemons, carpets, dyes – and Arabic numerals which revolutionise mathematics.
1248 - 1254	Seventh Crusade.	1256	Master ALDEBRANDINI of the SIENA School of Medicine and Pharmacy (ITALY) writes on diet and the pharmacodynamic virtues of prunes, in the 1 st study of this type on prunes.
1270	Eighth Crusade – SAINT-LOUIS, King of France, dies in TUNIS in an epidemic of the plague.		
1291	The last Crusaders leave PALESTINE – End of the Crusades		
		1300	MATTHAEUX PLATEARIUS : book of medicinal plant remedies, properties of prunes. PLATINUS of CREMONA refers to prunes in a book of culinary recipes.

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1337	HUNDRED YEARS WAR begins between ENGLAND and FRANCE. Occupation of AQUITAINE.	1300	Purgative concoction devised by COHEN AL ATTAR, an Arab physician.
1348 - 1350	The Black Death : plague ravages LONDON and all of EUROPE. Agriculture and the entire economy severely affected by the death of a large proportion of the population.	1384	GUCCI of FLORENCE describes the water system in DAMASCUS, an extension of the GHOUTA irrigation system.
1431	JOAN of ARC burned at the stake in ROUEN (FRANCE).	1396	Plum trees and irrigated orchards depicted in paintings of Islamic gardens.
1438	GUTENBERG (GERMANY) invents print with mobile characters.		
1455	Type-sets and prints a Bible		
1492	Genoese navigator Christopher COLOMBUS lands in CUBA and SAN DOMINGO.	1460	BARTOLOMEO PAGELLO DE VICENCE (ITALY) refers to the DAMASCUS plum in describing the establishment of a fruit garden.
1498	Portuguese navigator VASCO DA GAMA rounds the CAPE OF GOOD HOPE on voyage to INDIA.	1501	Sieneese physician MATTHIOLE (1501 - 1577) refers to prunes in an enduring quarrel between the SIENA School of Pharmacy and the SALERNO School.
1500	Portuguese navigator CABRAL lands in BRAZIL.	1529	Contemporary texts from the middle GARONNE region show that the date plum or <i>prune d'ente</i> was already widely known in S-W France.
1519	Death of Leonardo da VINCI at Amboise in the LOIRE Valley (FRANCE).		
		1532	BRUNFELS refers to the health benefits of prunes in "Pharmacica Simplicia".

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1539 to 1640

The Renaissance
The 16th Century
The Monks of Clairac
The Agen Prune

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1534	Potatoes introduced in EUROPE.		
1536	CAPITULATIONS ACT signed by FRANÇOIS I of France and SULEYMAN the MAGNIFICENT (the capitulations were agreements governing the status of foreigners in the OTTOMAN Empire). FRANCE establishes its first consulate in a caravanserai in the ALEPPO market.		
1534 - 1536	Jacques CARTIER explores CANADA.		
1539	Trade links established between ALEPPO and the Republic of VENICE.	1539	Reference in TRAGUS to a DATE PLUM which is not the <i>Robe de SERGENT</i> , next to the names DAMASCUS and PERDIGON, which suggests that the DATE PLUM and the present-day <i>Prune d'ente</i> are one and the same.
1542	Emperor Charles V, in an alliance with HENRY VIII, reopens hostilities against FRANÇOIS I, King of FRANCE.	15.13	FUCHS describes the shallow root system of the plum tree and differences with other fruit trees in DE HISTORIA STRIDIUM COMMENTARI, also describing the prune-plum.
1545	FRANÇOIS I establishes his court in the LOIRE Valley in the Chateaux of BLOIS and AMBOISE, where he commissions gardens with fruit trees, following the ITALIAN cultural tradition : the French RENAISSANCE begins.	1545	In the wreck of the MARY ROSE, flagship of England's HENRY VIII (discovered in 1982), 100 Mirabelle plum stones found in a basket, identified as GREENGAGE (Reine-Claude), CATALOGNE and MYROBOLAN stock.
		1545	The botanist PIERRE introduces the first VERDOCIA gages from Italy, and previously Greece, to the King's gardens in BLOIS.
1561	Tobacco brought back to Europe by NICOT on his return from the AMERICAS.	1550	Description of oven-drying techniques used in the Lower QUERCY region of S-W FRANCE to obtain prunes.
1571	LÉPANTE naval battle won by the Christian HOLY ALLIANCE against ALI PACHA's Turkish fleet.	1575	FRANCE: In a 1575 inventory of JEHAN COCBERT's APOTHECARY shop : "7 stoneware jars containing dried fruits including pears, prunes, peaches and cherries counted in scores, one cask containing 5 quantities of 50 prunes".

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		1575	According to MASCAU, QUETSCH plums that are sun-dried and then baked in a hot bread oven will keep throughout a long winter.
1589	Henri de NAVARRE crowned King of FRANCE.	1586	In his HISTORIA LUGDUNI PLANTARUM, Jacques DALECHAMPS describes 5 distinct plum varieties : the dark-skinned DAMASCUS plum, yellow PERDIGONA and IBERICA plums, the large ASININA plum and the purple, egg-shaped DACTYLA DE PRUNI, and refers to the DAMASCUS PLUM and DATE PLUM in his Natural History of Plants.
1597	The British navigator Francis DRAKE sails around the world for the first time to chart passages for the British Navy.	1597	In ENGLAND, John GERARD classifies the 60 best plum varieties. "QUETSCH PLUMS were more astringent than the sweeter SPANISH plums ". The 5 best varieties were the quetsch, myrobolan, almond plum, Damascus plum and damson. He also recommends the flavour of « potatoes boiled together with prunes and so eaten together ». Prunes already being used in recipes for sweet-sour dishes.
		1598	The AUVILLAR Company (FRANCE) levies a tax of 23 sous on each barrel of prunes transported along its toll road.
1600	British EAST INDIA COMPANY founded.	1600	In his ANTIDOTAIRE GÉNÉRAL, physician Jean-Jacques WECKER recommends the medicinal use of DAMASCUS plums and HUNGARIAN plums « which are large and long in shape ».
1616	Death of SHAKESPEARE and CERVANTÈS on the same date – 23rd April 1616 – but not the same day. SHAKESPEARE dies on Saturday 23rd April 1616 according to the JULIAN calendar, while CERVANTÈS dies on Tuesday 23rd April 1616 according to the new Gregorian Calendar introduced by POPE GREGORY.	1600	Monks in CLAIRAC graft and acclimatise the <i>prunier d'ente</i> , planting hillside and valley orchards along the Garonne, Lot and Tarn rivers in the 15 th and 16 th centuries.

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	ENGLAND, GERMANY, HOLLAND and the other Protestant countries do not adopt the GREGORIAN calendar until the 18 th Century.		
1620	The PILGRIM FATHERS – the first 102 English passengers on the MAYFLOWER - land in MASSACHUSETTS.	1628 1628	In the Poitou region (France), apothecary Paul CONSTANT writes verses in praise of the DAMASCUS plum. The city of Agen sends a consul to BORDEAUX to request admission of the Postal vessel and others carrying cargoes of plums into its port. The plums were loaded at VALENCE d' AGEN, the little river port of MARY near Agen, and ST JEAN DE THURAC.
1626	NEW AMSTERDAM, now NEW YORK, founded by the DUTCH, who also discover TASMANIA and « New Holland » (AUSTRALIA).	1630	Dried BRIGNOLES plums, otherwise known as « <i>pistoles de BRIGNOLES</i> ». BRIGNOLES, in the VAR <i>département</i> near TOULON, had been the summer residence of the Counts of Provence since the 13 th Century. These <i>Pistoles</i> were round golden-yellow plum which were stoned, flattened and dried to a shape recalling the SPANISH coins they were named after. The plums were similar to white or yellow prune varieties that still exist to this day.
1640	Maize grown in S-W FRANCE and traded through corn exchanges in TOULOUSE and CASTELNAUDARY.	1640	In BORDEAUX, ships take on prune cargoes equivalent to 2000 present-day tonnes per year (6000 casks of 7 quintals each), bound for ENGLAND, HOLLAND, the BALTIC STATES and GERMANY.

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1674 to 1796
The Age of Sail
The 17th Century
Opening up the world
The Prune Trade blossoms

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1650	CAPE of GOOD HOPE Colony taken from the PORTUGUESE by the DUTCH.	1674 1680 1682 1687	The SERIEYS family is referred to as the largest traders in the AGEN guild of prune merchants. Invoices in quill pen script for sales of prune-plums in « BARRIC » (casks), arriving in BORDEAUX from Agen by boat (COUREAU or GABARE) along the GARONNE and bound for HOLLAND.
1685	Revocation of the Edict of NANTES on the 18th October 1685 by King LOUIS XIV. Protestants had been persecuted since the « <i>Dragonnades</i> » in 1679 – 1681. 200 000 to 300 000 protestants emigrate to HOLLAND, ENGLAND, DENMARK and the BALTIC STATES. 14 000 French Protestants settle in PRUSSIA. Protestants are banned from the professions and therefore turn to trade and industry. Families from CLAIRAC engage in the prune trade between Holland and the LOT-ET-GARONNE.	1688	The DUTCH arrive in SOUTH AFRICA on 26 th April with the first Huguenot settlers. The colony is established on 3 rd December 1651 by JAN VAN RIEEBEECK, who orders shipments of fruit trees and vines from EUROPE to establish the colony's first plantations.
		1690	References to the IMPÉRIALE ÉPINEUSE and DOUBLE ROBE varieties originating in the Agen region.
		1700	A pharmaceutical treatise by JEAN DE RENOUE includes a chapter on prunes.
1682	CAVELIER DE LA SALLE reaches the Caribbean from CANADA via the MISSISSIPPI and takes possession of LOUISIANA. Founds FRENCH LOUISIANA, covering 14 present-day States in the US.	1700	The 17 th Century sees the first recorded use of the « Pruneaux d' Agen » appellation to refer to prunes shipped from the river port and trading centre of AGEN.
1715	The German physicist Gabriel FAHRENHEIT replaces alcohol in thermometers with mercury. According to his graduation devised in 1709, water freezes at 32° and boils at 212°.	1709	Exceptionally severe winter frosts destroy the ST. ANTONIN plum orchards in the Lot Valley near Agen. The orchards are replanted with the " <i>Prunier d'ante</i> " variety.
		1720	Before the French Revolution in 1789, city sergeants in the Agen region wore uniforms of the same colour as the ripe <i>prune d'ente</i> fruit, hence the name « <i>Robe</i> »

<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in World History</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in Prune History</i>
			<i>de Sergent</i> » or sometimes « <i>double robe</i> » for a variety producing larger fruit than the <i>prune d'ente</i> .
1727	Stephen ALES (1677-1761) establishes the foundations of plant physiology in his studies of plant growth and sap flow.	1714	USA EASTERN SEABOARD: plum trees established by French settlers in Nova Scotia. LAWSON records QUETSCH (« DAMAZEEN ») plums.
		1729	The port of BORDEAUX ships out prune cargoes of 50 000 quintals per year (2 400 metric tonnes).
1742	In Sweden, ANDERS CELSIUS devises a temperature scale in which water freezes at 0° and boils at 100°.	1745	MILLER describes prunes from varieties of the ST JULIEN plum found in the Loire valley, in the Nièvre region : ST JULIEN PETITE - ST JULIEN DE GROS - ST JULIEN DE TOULOUSE. Records of prunes from TOURS – like the dried BRIGNOLES plums, these are no longer in production .
1758	John BIRD invents the sextant for navigation on the high seas.	1747	Invoice issued on 26 th June by a trader in BORDEAUX for a consignment of prunes from Agen.
1763	Improvements to NEWCOMEN's steam engine by Scotsman JAMES WATT lay the foundations for the industrial revolution in rail and sea transport.	1754	Wreck of a Garonne riverboat carrying a cargo of prunes : the crew lived in ST HILAIRE near Agen
1776	JOUFFROY D'ABBAMS (1751 - 1832) builds a steam-powered rowboat which navigates the DOUBS river, then a steam-powered paddleboat used on the SAÔNE.	1755	LOUIS LEMERY : universal treatise on medicinal plants. NICOLAS LEMERY : refers to prunes in the pharmacy and diet and health sections of his treatise on foods.
1780			
1776	Thomas JEFFERSON writes the 4 th July UNITED STATES DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.	1775	TOURNY, steward to the King for GUYENNE in BORDEAUX, mentions the prune-drying method observed in the Agen region in a report to the King.
1787	American Constitution adopted.	1788	Governor PHILIPPE brings plum seedlings found during his voyage to the CAPE OF GOOD HOPE back to AUSTRALIA.
1789	George WASHINGTON elected as President of the United States of America.		
1789	The French Revolution.	1790	The <i>Robe de Sergent</i> variety of the <i>Prune d'ente</i> found in a nurseryman's catalogue from the Bordeaux

<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in World History</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in Prune History</i>
			area.
1795	Metric system established in FRANCE.	1796	First recorded entry for the <i>Prunier d'ente</i> under the name <i>prunier d'Agen</i> .
1807	FULTON makes the first commercial steamboat crossing between NEW YORK and ALBANY.		

<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in World History</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in Prune History</i>
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1815 to 1929

The Age of Steam

Plum orchards in 5 continents

The Prune Trade at its peak in the 19th Century

Overproduction

<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in World History</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in Prune History</i>
1815	WATERLOO: NAPOLEON I defeated by WELLINGTON and exiled to ST. HELENA.	1815	Commercial prune production in the Agen region reaches its peak at about this time. The prune trade revives during the blockade on imports and after the blockade on shipping. <i>Prune d'Ante</i> orchards spread throughout the Agen region which renews trade links with ENGLAND and other countries.
1816	Frenchman NICÉPHORE NIEPCE invents photography.		
1816	SAN MARTIN: ARGENTINA gains independence.		
1817- 1818	SAN MARTIN liberates CHILE with Bernardo O'HIGGINS. CHILE proclaimed as a Republic.	1821	The Agen Agricultural Society organises a competition in which Dr. TARRY receives an award for his dissertation on cultivation of the ROBE DE SERGENT plum and methods for drying the fruit.
		1822	Mr. TOURRES records shipping Agen prunes to a friend in NEW YORK
1825	In England, STEPHENSON opens the first passenger railway service.	1825	Records suggest that there were over one million plum trees in the Agen region at this time, of which 60 % were SAINT ANTONIN plums and 40 to 42 % true <i>pruniers d'Ente</i> . Production of the St. ANTONIN plum in the Lot-et-Garonne reaches 67 000 quintals, or 40 000 metric quintals, and 17 000 metric quintals for the <i>Robe de Sergent d'Ante</i> or <i>d'Ente</i> .
1832	Frédéric SAUVAGE, a French scientist born in BOULOGNE SUR MER (1786 - 1857), invents and patents a propeller for ships, which was later adapted by Augustin NORMAND, an industrialist from Le Havre, to form the three-bladed propeller as we know it today.	1831	Mr. TOURRES records that a nurseryman in his neighbourhood near Agen sold every single prune-plum seedling he had - a great many - for a single plantation in PHILADELPHIA.
		1834	CALIFORNIA: a cultivar imported from EUROPE by the SANTA CLARA mission is named the Mission plum.
		1836	E SOUBEIRAN - virtues of prunes described in a « new treatise on theoretical and practical pharmacy ».

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1834	C.H. McCORMICK invents the combine harvester which soon comes into widespread use in the UNITED STATES.	1840	Prunes bought by the ENGLISH from the Agen region for their hospitals are known in English as ANTHONY prunes (this was the small SAINT-ANTONIN plum). Some English traders marketed prunes under their own name (e.g. CLARK).
1840	World's first postage stamp issued in ENGLAND : the PENNY BLACK.	1840	According to the TOULOUSE Agricultural Society (FRANCE), the common plum (SAINT-ANTONIN) produces fruit each year rather than every two years, despite its prolificity. Growers wanting larger fruit would thin them out.
1845	The steamship GREAT BRITAIN becomes the first iron-hulled, propeller-driven ship to cross the Atlantic.	1840	Large-calibre plums introduced to S-W FRANCE.
1849	CALIFORNIA – gold seams discovered. SAN FRANCISCO – the Gold Rush.		
1852	NAPOLEON III becomes Emperor. BALTARD builds the Halles Centrales (central market) in PARIS.	1854	First official imports of prune-plum scions from FRANCE recorded by the United States Patents Office, but the cargo never reached their destination in CALIFORNIA.
1859	EDWIN DRAKE drills the world's first oil well in TITUSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA	1856	CALIFORNIA: French seaman Louis PELLIER leaves VALPARAISO in CHILE to join the SAN FRANCISCO Gold Rush in 1848. He buys a small farm in SAN JOSE, and writes to ask his brother to join him. Pierre PELLIER arrives in 1853, makes a trip back to Paris in 1856-1857 and returns in 1858 with a wide selection of fruit tree seedlings including the AGEN prune-plum.
1865	Biologist Louis PASTEUR studies fermentation and describes the principle of pasteurisation. Reveals the role of microbes in studies on the origins of infectious diseases.		
1868	Louis DUCOS DU HAURON, a native of Agen (FRANCE), invents and produces the first colour photograph, a three-colour plate showing « AGEN		

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	from the HERMITAGE HILL ». He also shows photographs in relief (anaglyphs) using red and green spectacles.		
1807- 1873	German chemist Justus LIEBIG studies the carbon and nitrogen cycles and applies his findings in chemistry and agriculture through experiments with fertilisers.	1857	AUSTRALIA : first nursery catalogue to include the prune-plum.
		1860 à 1887	SERBIA and BOSNIA, where plum trees have existed since Roman times, export up to 41 300 T of plums to CENTRAL EUROPE, FRANCE and AMERICA.
1869	Inauguration of the SUEZ CANAL. First railway crosses the UNITED STATES from EAST to WEST.	1861	Plum plantations in NEW SOUTH WALES (AUSTRALIA). The MACARTHUR family's 4-hectare prune-plum orchard at CAMDEN PARK (50 km south-west of SYDNEY) wins first prize in the 1891 national agricultural competition.
1850	Sulphur used on vines against powdery mildew.	1866	AUSTRALIA: records suggest that an orchard of the authentic Agen plum existed at CAMDEN PARK, about 50 km south-west of SYDNEY.
1870	FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR : Third Republic declared in France.	1870	At about this time, the market for the small-sized SAINT ANTONIN plum declines in favour of the larger AGEN PLUM.
1870	Potassium used as an agricultural fertiliser.		CALIFORNIA: 270 hectares of plum orchards. US imports from EUROPE reach 20 000 tonnes. Californian growers begin to plant plum trees on a large scale.
1876	In his novel TOM SAWYER, Mark TWAIN (1835 - 1910) describes the turmoil of life as a pioneer of the 'Wild West', from his own experience.	1878	An article in an agricultural journal in the Bordeaux region ("L'AMI DES CHAMPS"), referring to the 10 plum varieties, cites the <i>prune d'ente</i> as the most widely known, followed by the PETIT DAMAS BLANC which is readily dried to produce a prune also known as AMA BLANC.

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1876	Alexander Graham BELL invents the telephone.		
1880 - 1881	BOER WAR (SOUTH AFRICA) Peace Treaty between the Boers and the English.	1885	Early plum grafts on the smaller myrobolan stock, reducing the size of plum trees which had always been tall and broad.
1886	FRANCE donates BARTHOLDI's Statue of Liberty to the city of NEW YORK.	1887	Prune imports from EUROPE to NORTH AMERICA reach 42 000 tonnes.
1884	American industrialist George EASTMAN invents photographic paper.	1880 - 1890	A decade of overproduction in CALIFORNIA, which now has 36 000 hectares of plum trees.
1890		1886 - 1889	Californian prune production expands from 2 000 tonnes in 1886 to 51 000 tonnes in 1889, reaching 204 000 tonnes in 1917. Production then drops to 136 000 tonnes in 1919.
1890	World's first aeroplane flight, by Frenchman Clément ADER who takes off over a distance of 50 metres in a machine he calls an "avion".	1892	SOUTH AFRICA : records suggest that the first authentic Agen plum trees were introduced to the country at this time.
1889	EIFFEL TOWER built in PARIS for the Universal Exhibition.	1891	Plum orchards begin to decline in the Agen region. Six million trees were counted in 1894, but the orchards then began to age as trees were no longer renewed due to wars raging in EUROPE.
1895	Brothers Louis and Auguste LUMIÈRE (FRANCE) invent cinema and make the first film " <i>La sortie des ouvriers de leur usine à LYON Monplaisir</i> " (Lyons factory workers outing to Monplaisir)	1896	G. PLANCHON and E. COLLIN refer to prunes and their useful properties in essays on pharmacy.
1909	After the WRIGHT brothers' first flight in a biplane 1903, BLÉRIOT makes the first ENGLISH CHANNEL crossing in an aeroplane.	1900	CALIFORNIA has 85 prune processing factories.
		1910	Leopoldo SUAREZ imports Agen plum seedlings from France, planting them in SANTA ROSA de SAN MARTIN, in the province of MENDOZA.
3 rd August 1914	PANAMA CANAL opens – the first ship crosses on the 15 th August.	1912	AUSTRALIA : plum plantations in GRIFFITH region, in the MURRUMBIDGEE irrigated zone.
1914 - 1918	Many young people from rural families are killed in the FIRST WORLD WAR in EUROPE.		

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1920	11th November: The Unknown Soldier buried under the ARC DE TRIOMPHE on the Place de l'Etoile in PARIS, in homage to all those killed in the First World War.	1920	AUSTRALIA : soldiers returning from the war in EUROPE receive plots of land. Each plot in the YOUNG region contained 4 hectares of plum trees and 2 hectares of apple trees.
1927	Charles LINDBERGH completes the first North Atlantic aeroplane crossing with "SPIRIT OF ST LOUIS" (NX 211), leaving NEW YORK to reach PARIS LE BOURGET on the 21st May in 33 hours.	1923	The common plum (SAINT-ANTONIN) known to be still in production in the TARN, TARN-ET-GARONNE, LOT and LOT-ET-GARONNE <i>départements</i> .
1928	Englishman Alexander FLEMING discovers penicillin, but the drug is not used for medical purposes until 1940.	1927	During the first Prune Trade Congress, the Inspector of the ORLEANS railway company refers to contemporary plum varieties and to the volume of traffic from the Agen region to PARIS.
		1927	AUSTRALIA: first significant plum harvest in NEW SOUTH WALES (1 000 tonnes).
1929	The Great Depression begins in the UNITED STATES after the Wall Street Crash on Thursday 24 th October. Dried fruit production almost ceases as a result of the crisis.	1929	Maximum extent of plum orchards in CALIFORNIA, with 68 532 hectares.

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1930 to 2000
Prunes around the World
World War Aftermath
The International Prune Association
The Year 2000

<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in World History</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Milestones in Prune History</i>
1930	Jean MERMOZ completes the first aeroplane crossing of the South Atlantic on 12 th May with the French postal plane (AÉROPOSTALE) named LATÉCOÈRE, from TOULOUSE MONTAUDRAN via SPAIN, MOROCCO, SENEGAL, NATAL in BRAZIL, BUENOS AIRES, MENDOZA to SANTIAGO in CHILE. A letter posted in TOULOUSE on May 10 th arrived in SANTIAGO on May 15 th . Those who worked for the Aéropostale to bring the people of two continents closer together, sometimes losing their lives, include the financier BOUILLOUX LAFONT under Didier DAURAT, the pilots MERMOZ, GUILLAUMET, ST-EXUPERY, REINE and many others.	1930	CALIFORNIA: prunes no longer sun-dried as industrial drying kilns come into widespread use.
1931	The American W. H. CAROTHERS invents nylon, which is first marketed in 1938.	1932 - 1933	CALIFORNIA : the Association of prune and apricot producers (predecessor of SUNSWEET) launches prune juice and TENDERIZED prunes onto the market.
		1933	Production of the <i>prune d'ente</i> in FRANCE begins to decline in the Agen region. 2 080 tonnes of prunes were produced from 1930 to 1933, 1 750 tonnes from 1934 to 1939. Record low of 860 tonnes in 1937.
		1937	
1939 - 1945	Second World War. 6 th June 1944 : Allied troops land in NORMANDY under General EISENHOWER to liberate FRANCE and EUROPE.	1941	CHILE : 25 prune producers form the ASPROCICA cooperative to process and market their prune products.
1945	United Nations Organisation (UN) founded after the SAN FRANCISCO Conference.	1945	Plum orchards decline in France in the aftermath of war. Barely 850 000 productive plum trees recorded in the LOT-ET-GARONNE.
1947	American pilot Charles YEAGER (born in 1923) breaks the sound barrier for the first time.	1943 - 1946	A commission of INRA experts (Messrs. BERNHARD - RENAUD - MESNIER and CHENNEVIÈRE) travel through the <i>prune d'ente</i> area in the Lot-et-Garonne by bicycle to select about sixty

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			plum trees for the size of their fruit, their prolificacy and vigour. From a preliminary selection of 20 to 30 clones, 6 are finally chosen, including P 707, P 626, P 652 and P 303
		1945 - 1951	After the war, Californian plum orchards maintain production with 55 000 hectares in 1951, dropping later to 42 800 hectares.
1948	USA researchers J. BARDEEN, W. BRATTAIN and W. SHOCKLEY invent the transistor.	1946	Due to the cost of labour in CALIFORNIA, wooden crates are abandoned in favour of bins for plums and prunes.
		1948	Second National Plum and Prune Congress held on 20 th , 21 st and 22 nd October in AGEN (FRANCE), organised by the Lot-et-Garonne Fruit Growers Committee with support from the LOT-ET-GARONNE Agricultural Services Department.
		1949	PRUNE MARKETING COMMITTEE formed in the US.
1952	Dr. Alain BOMBARD stages a shipwreck to cross the Atlantic alone on an inflatable dinghy with no water or food, as a demonstration of survival techniques for sailors lost at sea. He successfully reaches BARBADOS on the 25 th December, after 27 days.	1952	U.S.A.: CALIFORNIA - CALIFORNIA PRUNE BOARD founded
		1953	FRANCE: Foundation of the G.E.D. (<i>Groupement d'Etude et de Défense de la prune d'ente</i>), a professional union formed by producers to organise their profession and disseminate technical knowledge on prune-plum cultivation.
		1955	First Californian-type tunnel installed in FRANCE.
		1960	Plum production in the SACRAMENTO Valley overtakes production in the SANTA CLARA Valley, which is increasingly taken over by real estate and will eventually become SILICON VALLEY. In the early 60s, the SUNSWEET GROWERS organisation

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		1960	develops pitted prunes. In ITALY, prune plantations and drying installations develop around MODENA and FERRARA.
		1963	The <i>Comité Économique du Pruneau</i> (C.E.P) formed as a professional federation of prune producers.
		1963	Foundation of the <i>Bureau Interprofessionnel du Pruneau</i> (B.I.P.)
1969	On 20th July, astronauts Neil ARMSTRONG and Buzz ALDRIN become the first men on the moon under NASA's APOLLO XI programme (U.S.A.).	1970	First « Prune Festival » organised at SAINTE-LIVRADE Agricultural College (Lot-et-Garonne) on an initiative from the <i>Comité Economique du Pruneau</i> .
		1975	SUNSWEET moves to YUBA CITY.
1969	Early stages of INTERNET development following a proposal made in 1964 by Pierre BARR-AN, in response to a request from the US Air Force, for a packet-switched network of computers. In 1969, four Universities (UCLA, STANFORD, SANTA BARBARA and UTAH) link up their 4 computers for the first time.	1988	First annual PRUNE FESTIVAL at YUBA CITY in CALIFORNIA, held in September.
1977	The INTERNET becomes operational.		
1991	TIM BERNERS-LEE of the CERN creates the WORLD WIDE WEB.		
1992	FINLAND : commercial development of mobile phones for the general public.	1990	International Prune Association (IPA) founded in AGEN on 26th January 1990 by prune producers from CALIFORNIA, USA, CHILE, ITALY and France, later joined by ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA and SOUTH AFRICA.
1999	25 th , 26 th and 27 th December : a storm of hurricane proportions crosses France from the Atlantic, causing huge damage in more than 70 French <i>départements</i> . In the LOT-ET-GARONNE and the whole of the SOUTH-WEST, violent winds uproot over 125 000 plum trees during the night of the 27 th .	2000	20 th January : 30 th Prune Festival in VILLENEUVE SUR LOT

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		2000	<p>24th May 1993 : 1st IPA Congress: YUBA CITY, CALIFORNIA</p> <p>14th November 1994 : 2nd IPA Congress: YOUNG, AUSTRALIA</p> <p>18th November 1996 : 3rd IPA Congress : SANTIAGO MENDOZA, CHILE – ARGENTINA</p> <p>25th May 1998 : 4th IPA Congress : BOLOGNA, ITALY</p> <p>22nd May 2000: IPA Congress in AGEN, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the IPA with representatives from prune-producing countries throughout the world.</p>