



NUT TREES



Two or more are needed for pollination with the exception on Hazelnuts/Hazelberts

- = ***Plant in rich loam or clay***
- = ***Dig a hole deep enough to generously accommodate the taproot of tree nuts***
- = ***Pack soil firmly around the root and water amply the first growing season***
- = ***Mulch to prevent the soil from drying out***

Butternuts, Buartnuts and Black Walnuts are all in the Walnut (Juglans) family. The soils best suited to these species are rich loam and deep silt/clay bottom land. They are more tolerant than fruit trees to wet soils. They will thrive along riverbanks and floodplain soils but can also adapt to most other soils. As nut trees are less fussy about soils they can get the 2nd best when it comes to site selection, leaving the best for the fruit trees.

Knowing this before you plant your nut trees in those more 'challenging sites' understand that there is a direct correlation between soil quality and growth rate of trees. If soil conditions do not suit the needs of your nuts trees, their growth can be painfully slow.

Nut trees of the walnut family are 'carrot' rooted, meaning that their entire roots system is comprised mainly of one large tap root, unlike many other species that have a fibrous root ball. Having one large tap root is wonderful for storing sugars but terrible for collecting water. Because of this plantings of such nut trees needs to be well watered until fully established.

At planting it is important to dig a hole larger enough to generously accommodate the tap root. Mulching around the trees will help to maintain soil moisture. Soil that is allowed to dry out will often crack along the line of the tap root, shrinking back from the root as it dries. If the soil shrinks back even slightly it will expose the tap root to air and the tree will most likely die. This can happen in mid to late summer, after planting as nature's conditions tend to be drier then.

Shagbark Hickory

See above this species grows very slow naturally and have a longer tap root.

Bur Oak

They begin growth slowly but rapidly increase size once established. Their tap root has a spiraling tendency which allows it to drill into the soil. The Ashworth Bur Oak at our nursery produces acorns that you can eat right off the tree.

Those in the Walnut family as well as Hickories and Oaks, can be planted 20 feet apart. They can be planted closer but should eventually thinned to 40 feet spacing. Deer will browse and rub new trees so protection may be needed.

Hazelberts

Like fruit trees, hazels prefer well drained soils with a PH of 6.2 -7. Hazels can have single taproots like walnuts or they can have a more fibrous system like those of fruit trees.

Hazels will establish best in a hole that accommodates the roots system. Planting the root collar of the hazel below soils level will encourage it to sucker if you wish to create more of a bush form.

Mulch and water the new plantings to get them established.

Hazels planted at 3-5 feet apart will make a wonderful dense hedge. Their fall foliage is quite beautiful, turning deep green to a mixture of reds, oranges, yellows and purples. Since their pollen is heavy and they rely primarily on wind for pollination, to get nuts they should not be planted farther than 6-10 feet apart.

Text by Effie Eifer – Fruit Drawings by Gabe Tempesta
Text and fruit drawings © 2009 Elmore Roots