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Growing Fruit Trees

Steps for Success!

#F11



Selection of Fruit

- What types of fruit do you like to eat? Grow what you like to eat. Select fruit that will grow well in your area.
- Do you have adequate space for the tree? The space should fit the tree. Are your soil conditions right for the fruit you want to grow?

Where and How to Plant Fruit Trees

- Will the tree get enough sunlight in the day?
- Will the tree have enough room to expand to full size?
- Are varieties close enough for cross-pollination? (Within 200 ft.)

How to Plant

- Keep tree in container, well watered, until ready to plant.
- Dig hole twice as wide and 1 1/2 times as deep as the container. Amend soil with peat, and fill-in bottom half with loose soil.
- Remove tree from container, planting straight and centered. At the same level tree was planted in container.
- Backfill hole, making a basin around tree to hold water.
- Water plant thoroughly to settle soil around roots.
- If necessary, stake and tie plant.
- Do not apply fertilizer for at least 3 months after planting.

Pollination

- Adequate pollination is necessary for high yields of good quality fruit.
- Some trees are not capable of pollinating themselves and these varieties are called self-unfruitful and require cross-pollination.
- Using compatible pollination plants to ensure good fruit set.
- Plant compatible varieties at the most 200 ft apart.
- Peach, Citrus, Nectarine, Blackberry, and Raspberry are self-fruitful and require no cross-pollination.
- Apple, Plum and Pear are self-unfruitful and require cross-pollination from another source.
- Blueberries will bear fruit with one variety, but yields are far better with two.
- Grapes can be self-fruitful, or self-unfruitful, depending on the variety.

Why Fruit Trees Fail To Bear?

- Water is a major factor why fruit and berry plants die during the first year. When watering soak plants well once a week. Light watering promotes shallow root growth.
- Too much water is a serious problem; if your area holds water, consider planting on a raised bed.

Insect and Disease Control

- Timing is critical for effective control. Most damage to fruit is done during the flowering stage. Begin spraying when the flower buds begin to swell in the early spring. Early spring applications of pesticides are important to prevent damage later.
- Alternate insecticides and fungicides with other types to prevent possible resistance developing in the pest.
- Always follow directions on the pesticide label.
- Spray in the early morning or late evening.

Fertilization

- Fertilize after the tree has been planted for 3 months, allowing time for the plant to establish some roots.
- Use a complete fertilizer such as a 12-12-12 in the early spring, just prior to plant leafing out.