

Fruit Trees – Selection and Care

Basics of Fruit Trees

- Eastern Washington vs. Western Washington – heating and chilling hours
- Location with at least 6 hours of sun in summer
- Spacing, air circulation and sunshine – find balance and leave room!
- Soils and drainage
- Fertilizing and dormant spraying
- Grafting and rootstocks – try combinations (no plums) or espaliers to save space
- Self-fertile? Need a pollinator? Make sure you get ones that work with each other!
- Disease resistance and genetics
- Yearly fertilizing, watering and maintenance

Apples/Pears/Asian Pears

- Discussion of growth and bud types
- Dwarf and mini dwarf available – M26 and M27 rootstocks on Apples
- All require cross pollination
- Note newer apples like “Cosmic Crisp” and “Sunrise Magic”, crosses of pears like “Reddy Robin” and “Maxie”. New for 2024 some cool red flesh Lucy apple varieties are fun
- For smaller gardens take advantage of Espalier, Columnar and Combination options for the garden
- Common bugs and diseases to watch out for on apples and pears

Cherries

- Discussion of growth and bud types
- Dwarf cherries on patented Gisela rootstocks
- Excellent self-fertile varieties like Glacier, Lapins, Black Gold, Tehranivee and Stella. Remember Rainier is the one that needs a second cherry for best production!
- Utilize a combination option if multiple varieties are needed
- Common insects and diseases to watch out for on cherries

Peaches/Apricots/Nectarines/Plums

- Discussion of growth and bud types
- Specific spraying and pruning tips
- In Peaches check out “new” option – disease resistant Salish Summer second option besides Frost Peach
- Most all available on dwarf rootstocks
- Remember all European plums are self-fertile
- Remember all Japanese plums require cross pollination
- Common insects and diseases to watch out for

Lots of other specialty fruits and nuts to try!

- Filbert/Hazlenut – we carry only new Filbert Blight immune varieties
- Walnuts and Hardy Almonds
- Figs that grow well around Puget Sound
- Persimmons to consider trying in PNW
- Mulberries to consider

Let’s talk something new and exciting with fruit! Permaculture!

- What is a fruit tree guild? Discussion of how this helps your home orchard, our native pollinators, and greatly reduces insect and diseases in the garden. Think of the surrounding garden in the orchard in combination with your fruit as creating an ecosystem. This is a newer concept in gardening but one to consider for sure in the home orchard..... Ask yourself questions like these.....

What will attract early pollinators?

What will attract beneficial insects in the growing season?

What will fix Nitrogen and add to the soil composition?

What might help ward off insects and diseases?

What will aid in erosion control?

Having a “home orchard” is easy and rewarding! Remember to use natural and organic products – especially with edibles - Go Green!