

Fruit Tree Varieties

A great selection of fruit trees is now available and even better, early spring is a great time to plant. The following provides information on locally common fruit trees.

Apples and Pears: These are the most adapted to Cache Valley's cold weather of all fruit grown here. However, keep in mind that some varieties will not ripen fruit due our short growing season. Granny Smith apple is a prime example where it does not ripen until November. Care should be taken with other varieties also, especially Braeburn, Fuji and Cameo. If these or other late ripening varieties are planted, keep them away from the coldest areas of the yard. Apples additionally require another variety be planted within close proximity for cross pollination. For more information on apple tree care and ripening times see the following fact sheet: <http://tinyurl.com/4uhtkox>. Pears are semi-self fruitful but yields are increased if another variety is planted in close proximity.

Apricots: Apricots are additionally relatively cold-hardy. The biggest challenge with them is that they blossom so early that the flowers are often damaged or eliminated by frost. Two older types that blossom later include Chinese (Mormon) and Moorpark. Others also exist. Apricots are self pollinating, but yields can be increased by planting a second variety in close proximity.

Plums: There are three main edible plums grown in Utah. The most cold-hardy is the American plum. These are usually left to grow as bushes and have smaller but delicious fruit that makes excellent jelly and syrup. American plums are somewhat less available and may need to be ordered online. European plums are very popular and cold-hardy. Common varieties include Stanley, Elephant Heart, Italian Prune and French Prune. The other common plum species is Japanese plum. It is the least hardy but is often planted. Common types include Santa Rosa and Satsuma. Japanese plums require a pollinator. The other two do not.

Cherries: Both sweet and tart (or pie) cherries are grown locally. Tart cherries are the more reliable and grow into a small tree or large bush. Sweet cherries are sometimes damaged during harsh winters and should not be planted in the coldest areas of the valley. Sweet cherries almost always require a cross-pollinator for satisfactory fruit production.

Peaches: Peaches are highly desired by local residents. Unfortunately, they are the least cold-hardy of locally grown fruit, but many still try and some succeed. This last November many peach trees in the valley were severely damaged or killed by the early sub-zero weather due to trees not being completely hardened off. Like cherries, they should not be grown in colder areas of Cache Valley. Some reportedly more cold tolerant cultivars include: Reliance, Canadian Harmony, Intrepid, PF 24C Cold Hardy, Veteran, Harken and Ranger. Of these ranger is considered the best canning peach.

Certain varieties of many other less common fruits and nuts perform well here also. Among them are serviceberry, elderberry, raspberries, strawberry, walnuts, hazelnuts, Asian pears and some varieties of grapes. These are also worth a try and offer valuable crops.

