Gardening Basics

Fruit Trees for North Texas



*1"Fig-tree - Figueira - 1" by * starrynight1 is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.*

If you are thinking of adding some fruit trees to your landscape, planting in January through March gives the tree time to adjust and spread its root system before the hot summer weather arrives. While many varieties of fruit and nut trees can be grown in our region, some of the more successful include figs, peaches, and plums. Most varieties of peaches and figs are self-pollinating, so you do not need to plant a second variety.

In horticulturalist Neil Sperry's interview with Texas A&M's Dr. George Ray McEachern, Professor and Extension Horticulturist Emeritus, who suggested the varieties listed below plus the interview also includes varietal suggestions for other fruits for North Texas: https://neilsperry.com/2016/02/best-fruit-varieties-for-north-and-northeast-texas/.

- Figs: Alma variety. (Other choice: Celeste) Dr. McEachern reevaluated the winter hardiness of Alma and feels it is equal to that of Celeste and notes that "Texas Everbearing/Brown Turkey exists in too many variations and is no longer recommended."
- Peaches: Redglobe
- Plums: "Methley plum, a good pollinator, both for itself and for other plum varieties." Although Methley plum is self-pollinating, you will get a better yield by having other Japanese plum trees nearby.

For even more information on many types of fruits and nuts and potential challenges, bookmark the AgriLife page on Fruit and Nut Resources, which has over 40 detailed fact sheets for each: https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/fruit-nut/.

A selection of fruit and nut trees should be available at area nurseries in late winter/early spring. When purchasing a container-grown tree, gently slide the tree from the pot until you can see that the roots are not girdled (tightly circling the trunk or other main roots). "Texas Tree Planting Guide" from Texas A&M Forest Service has useful information on selecting a healthy tree, planting, etc.: https://texastreeplanting.tamu.edu/PickTreeAtNursery.html.

Fruit and nut trees need at least six hours of direct sunlight for quality production, so choose a sunny spot with good drainage. A common planting mistake is to dig the hole too deep; a good rule of thumb is to dig the hole twice as wide as the root ball but at an equal depth, so the root flare (or sometimes called root collar, where the main roots meet the trunk) is not smothered and the root system has space to stretch and grow.

When planting a container-grown tree, gently separate the roots and remove any excess soil covering the top of the root ball, if necessary, to reveal the root flare. Backfill the hole with the original soil (do not add compost, etc.), and water well. Continue to water regularly as the new tree establishes itself. Be sure to remove weeds and grass from the soil

surrounding the new planting and keep the area clear for about five years to reduce the competition for water and nutrients.

This guide provides in-depth information: “Plant Fruit Trees the AgriLife Extension Way” https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/2020/10/23/plant-fruit-trees-the-agrilife-extension-way. Also see this video from Texas A&M Forest Service “How to Plant a Tree in Your Yard”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Dmmaemw4jo

Resources:

“Fruit & Nut Resources”, Texas AgriLife Extension, Texas A&M University, (accessed 30 September 2026), https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/fruit-nut/

“How to Plant a Tree in Your Yard”, YouTube, Texas A&M Forest Service, (22 March 2010, accessed 30 September 2026), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Dmmaemw4jo

Russell, Adam, “Plant Fruit Trees the AgriLife Extension Way”, AgriLife Today, (23 October 2020), Texas AgriLife Extension, Texas A&M University, (30 September 2026), https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/2020/10/23/plant-fruit-trees-the-agrilife-extension-way

Sperry, Neil, “Best Fruit Varieties for North and Northeast Texas”, Neil Sperry's Gardens, (18 February 2016, accessed 20 April 2024), https://neilsperry.com/2016/02/best-fruit-varieties-for-north-and-northeast-texas/

“Texas Tree Planting Guide”, Texas A&M Forest Service, (accessed 30 September 2026), https://texastreeplanting.tamu.edu/PickTreeAtNursery.html

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