



Nectarine:

General info: Nectarines (*Prunus persica*) are basically a non-fuzzy peach. They are considered a relatively new fruit, although they have been around for at least 2,000 years. The fruit is brightly colored, sweet and fragrant.

Nectarines can be divided into two categories according to their type of flesh: melting and non-melting. Melting varieties soften as they ripen, and are very juicy. Non-melting varieties stay firm even while ripening. They can also be divided according to how the flesh separates from the pit. Freestone nectarines separate easily from the pit, while clingstone peaches “cling” to the pit.

Landscape uses: Small specimen tree; mixed border.

Ornamental qualities: Showy pink blossoms in spring; long, arching leaves all summer long.

Planting: Plant in full sun and well drained soil. Early morning sun is important to help dry the leaves and reduce the chance of disease. If necessary, cut off any broken or mutilated roots, otherwise keep root pruning to a minimum. Plant the same depth as grown in the nursery. When the hole is half filled, firm the soil with your feet before filling the rest of the way. Pack the soil firmly. Do not leave a depression around the tree. Water well after planting, to help eliminate air pockets.

Pruning: Nectarines need to be pruned into a vase shaped tree with an open center to promote good air circulation and to let sunlight in. This helps reduce the chance for disease, and makes it easier to harvest the fruit. Pruning should be done during mid-February.

First remove dead, diseased, broken, and low hanging limbs. Do not allow the tree to form a dominant central leader. Prune out any crossing branches growing back towards the center, and any vigorous, upright shoots that developed from the inside of the main branches. You can think of the tree being pruned to look like your hand with your palm facing up, cupped, and fingers spread. Pruning may also be done in the summer after fruit harvest.

Approximately 4 weeks after bloom, thin out the fruit so there is about 6” between each nectarine. Removal of excess fruit is necessary to ensure proper ripening and to reduce limb breakage.

Fertilizing/Watering: Fertilize in spring and again in summer. Do not let fertilizer accumulate around the trunk.

Varieties:

Karla Rose: This variety has a deep red mottled skin and a white flesh of excellent quality. Perfect for fresh eating. The Karla Rose nectarine is a semi-freestone fruit of medium size that requires 650 chilling hours.

Fantasia: Fantasia is one of the largest freestone nectarines. The skin is bright red with bright yellow under-color, and is extremely attractive. The firm, smooth textured, yellow flesh is of high quality. Fantasia bears a heavy crop of sweet and juicy nectarines. It requires 600 chilling hours.