



Easy Edible

Pawpaw:

General info: Paw paws (*Asimina triloba*) are native to America, and even have a few songs written about them. (“pickin’ up paw paws, puttin’ ‘em in a basket...”). The fruit is highly nutritious and is a good source of Vitamins A and C. Paw paws ripen during fall to a golden-brown color with dark splotches. Almost ripe fruit may be stored in the refrigerator for about two weeks, and then ripened for a few days at room temperature. The pawpaw trees are capable of rapid growth once established but are slow to take off the first few years. Usually grows 15-20’ tall and wide, as a tree or multi-stemmed shrub. Paw paws also attract Zebra Swallowtail butterflies.

Pollination: At least 2 genetically different plants are required if you are planting a named variety (because they are clones), but 2 or 3 seedlings will be sufficient as they are all genetically different but the more you plant the better because they are not bountiful pollinators. They truly do best by creating a hammock with several for pollination and shade.

Landscape uses: Specimen or shade tree

Ornamental qualities: Naturally pleasing form; Large, lush, tropical looking leaves all summer; leaves turn golden in fall.

Planting: Perform best in fertile, well drained soil that is slightly acidic. Will not tolerate soggy soil. Prefers partial sun, but will grow in sun or shade, too. Grows as an understory tree in the wild. Plant at least two for cross-pollination. Young trees must be planted in shaded areas until at least 2-3 years old.

Pruning: Requires very little pruning. Remove damaged or dead branches and correct unwanted growth. Occasionally pruning older trees will promote more fruit production. Suckers should be hand pruned while still small.

Fertilizing/Watering: Keep plants well watered for the first few years to establish a good root system. Grows quickly if mulched and watered during drought conditions. Fertilize in spring and mid-summer

Varieties:

Seedlings: The ripe fruit is fragrant, shaped like a mango, and tastes similar to a vanilla flavored banana with a custard consistency.