



## **Plums and Plumcots:**

**General info:** Plums (*Prunus*) are native to Asia, Europe, and North America. They put on a beautiful display of blooms in the spring. Plums are an excellent source of Vitamin A & C, as well as other nutrients. They can grow to about 15-20' tall, but can be kept under 10" with proper pruning. \*\* Some plums are considered self-fertile, but nevertheless are improved with a pollinator.

**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.

**Landscape uses:** Small specimen or shade tree

**Ornamental qualities:** Fragrant white blossoms in spring; fruit

**Pruning:** Plums 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 braches 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 plums so there is about 6" between each fruit. 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:

**Bruce:** A tough tree, red-orange fruit with a sweet mellow flavor flesh, self-fertile.

**Methley:** A southern favorite. Deep red-purplish skin. Amber with red streaked flesh. Medium to large. High quality. Mild, sweet, distinctive flavor. Self-fertile.

**Santa Rosa:** Most important commercial & home orchard variety. Large, oval shape. Purplish-red skin, purplish flesh. Firm, rich, sweet-tart flavor. Somewhat self-fertile.

\*\* The following varieties are especially bred for our area of the southeast.

**AU Amber:** Amber flesh, self-fertile; Good vigor and resistance to disease.

**AU Cherry:** This tree produces a heavy crop of bright red fruit resembling cherries and dark flesh with a sweet taste when ripe; self-fertile

**AU Roadside:** Excellent quality with purple-ish skin and red flesh; Somewhat self-fertile.

**AU Producer:** A heavy producer of juicy sweet fruit, great for fresh eating & cooking.

**Byron Gold:** Golden yellow skin and flesh; needs a pollinizer.

**Spring Satin:** A plumcot (cross between plum & apricot). Red-black skin and golden red flesh that is very sweet — 33% sugar. Best pollinator is any type of Japanese plum.