



EDIBLE  
GARDENING  
SERIES

# Peaches & Nectarines

Peach trees produce tasty fruit having fuzzy skin. Nectarines are very similar to the peach except they have smooth skin. Both have sweet and juicy fruit that is good for fresh eating, canning, preserves and desserts. Their only draw back is they are prone to peach leaf curl. We do offer some great peaches that are resistant to the peach leaf curl, but we still advise applying dormant spray. Grows 15 feet tall and wide, but can be maintained smaller, and range in hardiness from -10°F to -20°F. In the spring peaches and nectarines have showy pink flowers.

## EXPOSURE

Full sun to part shade. Early sun is particularly important because it dries dew from trees reducing the incidence of diseases.

## PLANTING

Plant 15 feet apart. Peaches need well drained soil. Plant your peach tree with **Gardner & Bloome Organic Soil Building Compost**, **Dr. Earth Starter Fertilizer** and water in with **Bonide Root n Grow**. Also, incorporate **Lime** when planting. Healthy soil is the first step in disease control.

## SPRAYING

Spray **Bonide Copper Fungicide** in December and then again in January. This will help to prevent peach leaf curl. Peach leaf infection happens when buds open. The key to controlling it is to spray after the spores have germinated but before and during the period when the buds open on dormant peaches and nectarines. In the Pacific Northwest, 1 to 3 applications maybe necessary for control. WSU recommends applying the first spray in December and then in 3 week intervals until bloom. Fall clean-up is another way to help fight peach leaf curl. Near total control can be achieved by moving potted trees under cover in the winter.

## PRUNING

Peaches require heavy pruning to produce well. Peaches bear on first year wood only, so you need to prune off old wood so your peach tree is always renewing its branches. Prune to keep an open canopy.

## FERTILIZING

In March, use **Dr. Earth Fruit Tree Fertilizer** and again in early August. Apply **Lime** in early June and again in early August.

## FRUITING

Begin to bear fruit at 3 to 4 years. Fruit may need thinning. Hand thin 4 weeks after bloom spacing peaches about 6 inches apart on the limb. There are two types of peaches: Freestone & Clingstone.

- **Freestone:** Pits are easily removed.
- **Clingstone:** More difficult to separate from the fruit.  
These are best for canning.

## HARVESTING

Harvest times range from July through August.

## MULCHING

Apply 2 to 3 inches of **Gardner & Bloome Soil Conditioner** around your peach trees annually.

## WATERING

Watering is very important for fruit production. When watering, make sure water penetrates 6 to 8 inches below surface.

## CHECK LIST

- Peach and/or Nectarine Trees
- Organic Soil Building Compost
- Dr. Earth Starter Fertilizer
- Bonide Root n Grow
- Lime
- Dr. Earth Tree Fertilizer
- Mulch
- Bonide Copper Fungicide

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