

# **Growing Temperate Tree Fruit and Nut Crops in the Home Garden and Landscape**

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## **Varieties for Planting in the Home Garden**

Where you live (your "climate zone") will determine which varieties of temperate tree fruit and nut crops will perform best in your home garden, when fruits and nuts are harvested, and which pest and disease problems are more common. This table describes *selected* varieties that are suitable for home gardeners in California. The number of varieties could easily be doubled or tripled if all heirloom varieties and newer varieties available at nurseries or through mail order were included.

Certain varieties are superb eaten fresh. Other varieties tend to be used more often for cooking, canning, and freezing. Experts do not always agree about which varieties are best suited for various uses because individual tastes differ. Thus, the comments in the table regarding these issues are offered as points of interest only, not as official advice endorsed by the UC.

## **Plum and Prune**

(*Prunus domestica* and *Prunus salicina*)

Plum trees are one of the best-adapted fruit tree species for almost anywhere in California. They are easy to grow. Available rootstocks are very tolerant of wet winter soils; they bloom late enough to avoid most spring frosts; and they have few pest problems. Plum trees get relatively large and require 12-18 ft spacing. Most plums, but not all, require cross-pollination to set adequate crops; plan to plant two different varieties. There are two different kinds of plums: Japanese, *Prunus salicina*, and European, *Prunus domestica*. European types are either very sweet fresh plums or prunes used for drying. Both types of plums require about 140-170 days to mature the crop. Most Japanese plums bloom earlier and mature earlier. They typically require less chilling than European plums.

### **Rootstocks**

- **Myrobalan Seedling** - The largest and most vigorous of the plum or prune rootstocks. Hardy, long-lived, adapted to most soils. Tolerates wet winter soil conditions. Susceptible to oak root fungus and nematodes, but somewhat resistant to root and crown rots.
- **Myrobalan 29C** - A cutting selection immune to root knot nematodes. Susceptible to oak root fungus, root rot, and root lesion nematode. Produces a tree with just a little less vigor than the seedling Myrobalan.
- **Marianna 2624** - The overall best choice. It is resistant to oak root fungus, root rots, root knot nematodes, and crown gall, but susceptible to bacterial canker and root lesion nematode. A cutting that is shallow-rooted and produces a smaller tree. It is the best adapted to poor, wet soil conditions, but does tend to sucker.
- **Lovell Peach** - Less susceptible to bacterial canker, but the most intolerant of heavy soils, wet feet oak root fungus, and root rots. Produces a moderately large tree that fruits earlier and sets more consistent crops. Compatible with most plum or prune varieties.
- **Prunus besseyi** - Semi-dwarfing rootstock. Suckers badly. Produces inferior fruit quality on the scion variety. Partially incompatible.
- **Citation** - A new peach-plum hybrid that produces a full-sized tree. Tolerates wet soils.

### Standard Plum Varieties

- **Autumn Rosa** - Large. Purple skin. Self-fertile. Japanese plum.
- **Beauty** - Green skin, amber flesh, hear-shaped. Poor keeper. Japanese plum.
- **Burgundy** - Red skin and flesh. Self-fertile. Holds well.
- **El Dorado** - Purple skin. Amber flesh. Large, oblong.
- **Elephant Heart** - Purple skin. Large, heart-shaped. Japanese plum
- **Friar** - Black skin. Amber flesh. Tasteless, old variety. Japanese plum.
- **Golden Nectar** - Large. Yellow flesh. Tender skin. Great flavor. Japanese plum.
- **Howard Wonder** - Large, pink skin. Yellow flesh. Japanese plum.
- **Kelsey** - Green-yellow skin and flesh. Japanese plum.
- **Laroda** - Red-purple skin. Yellow flesh.
- **Mariposa** - Green-yellow skin. Red flesh. Large, heart-shaped. Japanese plum.
- **Nubiana** - Purple-black skin. Yellow flesh. Oblong. Japanese plum.
- **President** - Large. Blue skin. Yellow flesh. European plum.
- **Red Beauty** - Red skin, yellow flesh, excellent flavor.
- **Roysum** - Light purple skin. Yellow flesh.
- **Santa Rosa** - Purple skin. Amber flesh. Excellent flavor. Japanese plum.
- **Satsuma** - Red skin and flesh. Small, round. Japanese plum.
- **Shiro** - Light green-yellow skin. Yellow flesh.
- **Simka** - Dark black skin. Yellow flesh. Oblong.
- **Sprite Cherry Plum** - Black, sweet skin. Exotic flavor. Small.
- **Wickson** - Green-yellow skin. Yellow flesh. Large heart. Japanese plum.

## Harvest Period

Standard Varieties	San Joaquin Valley	Sacramento Valley	Central Coast	North Coast	Sierra Nevada Foothills	Southern California
Autumn Rosa	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	September	September	September	NA
Beauty	June	June	July	July	June	June
Burgundy	Early Aug.	Early Aug.	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	August
El Dorado	Early July	Mid July	August	July	July	July
Elephant Heart	Early Aug.	Early Aug.	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	NA
Friar	Mid Aug.	Mid Aug.	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	August
Golden Nectar	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	September	September	September	NA
Howard Wonder	Early Aug.	Early Aug.	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	NA
Kelsey	Early Aug.	Early Aug.	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	August
Laroda	Mid Aug.	Mid Aug.	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	August
Mariposa	August	August	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	August
Nubiana	Early Aug.	Early Aug.	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	NA
President	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	September	September	September	NA
Red Beauty	Early June	Early June	June	Mid June	June	June
Roysum	September	September	October	October	October	NA
Santa Rosa	Early July	Early July	Late July	Mid July	July	July
Satsuma	Early Aug.	Early Aug.	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	July
Shiro	Early July	Early July	Late July	Mid July	July	NA
Simka	Early Aug.	Early Aug.	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	NA
Sprite Cherry Plum	Early Aug.	Early Aug.	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	NA
Wickson	July	July	August	August	Late July	NA

**Low Chill Plum Varieties:** These plum varieties are adapted to the low latitudes of Southern California because they have low winter chilling requirements.

Beauty Burgundy, Delight, Howard Miracle, Kelsey, Mariposa, Meredith, Methley, Santa Rosa, Satsuma, Sprite

### Standard Prune Varieties

- **French** - Medium-sized fruit. Self-fertile. Late maturing. European plum.
- **Imperial** - Large fruit. Requires cross-pollination. Late maturing. European plum.
- **Italian** - Large fruit. Purple skin. Yellow flesh. European plum.
- **Green Gage** - Greenish-yellow skin. Amber flesh. Old, European variety.

### Harvest Period

<b>Standard Varieties</b>	<b>San Joaquin Valley</b>	<b>Sacramento Valley</b>	<b>Central Coast</b>	<b>North Coast</b>	<b>Sierra Nevada Foothills</b>	<b>Southern California</b>
French	August	August	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	NA
Imperial	August	August	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	NA
Italian	August	August	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	NA
Green Gage	August	August	Late Aug.	Late Aug.	August	NA