truckee meadows
COMMUNITY
FORESTRY
COALITION

Participants

- City of Reno Recreation & Parks Commission
- City of Reno Urban Forestry Commission
- City of Sparks
- Community Services Agency
- Dale Carlon Consulting, LLC
- Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful
- Kennedy-Jenks Consultants
- Los Verdes Arborists
- The Nature Conservancy
- Nevada Division of Forestry
- Nevada Landscape Association
- Nevada Shade Tree Council
- NV Energy
- Signature Landscapes
- Truckee Meadows Water Authority
- University of Nevada Cooperative Extension
- Washoe County Commission
- Washoe County District Health, Air Quality Division
- Washoe County Regional Parks & Open Space
- Western Regional Water Commission
- Wilbur D. May Center & Arboretum

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Fruit Trees

Which fruit trees grow in our region?

The Truckee Meadows is a prime location with lots of sun and freezing temperatures appropriate for many fruit trees. Trees that perform the best in our high desert area are (in order): apple, pear, dwarf cherry and peach.

Are there special considerations for selecting a fruit tree?

When choosing a fruit tree look for the tree's chill hours. A chill hour is one hour for every hour the temperature is between 32 and 45. Trees that need at least 800 chill hours will perform the best in our region.

Choosing a dwarf or semi-dwarf variety may make trees easier to maintain and to harvest fruit. Smaller trees are also less prone to wind damage. Very often in the Truckee Meadows we have an early warming period in January or February, causing trees to break dormancy early. Then, when freezing temperatures resume, new growth is damaged or killed. To avoid this problem, choose species that are late bloomers and select species that are "hardy" to zone 3 (Sunset Western Garden Book) or zone 4 (USDA). View a hardiness zone map online at **http://www.usna.usda.gov/hardzone/**.

Other considerations:

Watering

Drip irrigation works best. If we have two or three consecutive weeks of warm weather in winter, give the tree a good soaking. For more information see our **Watering Tree Topic Paper** or log on to **www.communityforestry.org**.

Pruning

Maintenance pruning is recommended from December to mid-March. Pruning to elevate limbs and thinning the interior can be done in summer after fruit drop. For more information see our **Pruning** page at **www.communityforestry.org**.

Thinning Fruit

Trees usually set too much fruit and need to be thinned. Without thinning, fruits will be small and poor in quality. Heavy loads of fruit will reduce the next season's crop and may lead to alternate year bearing. Hand thinning is the best method. For the best production of apples and peaches, the developing fruit should be at least six inches apart. Cherries do not need to be thinned.

What diseases should I look for in my fruit trees?

Tree diseases are best diagnosed by a certified arborist. Visit **www.communityforestry.org** to search for an arborist in your zip code. Some common fruit tree diseases are:

Crown Gall

This appears as lumpy growths on the trunk near the soil line. Normally crown gall is not deadly unless the gall girdles the trunk. Crown gall can be avoided by protecting the trunk from injury since bacteria enters through wounds.

Fire Blight

Leaves will suddenly wilt and turn black as if burned. Bacteria are carried by pollinators and enter the tree through blossoms, openings in the bark or wounds. The best way to treat fire blight is by removing affected branches. Tools must be disinfected between each cut and between each tree. Disinfectant can be made from mixing one part household bleach and nine parts water.

Gummosis

Usually as a result of damage to the bark, gummosis is the discharge of clear to colored fluid running down the trunk. To prevent gummosis, wrap or paint trunks with white latex to prevent sun scald.

Powdery Mildew

Trees will have a white powder that can rob water and nutrients from the leaves. If allowed to become severe, it can lead to premature leaf and fruit drop. Fungicides are available and should be applied at the first sign of the disease.

What insects should I be concerned about with fruit trees?

Aphids

These small sucking insects will cause leaves to curl, preventing the leaves from feeding the tree. When infestation becomes severe, the insects will produce honeydew which leaves a slick wet area below the tree. If found in the summer, there are summer oils that can be applied to help. Then the following winter, apply dormant oil to kill any left-over eggs.

Borers

The pacific flathead borer, western peachtree borer and shothole borer all attack fruit trees in our area. Holes can be seen in the trunk and sap will flow down the trunk as well. Applying white latex to prevent sunscald keeps trunks healthy and will make it more difficult for borers to enter. Remove and dispose of any limbs from pruning.

Codling Moth

This moth is ¾" long with grey wings that fold over the body like a tent. The larvae get into fruit and bore their way to the center leaving a small pile of debris at the entry hole. The best way to combat the codling moth is to use a combination of pheromone traps, put bags over the fruit and remove and dispose of infested fruit.

For more detailed information on growing fruit trees in our region, contact the **University of Nevada Cooperative Extension**.