

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.

Cherry (*Prunus avium L.*)

Two types of cherries can be planted: sweet, for fresh eating, and sour, for pies and preserves. Generally, cherries are the most difficult trees to keep alive. They do not tolerate "wet feet" and are very susceptible to brown rot, bacterial canker, cytospora canker, root and crown rots (*Prunus cerasus L.*) and several viruses. Trees must be planted 14-20 ft apart in well-drained soil and up on a small mound or berm. Sweet cherries require cross-pollination (many varieties are self-sterile and intrasterile, as noted below), but sour cherries are self-fertile and do not require pollenizers. Both types require <100 days to mature.

Rootstocks

- **Mazzard** - Good rootstock for cherries in coastal California. Produces a large, vigorous tree that is delayed in coming into bearing. Less susceptible to root rots and gophers than Mahaleb (see below) but more susceptible to bacterial canker than Mahaleb.
- **Mahaleb** - Very susceptible to root and crown rots. Some resistance to buckskin virus, bacterial canker, and root lesion nematode.
- **Stockton Morello** - Somewhat dwarfing rootstock. Not readily available. Makes an overgrowth at the bud union. Propagated from a cutting. Tolerant as Mazzard to wet feet. Somewhat resistant to gophers. Less susceptible to bacterial canker. Generally a very good rootstock.
- **Colt** - Somewhat dwarfing rootstock. The leading rootstock in California. Giesla series dwarfing rootstocks are relatively new and in most cases produce trees that are smaller in stature (8-10ft.). They also tend to impart early bearing. The smaller trees are easier to cover with netting to keep the birds from eating all the fruit.

Sweet Varieties

- **Bing** - Industry standard. Deep mahogany red fruit. Produces very heavily. Very susceptible to bacterial canker. Pollenized by 'Van', 'Black Tartarian' or 'Sam'. 'Bing', 'Lambert' and 'Royal-Ann' will not pollinate each other. (They are intrasterile.)
- **Black Tartarian** - Small, black fruit. A good pollenizer for 'Bing' and most other varieties.
- **Early Burlat** - Moderate-sized fruit. Ripens two weeks before Bing. Soft flesh. Pollenized by 'Bing' and 'Tartarian'.
- **Early Ruby** - Early in season. Large, dark red fruit. Prolific. Fruit hold on tree.
- **Lambert** - Dark, large, firm fruit. Pollenized by 'Van'. Late season. 'Lambert', 'Bing', and 'Royal-Ann' will not pollinate each other.
- **Rainier** - Yellow-red blush. Large, crack-resistant fruits.
- **Royal-Ann** - Yellow fruit with a red blush. Pollenized by 'Van'. Late season. 'Royal-Ann', 'Lambert', and 'Bing' will not pollinate each other.
- **Stella** - Dark fleshed fruit. Matures just after Bing. Self-fruitful.
- **Van** - Large, dark fruit. Pollenized by 'Bing' or 'Lambert'.

Low Chill Sweet Varieties: None available. Low-chilling types of sweet cherries need to be bred and selected.

Sour ("Pie") Varieties

- **Early Richmond** - Very early in season. Bright red fruit.
- **Meteor** - Semi-dwarf.
- **Montmorency** - The leading sour variety. Medium-sized, dark red fruit.
- **North Star** - Semi-dwarf. Self-fruitful.

Low Chill Sour Varieties: None available. Low-chilling types of sour cherries need to be bred and selected.

Harvest Period

Standard Varieties	San Joaquin Valley	Sacramento Valley	Central Coast	North Coast	Sierra Nevada Foothills	Southern California
Bing	June	June	Late June	Late June	June	NA
Black Tartarian	June	June	Late June	Late June	June	NA
Early Burlat	Early June	Early June	June	June	June	NA
Early Ruby	Early June	Early June	June	June	June	NA
Lambert	Late June	Late June	July	July	July	NA
Rainier	June	June	Late June	Late June	June	NA
Royal-Ann	Early June	Early June	June	June	June	NA
Stella	Late June	Late June	July	July	July	NA
Van	June	June	Late June	Late June	June	NA
Early Richmond	Early June	Early June	June	June	June	NA
Meteor	Early June	Early June	June	June	June	NA
Montmorency	Early June	Early June	June	June	June	NA
North Star	Early June	Early June	June	June	June	NA

NA = Not Applicable due to chilling requirements