

Peaches

Planting Specifications



- Must have well drained soil
- Short life span of 12-25 years
- Peaches only produce fruit on one year old wood, so heavily prune in the winter
- Fun fact- peach pits contain high levels of cyanide and should not be eaten!
- 12-15' semi-dwarf
- Native to China
- Varieties: Contender, Harrow Diamond
- At initial planting, we recommend planting allium companion plants (like chives) to deter pests

Common Pests and Diseases

Other diseases or pests may be present, but these are the ones most commonly found in St. Louis.

Codling Moth and Oriental Fruit Moth: Small gray/brown moths that eat the fruit. OFM also eat branch tips

Treatment: Bt inclusion in 4th holistic sprays, Bt sprays, sunflower companion planting

Peach Tree Borer: Moth larvae that bore into the trunk and branches, weakening or killing the tree

Treatment: Bt inclusion in 4th holistic spray, wrapping trunk with window screening, kaolin clay paste painted on the trunk, alliums planted around trunk

Brown Rot: Fungal disease, creates soft brown spots on fruit

Treatment: Preventatives: sulfur spray, whey spray, Monterey complete disease control

Peach Leaf Curl: Fungal infection that infects the leaves, causing them to curl up and fall off

Treatment: Copper application when tree is dormant

Bacterial Spot: Infection that causes dark, angular spots on the leaves, sunken spots on fruit

Treatment: Copper application

Perennial Canker: Fungal infection that infects winter injury to bark, leads to branch death

Treatment: Prune right before bloom, remove infected material, apply mustard oil or mustard green poultice to cankers

Peach Scab: Black velvety spots on fruits, shoots, and leaves

Treatment: Sulfur spray, whey spray

Seed St. Louis Recorded Classes and Resources

Holistic Sprays- Available to Giving Grove projects
Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt), kaolin clay, sulfur, whey, Monterey complete disease control, liquid copper, mustard green seed packets - Available for purchase from our store

Orchard Class Recordings - Summer Pruning, Dormant Fruit Tree Pruning, Pest and Disease Management, and Harvest. Available on our YouTube channel.

Companion plant recommendations - Handout available on website

Timeline of Care

Spring Care

- Application of four holistic sprays (liquid fish, pure neem oil, effective microbes) every few weeks once leaves start emerging and ending once fruits have formed (*Late February to Mid-May*)
- Complete the big yearly pruning. Peaches only produce on new growth, so peaches can be pruned heavily, going up to 50% of the branches (*Late February to Mid-March*)
- Remove any tree wraps placed in winter (*Early April*)
- For the first three years, remove all fruitlets to prevent fruit production (*Late April to Early May*)
- After three years, thin the fruits so that individual fruit are spaced about 8 inches apart (*Prior to fourth holistic spray*)

Summer Care

- Harvest when fruits are ready! Peaches are ripe when the fruit has a slight give and smells sweet (*May through August*)
- While harvesting, remove any mummified fruits and dispose of outside of the orchard to prevent disease spread (*May through August*)

Fall Care

- Cut back or harvest allium companion plant (*September through November*)
- Remove or shred all fallen leaves to prevent diseases from spreading (*Mid-October to November*)
- Fifth holistic spray once all leaves have been disposed of (*November*)
- Install tree wraps to protect trees from rabbits and voles (*Late November*)
- Apply a new layer of mulch to the base of the tree (*November*)

Ongoing Care

- During the first full growing season, water 5 gallons per plant per week, with the exception of weeks with substantial rain. After the first year, trees only need to be watered during droughts
- Weed the mulch ring
- Plant any desired companion plants to benefit the orchard ecosystem (*Spring or Fall*)