

Ten Things to Know About Fruit Tree Selection and Planting

1. Size matters. Avoid undersized (<3/8 inch) or oversized (>5/8 inch) trees, measured with calipers just above the graft union. In bare roots, look for a well-healed graft union.

http://homeorchard.ucanr.edu/The_Big_Picture/Tree_Selection/

2. Know the rootstock. Dwarf, semi-dwarf, standard. Know the cultivar—think harvest timing and personal taste.

UC ANR Pub 8261: Selecting Fruit, Nut, and Berry Crops

<http://homeorchard.ucdavis.edu/varieties.pdf>

3. Know and understand chill requirements. Cumulative hours of chill are required to break dormancy.

http://homeorchard.ucanr.edu/The_Big_Picture/Tree_Selection/

http://fruitsandnuts.ucdavis.edu/Weather_Services/chilling_accumulation_models/Chill_Calculators/

4. Understand climate and especially microclimate. Consider summer and winter sun. Frost and management are important in the home orchard.

<http://homeorchard.ucdavis.edu/backyard-climate.pdf>

UC ANR Pub 8368: Winter Pest Management in Backyard Deciduous Fruit Trees

5. Pollination counts. Understand self-fruitful, and self-sterile.

http://homeorchard.ucanr.edu/The_Big_Picture/Pollination/

6. Good soil drainage is vital. Soil amendments are not needed. Understand relationship between soil and irrigation.

UC ANR Pub 8048: Fruit Trees: Planting and Care of Young Trees

http://homeorchard.ucanr.edu/The_Big_Picture/Site_Considerations/

7. Unplanted trees should never dry out or freeze.

http://homeorchard.ucanr.edu/The_Big_Picture/Preparation_&_Planting/

8. Plan the orchard site. Consider bloom time, size at maturity, cultivation and care, harvest accessibility.

http://homeorchard.ucanr.edu/The_Big_Picture/Preparation_&_Planting/

9. The planting hole should be at least twice as wide as the spread of the tree's roots, but no deeper than the depth of the root ball unless the soil is deeply compacted.

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10. When properly planted, the soil line on the trunk of the tree should be 1 to 2 inches above the level of the surrounding ground. Graft union should be placed toward the northeast.

<http://pcmg.ucanr.org/files/171586.pdf>

11. BONUS! Implement UC irrigation, heading guidelines after planting, and also sunburn protection.

http://homeorchard.ucanr.edu/The_Big_Picture/Irrigation/

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