

# Home Lawn and Garden

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## Grow your own fruit, but choice is important

By LARRY SHERK  
Chief Horticulturist,  
Sheridan Nurseries

With the rising price of food, more home gardeners are adding various fruit trees and a bushes to their gardens. Not only does fresh fruit from your own garden help to balance the food budget but nothing tastes better than tree-ripened fruit fresh from the garden.

Unfortunately with smaller lots, many newer homes have very little space for planting any quantity of fruit. If space is limited, you must choose carefully.

What is your family's favorite fruit? Choose with care. Remember that all apples, pears, most plums and most sweet cherries require a second tree of a different variety nearby to ensure good cross pollination. An apple will not pollinate a pear or vice-versa.

You will usually require two different plums or two different sweet cherries. There are exceptions. The Italian Prune and Iroquois are self pollinating, so one alone will fruit as will the Stella sweet cherry. Italian and Japanese plums will not cross pollinate.

All apricots, peaches and sour cherries are self pollinating so do not require the planting of two different types. Therefore these self pollinating types of fruit are perfect for smaller lots.

Dwarf apple trees are well suited for smaller lawns also. Pear, plum, sour cherry and peach trees do not grow too large. Pears are more upright than most other fruit and are best to plant where space is really limited.

Potted fruit trees can be planted any-time from spring on into the fall. Peaches and sweet cherries grow best in light, sandy soil but can be grown successfully on well-drained heavier soils. Apples, pears and plums grow well in the heavier soils. Grapes also grow best in lighter soils.

The small fruits such as red and black currants, gooseberries and raspberries are all easy to grow and a few plants will produce sufficient quantities for small families.

Blueberries are becoming more popular with home gardeners. They require an acid soil and should be planted in groups. Prepare a large bed of acid soil by mixing large quantities of peat moss and compost or cattle manure. Remember that all fruit trees and bushes should be planted in areas that receive lots of sun.

Saskatoons are a native shrub or small tree, the fruit of which is widely eaten and used for pies in Western Canada. They are not well known to Easterners but are available now. The blue-purple fruit is the size of blueberries, and ripens in early summer. The fruit is delicious eaten fresh or used for pies or preserves.

Rhubarb is popular with many families and is easy to grow. Three to six plants will soon provide enough stems for cooking for a family.

Do not forget to work into the soil a good quantity of cattle manure (available at Sheridan Nurseries Farm Outlet) or compost when planting your fruit.

Here's looking forward to that first basket of fruit you pick from your own plants. For gardening advice from the experts visit Sheridan Nurseries Farm Outlet.

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