



Best Fruit/ Nut Producing Plants

In USDA planting zone 8a, gardeners have a wealth of options when it comes to fruit trees, thanks to the region's warm climate and longer growing season. Trees like peaches, plums, and figs thrive here, producing sweet and juicy fruits that are perfect for fresh eating or preserving. Citrus trees, such as oranges and lemons, flourish in this zone, offering vibrant flavors and fragrant blossoms but cannot handle freezing temperatures. You must keep citrus trees planted in pots and bring them inside during cold winter snaps. Blackberries and blueberries grow very well in East Texas and are excellent choices for your edible garden.

Pomegranates and persimmons also make excellent choices, providing unique fruits that add variety to any orchard. With proper care and attention to soil and watering needs, fruit trees in East Texas can yield bountiful harvests while enhancing the beauty of the landscape.

1. **Blackberries (*Rubus spp.*):** Blackberries will grow almost anywhere. They are high in fiber and vitamin C and can help lower cholesterol. Usually eaten fresh and made into jams, they can also be frozen or used in baking for pies and desserts. This plant can grow 5-6 feet tall and wide.
2. **Blueberries (*Vaccinium spp.*):** Blueberries will grow almost anywhere but prefer acidic soil. They are high in fiber, vitamins C and K, and can help lower cholesterol. Usually eaten fresh and made into jams, they can also be frozen or used in baking for pies and desserts. This plant can grow anywhere from 2-12 feet tall and wide.
3. **Figs (*Ficus carica*):** Figs are one of the oldest cultivated fruits and are grown worldwide. They are higher in fiber than any other common fruit or vegetable and contain high amounts of iron, potassium, and calcium. Figs

can be eaten fresh or made into jams and jellies. This tree grows 6-30 feet tall and wide.

4. **Grapes (*Vitis spp.*):** Grapes and muscadines are produced on vigorous-growing vines that can cover arbors, fences, and trellises. The fruits are high in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. They can be eaten fresh, made into wine, dried (raisins), or used in jams and jellies. If not pruned, these vines can grow as long as 50 feet.
5. **Nectarines (*Prunus persica var. nucipersica*):** A nectarine is a peach without the fuzzy skin. They are usually slightly smaller and sweeter than peaches and are rich in important vitamins and minerals. This tree ranges from 12-25 feet tall and wide.
6. **Peaches (*Prunus persica*):** Peaches have fuzzy skin, are low in calories, and are packed with numerous vitamins and minerals. They can be eaten fresh, dried, or made into desserts and jams. This plant grows about 10-20 feet tall and wide, with dwarf varieties that grow 4-5 feet tall and wide.
7. **Pears (*Pyrus communis*):** Pears are an excellent source of vitamins C and E, both powerful antioxidants and essential nutrients, and they are also high in fiber. They can be eaten fresh or used in cooking and come in classic pear shapes or round Asian types. These trees grow to 10-30 feet tall and wide.
8. **Pecans (*Carya illinoensis*):** A wonderful large tree that produces tasty and healthy nuts, which can also be used as a shade tree. Pecans are a natural, high-quality source of protein, contain healthy fats, have no cholesterol, and very few carbohydrates. Pecans are eaten fresh or used in baking. This tree can grow anywhere from 40-130 feet tall and 40-75 feet wide.
9. **Pomegranate (*Punica granatum*):** An easily grown tree that produces large, rounded fruit with leathery green skin that turns red when ripe. The skin is peeled away to reveal the sectional chambers loaded with ruby-red seeds, prized for their sweet, tangy flavor. The fruit is also a good source of antioxidants and vitamins. This plant can grow to 6-30 feet tall and wide.
10. **Plumcot (*Prunus plumcot*):** An upright, spreading tree that is a cross between a plum and an apricot. It produces medium-sized, round fruit with

a flavor similar to that of an apricot. It can be used for fresh eating or in jams and jellies. This tree grows 15-20 feet tall and wide.

11. **Plums (*Prunus domestica*)**: A sweet-tasting fruit that can grow just about anywhere. Plums are a good source of vitamin C, vitamin A, vitamin K, potassium, and dietary fiber. They can be eaten fresh, dried (prunes), or used in jams and jellies. Plums grow 15-20 feet tall and wide.

12. **Persimmons (*Diospyros spp.*)**: This tree produces a sweet-tasting fruit that looks like an orange tomato and is also an ornamental tree. The fruits are a rich source of dietary fiber and are low in calories, containing a high amount of antioxidants. They can be eaten fresh, dried, or cooked. This tree grows from 12-60 feet tall and wide, depending on the variety.