



Apricots

About Apricots

Apricots are a stone fruit that normally grow as round bushy trees 4-5 m high. Flower buds form on 1 year old shoots and initiation occurs in late summer. Bud burst is in early spring with fruit ripening in early to mid-summer.



Climate and soil

Temperature	Frost tolerance	Water needs	Tolerance to waterlogging	Drought tolerance
Prefers Mediterranean or continental climate	-4°C damages buds. Small fruit damaged at -1°C	Requires adequate moisture	Not tolerant	Moderate to good

Humidity tolerance	Wind tolerance	Soil needs	Nutrient requirements
Prefer dry climates. Rain at harvest will cause large losses	Moderate	Prefers good deep well drained soil	Requires fertilization – especially Nitrogen

Cultural practices

Propagation	Grow rootstock from seed and bud in Late summer
Rootstocks	Apricot and Peach seedlings often used..
Spacing	Plant on 6 m square
Training and Pruning	Train as Vase or open center. Prune to encourage annual growth. Best to do annual pruning after danger of frost has passed. Then prune heavily if the crop is too heavy, less heavily if the crop is light.
Thinning	Thin to 2 fruit on spurs and single fruit at 8 cm spacing on 1 year old wood.
Tillage and orchard care	Grassed alleyways often used. Keep surface around trees clean.
Time to 1st harvest	2-3 years
Time to full production	5-6 years
Normal productive life	25-40 years
Expected yields	2 years: 5 t/ha 4 years: 10 t/ha 6 years: 20 t/ha
Harvest	Hand harvest. Get best flavor when picked mature.
Storage	1-2 weeks at 0 to 1°C
Pests and diseases	Blossom blast, Brown rot, Shot hole. Has fewer insect pests than many other fruits, but can be affected by peach twig borer, peachtree borer, leafrollers, spider mites and aphids.

Prepared by MA Bell, Louise Ferguson and Ali Almehdi, February 16 2007

Primary reference: Jackson, D.I. and Looney, N.E. 1999. Temperate and Subtropical Fruit Production. 2nd Ed. CABI Publishing. Wallingford (United Kingdom)

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