

About Peaches and Nectarines

Peaches and Nectarines are usually grown on vase-shaped trees typically 4-5 m high. Peaches have a fuzzy skin while nectarines are smooth-skinned; both are insect or self-pollinated. Flower buds form on one year old shoots and flower initiation occurs in late summer. Leaves and flowers emerge in early spring with fruit ripening in early to mid-summer. Flowers or fruit should be thinned to allow quality fruit development. Proper management, in particular involves good orchard establishment (spacing and drainage), annual pruning, and pest monitoring/management.



Climate and Soil

Temperature	Frost tolerance	Water needs	Tolerance to water logging	Drought tolerance
Warm; Ideal fruit development in temperate regions with warm-hot summers.	Low cold tolerance. T < -4°C damages buds. Small fruit damaged at -1°C.	Plentiful water supply required, especially in final fruiting stage.	No tolerance	Moderate but adequate water needed to size fruit.
Humidity tolerance	Wind tolerance	Soil needs	Nutrient requirements	
Susceptible to Brown Rot in humid climates. Nectarines are prone to cracking if heavy rain falls close to harvest.	Moderate	Light, well-drained soil. Avoid heavy clay.	Foliar Zn and K applications common. N (as NO ₃ , Urea or manure) applied in spring.	

Cultural Practices

Propagation	Budding is common.
Rootstocks	Peach seedlings or clonal peach/plum hybrids often used. Certified saplings can help reduce disease and nematode resistance.
Spacing	Plant trees 3-4 m apart in rows and 5-6 m between each row.
Training and pruning	Train as "open center" (low, wide-angled branches with no central leader). Prune to encourage annual growth, in late winter while trees are dormant to reduce fungal disease problems.
Tillage and orchard care	Grassed alleyways often used. Keep surface around trees clean and free of previous season "mummies" (remaining dried fruit) and residue.
Time to first harvest	2-3 years.
Time to full production	4-6 years.
Normal productive life	10-20 years.
Expected yields	Varies greatly by region, cultivar (particularly time of harvest) and management. 2 years: 2-4 t/ha 4 years: 6-40 t/ha 6 years: 8-60 t/ha
Harvest	Hand harvest. Firm ripeness for local markets. Pick earlier for long distance markets. Fruit will continue to ripen after picking.
Storage	1-2 weeks at 0 to 1°C.
Pests and Disease	Peach Twig Borer, Oriental Fruit Moth, Green Peach Aphid, Western Flower Thrips (nectarines), San Jose Scale; Root Knot, Ring and Lesion Nematodes; Brown Rot, Mildew, Bacterial Canker, Blight, Shot Hole Borer, Leaf Curl, Phytophthora,