



Plums

About Plums

There are two primary types of plums: European plums and Asian plums. Asian plums require warmer summers. Most plums need to be cross-pollinated to set adequate crops; so two different varieties should be planted.



Climate and soil

Temperature	Frost tolerance	Water needs	Tolerance to waterlogging	Drought tolerance
European plums grow in cooler areas than Asian plums,	Damaged at -4 to -5°C at bud swell.	Needs adequate moisture especially during fruit growth	Moderate to good.	moderate

Humidity tolerance	Wind tolerance	Soil needs	Nutrient requirements
Can grow in dry and humid – but more disease in humid	Moderate	Deep and well drained are best. European can tolerate heavier soils than many other fruit trees.	Can grow with less nitrogen than other stonefruit.

Cultural practices

Propagation	Budded onto adapted rootstock
Rootstocks	Oten P cerasifera (myrobalan) or Marianne 2624. Japanese plums often budded to peach seedlings for well drained soil. USA,
Spacing	Usually planted on a 6m square
Training and Pruning	Often vase shaped. Requires less pruning than other stonefruit. Remove suckers.
Thinning (or crop drop)	May be required in some varieties
Tillage and vineyard care	Grown in grassed orchards
Time to 1st harvest	3 rd – 4 th season
Time to full production	7-9 years
Normal productive life	25-35 years
Expected yields	3 years: 3 t/ha 6 years: 9 t/ha 9 years: 18 t/ha
Harvest	Machine harvest for prunes. Hand pick for fresh market.
Storage	2-4 weeks at 0°C
Pests and diseases	Silver leaf, bacterial canker, blossom blast and brown rot (in wet areas), bacterial spot and plum leaf scald (especially in Japanese plums) can be problematic. Generally has fewer insect pests than other fruit. However, leaf rollers, cutworms, twig borer and peach tree borer can cause damage.

Prepared by Louise Ferguson and Mark Bell, 2011

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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