



Grape trellising - Afghanistan

What is Grape Trellising?

Trellising covers a range of systems for growing the grape vines on an above-ground structure.

Why trellis grapes?

Grapes are grown on trellises to

1. keep the fruit clean and off the ground
2. increase airflow about the vine and thus reduce plant diseases, and
3. increase light penetration into the vine and thus increase grape yields and quality.



Traditionally, grapes are grown on the ground in Afghanistan

Note: Wine grapes are trellised to increase light absorption by the grape fruit itself. The light directly affects the grape fruit (e.g., fruit skin) and subsequent wine quality.

Why grow vines on the ground?

Many grapes are grown on the ground (e.g., in Afghanistan and Uzbekistan) because of

- 1) the lack (or potential theft or loss) of trellis materials,
- 2) the potential of cold injury to the vine during cold months. and/or
- 3) tradition.

1. **Materials.** The cost, availability and potential theft of trellis materials can sometimes be the reason why grapes are not trellised.
2. **Cold.** Some grapes (e.g., in parts of Uzbekistan) are grown on the ground so that they can be covered with soil in the winter to avoid winter injury to the plant.
3. **Tradition.** If local growers feel that there is no reason to cover vines during the winter, then, growing grapes on the ground may just be due to tradition. Under such conditions, the farmers could try trellising. However, only use trellising if you are sure winter cold injury is not a problem.

Can you trellis ground grapes?

Ground grown grapes are often tied together above ground to form a self-supported plant. These plants will often collapse as the grapes grow, but they do tend to keep grapes off the ground.

Alternately, grapes grown on the ground can be grown on trellises using a system referred to as the "Fan System". This system uses a permanent trellis consisting of a vertical post with 3 or 4 wires. The vines are trained each season from multiple 'trunks' or 'canes' that arise from below the soil surface. These 'trunks' are retained or replaced as needed. Trunks are trained to be flexible enough to bend down and cover with soil during the winter. When covering, the vines are first pruned, detached from the trellis and then bent down so that they can be covered with soil.

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