



Almonds

About Almonds

Almonds are a nut that are actually a stonefruit. Trees normally grow 4-6m high. Flowers form on previous year's growth and on spurs on older wood. Almonds generally require cross pollination. Bud burst is in late winter to early spring making frost damage a potential problem. Nonpareil almonds are the most popular commercial variety grown in California. Nonpareils have a higher kernel weight to total weight (65%) than pareil varieties (35%) and they also have smoother skins than pareil varieties.



Climate and soil

Temperature	Frost tolerance	Water needs	Tolerance to waterlogging	Drought tolerance
Dry, warm to hot climates.	A serious problem if occurs during flower bloom. Damage occurs at -2°C	Tolerates dry areas, but much better if watered especially where <500 mm per year.	Does not like waterlogging	Moderate
Humidity tolerance	Wind tolerance	Soil needs	Nutrient requirements	
Moderate to good	Moderate	Tolerates poor soils especially if on plum rootstock.	Typically responds to nitrogen applications.	

Cultural practices

Propagation	Budded
Rootstocks	Some peach, plum and almond rootstocks used.
Spacing	Traditionally 6-7.5 m – now 2 x 4.5 m
Training and Pruning	Both vase shaped and with central leader systems
Thinning	Not required
Tillage and orchard care	Grassed alleyways. Surface around trees clean.
Time to 1st harvest	3-4 years
Time to full production	7-9 years
Normal productive life	15-25 years
Expected yields	Yield (unshelled nuts) at 7 m x 7 m 3 years: 1 kg/tree 5 years: 2 kg/tree 8 years: 2 kg/tree
Harvest	Hand or machine (Shake and then sweep)
Storage	Remove nuts from shell and keep cool and dry as soon as possible
Pests and diseases	Silverleaf, blast and brown rot can be a problem. Suitable rootstock reduces soil disease problems.

Prepared by Louise Ferguson and MA Bell, September 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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