



APPLE TREES

Site planning

As with most fruit trees, apple trees produce best when planted in full sun. They prefer well-drained soil with organic matter. They struggle in heavy clay soil and sitting in wet soil leads to root rot disease. Plant in a location with good air circulation so leaves dry quickly after a rainfall, to minimize the risk of fungal diseases. The ideal soil PH is 6 - 6.5. When choosing a location, consider the impact deer browsing will have on your new trees. The further away from cover of the woods, the less inclined deer will be to chew on your trees. If installing fencing, remember an 8' high fence is needed to keep them out!

Planting

Tree spacing is influenced by the rootstock and your pruning plans. Our trees are grafted onto G969 rootstock so they will grow to a maximum of 14' tall and roughly 14' wide at maturity. It's best to leave space between trees for air flow, so we recommend planting them 18-20' apart if you have the space to do so. If you have a smaller area, remember you can keep them pruned to any size you want, so you can maintain them much smaller than 14' wide/tall. Dig a hole twice the size of the pot and loosen up as much soil as you can around the hole. As you fill in around the root ball be sure to pat the soil down to remove any air pockets. DON'T add fertilizer to the hole as you can burn the roots. Ensure the soil level at the top of the pot is level with the ground - don't bury the trunk deeper than it was in the pot! Water well. Mulching the ground around the tree helps maintain moisture in the soil and cuts down on competition from weeds. DON'T put the mulch right up against the trunk of the tree - keep it out a few inches. A spiral tree guard is recommended to protect the trunk from damage as well as rodents chewing the nutritious bark in the winter months.

Pruning

When you receive your apple tree it will have no/very few branches at this stage. 2nd year trees should have any branches removed from the bottom 18" and remaining branches spaced well apart in different directions. Early blossoms on the tree should be pinched off to help the tree focus its energy into structural growth rather than fruit production. Your goal in pruning the young tree is to form a balanced framework that will guide the tree's growth into the future. It's best to prune harder in the early years to shape the tree, as opposed to serious corrective pruning later on!

Harvesting

Apples are a bit tricky with harvest as there are so many varieties that ripen at different times. The biggest indicators are that the stem separates easily from the branch and the seeds are brown not white inside the apple. The longer they ripen on the tree the better the flavour!