



PLUM TREES

Site planning

Plum trees produce best when planted in full sun with well-drained soil with an ideal PH of 6-6.5. Plant in a location with good air circulation so leaves dry quickly after a rainfall, to minimize the risk of fungal diseases. When choosing a location, be sure to have other varieties close by to aid in cross pollination-remember Japanese and European plums don't cross pollinate each other!!! As always- the further away from cover of the woods, the less inclined wildlife is to steal your fruit!

Planting

Tree spacing is influenced by the rootstock and your pruning plans. Our plum trees are grafted onto Mariana 2624 rootstock which will grow to 14-16' at maturity. It's best to leave space between trees for air flow, so we recommend planting them 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. 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 plum tree from us 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. European plums do best pruned in a central leader system-one main trunk with limbs coming off it. Japanese plums do best with open center "vase shape" pruning.

Harvesting

Plums generally start producing fruit at 4-5 years. Plums are ready to be picked when they separate easily from the tree with a little twist. They shouldn't be picked when they are still firm.

