



# Peaches

## Planting Specifications



- Must have well drained soil
- Short life span of 12-25 years
- Peaches only produce fruit on one year old wood, so heavily prune in the winter
- Fun fact- peach pits contain high levels of cyanide and should not be eaten!
- 12-15' semi-dwarf
- Native to China
- Varieties: Contender, Harrow Diamond
- At initial planting, we recommend planting allium companion plants (like chives) to deter pests

## Common Pests and Diseases

Other diseases or pests may be present, but these are the ones most commonly found in St. Louis.

**Codling Moth and Oriental Fruit Moth:** Small gray/brown moths that eat the fruit. OFM also eat branch tips

*Treatment:* Bt inclusion in 4th holistic sprays, Bt sprays, sunflower companion planting

**Peach Tree Borer:** Moth larvae that bore into the trunk and branches, weakening or killing the tree

*Treatment:* Bt inclusion in 4th holistic spray, wrapping trunk with window screening, kaolin clay paste painted on the trunk, alliums planted around trunk

**Brown Rot:** Fungal disease, creates soft brown spots on fruit

*Treatment:* Preventatives: sulfur spray, whey spray, Monterey complete disease control

**Peach Leaf Curl:** Fungal infection that infects the leaves, causing them to curl up and fall off

*Treatment:* Copper application when tree is dormant

**Bacterial Spot:** Infection that causes dark, angular spots on the leaves, sunken spots on fruit

*Treatment:* Copper application

**Perennial Canker:** Fungal infection that infects winter injury to bark, leads to branch death

*Treatment:* Prune right before bloom, remove infected material, apply mustard oil or mustard green poultice to cankers

**Peach Scab:** Black velvety spots on fruits, shoots, and leaves

*Treatment:* Sulfur spray, whey spray

## Gateway Greening Classes and Resources

**Holistic Sprays-** Available to Giving Grove projects

**Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt), kaolin clay, sulfur, whey, Monterey complete disease control, liquid copper, mustard green seed packets** - Available for purchase from our Gateway Greening store

**Orchard Classes-** Summer Pruning, Dormant Fruit Tree Pruning, Pest and Disease Management, and Harvest. Schedules available on our website and Facebook page

**Companion plant recommendations-** handout available on website

## Timeline of Care

### Spring Care

- Application of four holistic sprays (liquid fish, pure neem oil, effective microbes) every few weeks once leaves start emerging and ending once fruits have formed (*Late February to Mid-May*)
- Complete the big yearly pruning. Peaches only produce on new growth, so peaches can be pruned heavily, going up to 50% of the branches (*Late February to Mid-March*)
- Remove any tree wraps placed in winter (*Early April*)
- For the first three years, remove all fruitlets to prevent fruit production (*Late April to Early May*)
- After three years, thin the fruits so that individual fruit are spaced about 8 inches apart (*Prior to fourth holistic spray*)

### Summer Care

- Harvest when fruits are ready! Peaches are ripe when the fruit has a slight give and smells sweet (*May through August*)
- While harvesting, remove any mummified fruits and dispose of outside of the orchard to prevent disease spread (*May through August*)

### Fall Care

- Cut back or harvest allium companion plant (*September through November*)
- Remove or shred all fallen leaves to prevent diseases from spreading (*Mid-October to November*)
- Fifth holistic spray once all leaves have been disposed of (*November*)
- Install tree wraps to protect trees from rabbits and voles (*Late November*)
- Apply a new layer of mulch to the base of the tree (*November*)

### Ongoing Care

- During the first full growing season, water 5 gallons per plant per week, with the exception of weeks with substantial rain. After the first year, trees only need to be watered during droughts
- Weed the mulch ring
- Plant any desired companion plants to benefit the orchard ecosystem (*Spring or Fall*)