

Peach Trees for the Wiregrass

Time to plant fruit trees. A great gift for Christmas. Bare root or in a pot is going to be the best way to buy. The ones in the bag might have gotten dry and that will kill them. Let's talk the famous and delicious Peach. There are lots of new hybrids out that have that low chill hour that we need in the Wiregrass. As of Dec. 9th we have 261 chill hours, chill hours start at 45 degrees and under.

Selecting the right variety is very important. The local garden centers should sell only what is best for our area. The Wiregrass should have 450 to 750 chill hours unless we have a very warm winter and we know that can happen. The way it is going we should have our hours this year.

It is best to have a peach that is medium in size and firm in the flesh. Yellow meats will be the best, white meat will be softer. Belle of Georgia will be the best white meat for us. The Floraking is one of the best right now for us, it will harvest late April to May but they say you could get some cold burn because it will bloom early. June Gold is another good early one. Try Flordaglobe, it to is low chill. We all love the famous Elberta, she is ready about the first of July and that great ice cream that we all love to eat on a hot day. Just something about home made peach ice cream that makes the world a better place to live. A new girl on the market is the Tropic Beauty, only takes 150 chill hours and we have that already. She is yellow flesh and a semi-cling stone and is ready in May. Tropic Snow is another new one 220 chill, super sweet and come ready in May.

Well-drained soil is what you will need, they like a sandy soil but most will do. They need at least 6 hours of sun and full sun is best. They like a slightly acid soil around pH 6.0 to 6.8.

Dig a hole twice the size of the pot and twice as deep. Mushroom compost and some pine bark mixed together is excellent for the roots. DO NOT plant too deep, right at ground level and DO NOT put mulch right up to the trunk of the tree. Best not to fertilize when you plant unless you use a slow release tree spike, around 10-10-10; I really do like the tree spikes. Trees should be at least 20 feet apart.

Water the first year is very important, water well and after the first year an inch a week should be good.

Prune each year, this is very important. Go by the County Extension Office for a booklet on how to prune.

Enjoy Life, Eat a Peach!!

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