

REEMS CREEK NURSERY

APPLES

A Garden Guide

WNC is an excellent region for growing apples, as the many orchards in the area can attest. We carry many fantastic apples for local gardeners and producers to choose from.

Apple trees are commonly grafted. The lower part of the tree is called the rootstock, and this mostly determines the size of the tree, but can also confer some disease resistance. The upper part of the tree is called the scion, and bears the fruit.

Fruit trees generally come in three basic sizes - dwarf, semi-dwarf, and standard (full size). We mostly carry semi-dwarf, as they are a good compromise between the vigor and longer life of the standard tree, and the precocity of the dwarfing types, all at a manageable size.

There are thousands of apple varieties. We carefully select ones that will perform well here in Western North Carolina, including heritage varieties that are generally known for their flavor, and modern varieties that are generally known for their disease resistance.

Pollination

For best production and fruit quality, **plant at least two different varieties** of apple trees with overlapping bloom periods. Crabapple trees can also pollinate apple trees.

Selected Varieties of Apple Trees for WNC

Varieties	Bloom Period		Notes
Arkansas Black	Mid	Heirloom	Heirloom with disease resistance to fireblight, scab, and rust. Excellent for pies.
Cameo	Mid	Modern	Remarkable sweet flavor. Great dessert apple. Good keeper.
Cox Orange Pippin	Mid.	Heirloom	Exceptional flavor from this famous English apple. Thomas Jefferson grew this at Monticello. Incredible in cider. Best for



			experienced growers.
Empire	Early	Modern	Tasty crunchy apples, good fresh. Some resistance to fireblight and cedar apple rust.
Enterprise	Mid	Modern	Spicy aroma with mild tartness. Very similar to a McIntosh. Extremely disease-resistant to apple scab, cedar apple rust and fire blight; moderate resistance to powdery mildew. Excellent keeper.
Goldrush	Mid to late	Modern	Incredible flavor with disease resistance to apple scab and powdery mildew - the organic growers choice. Tart, tangy flavor that sweetens with age.
Golden Delicious	Mid to late	Heirloom	World's most popular apple! Even better when homegrown. Found in an orchard in WV around a hundred years ago.
Granny Smith	Mid to late	Heirloom	Tart and tasty green apples. Homegrown left-to-ripen-on-tree flavor is far superior to what is found in stores. Heirloom from 1868.
Honeycrisp	Mid	Modern	Superb dessert apple. Very resistant to scab, some resistance to fireblight. Not a heavy producer, but absolutely worth growing.
Liberty	Mid	Modern	Excellent for beginners. Shiny tasty apples. Extremely disease resistant: resists apple scab, cedar apple rust, fire blight, and powdery mildew. Not a great pollinator of other trees.
McIntosh	Early to mid	Heirloom	Scrumptious apple aroma! Vigorous and precocious. Good keeper.
Mutsu / Crispin	Mid	Heirloom	Incredible sweet-tart flavor. Vigorous. An apple for apple connoisseurs. Poor pollinator of other apples.
Pink Lady	Mid	Modern	Divine sweet-tart flavor. Beautiful fruits. Exceptional keeper.
Red Fuji	Mid	Modern	Mild and sweet. Remarkable keeper. Some resistance to mildew and scab.

Red Rome	Late	Heirloom	“Queen of the baking apples”. Good keeper. This is a naturally redder version of Rome.
Redfree	Early to mid	Modern	Top quality early apple. Good keeper. Resistant to apple scab, cedar apple rust, fire blight, and mildew.
Royal Gala	Mid	Modern	Juicy! One of the best fresh eating apples. Needs good air flow. Cold hardy down to zone 4.
Yellow Transparent	Early	Heirloom	Best for baking, makes outstanding apple sauce. Resistant to cedar apple rust and apple scab.

Site Selection

In WNC, our native clay soils need amending to grow healthy apple trees. We carry many organic soil amendments that are suitable, such as cow manure, fish emulsion, lime, pine bark fines, worm castings, and more. Work these amendments 12-18” deep into the ground. A good soil test will tell you what amendments to add.

Avoid planting in a “frost pocket”, where cold air settles in low-lying areas. In frost pockets, cold spring temperatures commonly kill blossoms or developing fruit. If possible, choose a higher site on a slope, so cold air will drain away from the tree. Try to avoid planting at the bottom of a hill, holler, or valley.

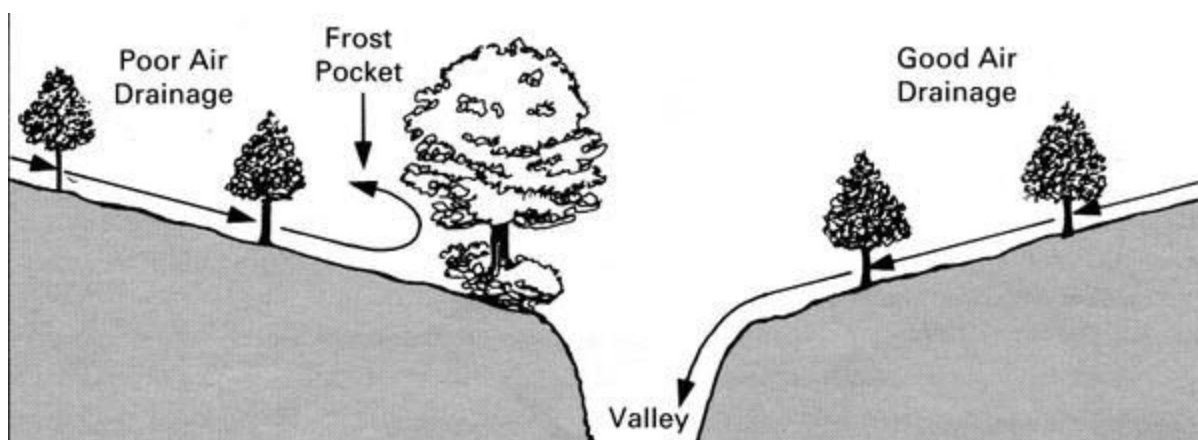


Illustration from NCSU

Planting Tips

- Plant in full sun (a minimum of 6 hours of sun per day).

- Space trees far enough apart to allow for good air movement once they have reached their mature size (this helps prevent fungal diseases).
- Apple trees like good drainage in their root zone. Amend your planting hole with 50% soil amendment (compost, soil conditioner). Your backfill should be 50% your native soil mixed with 50% amendment.
- Hold mulch away from the trunk of the plant.
- Water regularly and deeply the entire first year (water twice weekly to the bottom of the root ball), and water during dry periods (drought can compromise fruit production).
- Remove any flowers/young fruit the first year, so the plant's energy goes into rooting.
- Enjoy your delicious harvest!



Management

Apple trees benefit from management. Prune out any dead or diseased wood, clear leaves and fallen debris near trees. We carry a variety of organic products to help manage disease and pests, both premixed and concentrates. Follow label instructions. It is good to not rely on one single product, but rather to alternate products, in order to slow down pest resistance to them.

Pruning

Please see this in-depth guide from the NCSU Cooperative Extension Service - [Training and Pruning Fruit Trees in North Carolina](#).

Harvesting

It may be 2-6 years until there's a harvest, assuming trees are sited correctly. The best way to find out if apples are ripe is to actually eat one! A ripe apple will be at peak flavor, juicy and delicious. Red apples will turn from dull to shiny. Yellow apples will turn from green to yellow. Ripe apples will release easily from the tree, with their stems (pedicels) intact.



There are many many delicious ways to enjoy apples.

Version 2.0 Oct 20



76 Monticello Road Weaverville, NC 28787 828-645-3937 <https://reemscreek.com/>