**Pruning and Trimming  Fruit Trees and Planting Bare Root**

1. Types of Fruit Trees
   1. Evergreen trees –keep their leaves all year.
      1. Evergreen fruit trees will keep their foliage year round and will provide fruit in areas with warm summers but not in frosty winters
   2. Deciduous trees tend to lose their leaves in fall, growing new shoots and leaves in the spring.
2. Most fruit trees are classified as deciduous giving fruit in the spring and summer and require cold periods to produce flowers and fruits.
3. Almost all deciduous trees require pruning to maximize the amount of fruit yield.

Types of Deciduous Fruit Trees

* 1. Pome Fruit Trees

1. Apple, quince and pear fruit trees have multiple seeds inside of the fruits they produce.
2. Popularly grown, most apple and pear trees need cross-pollination
   1. Stone Fruit Trees
3. Stone fruit trees grown large and need plenty of space between trees.
4. These types of fruit trees have a pit, apricots, peaches, nectarines and plums are in this category.
5. Apricots, peaches and nectarines are self-fertilized. Plums need cross-pollination.
   1. Figs and Persimmons
6. Unlike other deciduous trees, figs and persimmons don not need as long periods of cold weather to produce flower and fruit.
7. Do not need regular pruning for fruit production.
8. Usually they do not require cross-pollination.

Types of Evergreen Fruit Trees (CA friendly)  
f. Citrus

1. Citrus fruits include oranges, lemons, grapefruit, pummelo and limes
2. Ever bearing citrus like lemon and limes can produce through the year, their major yielding periods are winter and spring.
3. Avocado
   * 1. Cultivated in tropical and Mediterranean climates.
     2. Partly self-pollinating and are propagated through grafting to have control of quality and quantity of the fruit.

1. Pruning Fruit Trees

It’s ideal to prune in the winter when trees are without foliage, it’s easier to see what you are doing.

a. Why pruning is useful

* + - 1. Keeps trees shapely
      2. To remove branches that are diseased, dead densely branched or rubbing together.
      3. To direct growth, remove suckers(steams growing from the roots) and water sprouts (upright shoots growing from the truck and branches)
      4. To increase fruit production
      5. For safety reasons
  1. Types of Pruning
     + 1. Pinching- nipping off the terminal shoot of new growth.
       2. Thinning- removing entire branches by cutting back to main trunk or side branch
       3. Allows light and air into canopy, boosts fruit production and reduces problems with pests and disease.  
          III. Heading-cutting back a branch to a bud, twig, or branch too small to take over the terminal role  
          1. Makes fruit trees branch at a particular point  
          2. Prevents branches from snapping under the weight of the fruit

c. Steps of pruning

I. Clean up  
1. Prune away wood with the 3 D’s: dead, damaged or diseased  
2. Remove suckers and water sprouts  
3. Make sure to prune the branches back to larger limb, don’t leave little stubs

II. Thin out   
1. Remove any branches that grow downward, toward the center of the tree or cross paths with another branch   
2. Remove any branches that might compete with each other, either growing from a single crotch or at a narrow angle  
3. Keep the healthiest branches with good angles ( 2oclock or 10 o’clock from tree’s center)

* + - 1. Head back   
         1. Time to give the tree a haircut: prune back the outermost growth of the tree that way the branches become shorter and thicker as the grow  
         2. Cut back 20 to 30 percent of the last year’s growth

1. Planting bare root
2. What is “Bare root”
   * + 1. When a plant is offered for sale with its roots exposed, dug up after it has become dormant.
       2. Bare root trees should be kept moist, stored in material that retain moisture.
       3. Bare root plants include: ornamental and shade trees, fruit trees, shrubs and vines such a grapes or kiwi.
   1. Why plant bare root?

I. Cost effective

II. Greater selection can be shipped longer distances.

III. Available fall to early spring

* 1. How to plant bare root
     1. Inspect that plant is in good health before buying, check roots for flexibility. Healthy roots are flexible and will bend instead of break.
     2. Same day planting is ideal, especially mail orders as they begin to break dormancy not being refrigerated. If not plant same day must be kept in cool moist environment.
     3. Rehydrate plants by soaking in water before planting, overnight soaking is recommended.
     4. Once planted the bare root plant will take about a week or so to show any signs of life that are visible on the top part of the plant.
     5. Keep the soil watered, you will see new green shoot that will indicate the plant has broken its dormancy.
     6. Continue to water plant as needed, you know it is well established when it leafs out and starts to set flower buds.

References:

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