



# Project List:

## Fruit Trees

Texas' soil and climate make us well known for growing great fruit trees. Many varieties produce well, and are a great addition to the landscape. With careful attention to planting, growing, and pruning methods, you too can grow your own.

☐ **Root Stimulator**—organic solution with seaweed greatly strengthens plants and lessens shock.

☐ **Superthrive**—Not a plant food, **Superthrive** contains 50 vitamins and hormones essential for plant growth. Adding this solution to transplants can ease stress and reduce shock.

☐ **Mulch**—Mulch retains moisture in the soil, suppresses weeds, moderates temperature, provides a finished look, and organic choices break down slowly to provide additional organic matter. Maintain a year-round level with at least 2-3" of a shredded mulch such as **Vital Earth Hardwood**.

☐ **Treegator Bag or Soaker Hose** —These and other types of drip irrigation methods can be more efficient long term watering solutions, as they can supply water more slowly over a long period right at the root zone. **Treegator Bags** hold up to 15 gallons, and will release water over 5 to 9 hours.

☐ **Pruners**—High-quality, bypass-type pruners are always a good tool to have on hand, as fruit trees will require regular pruning in order to produce well. Clean well between prunings of different trees.

☐ **Fertilizer**—Try **Espoma's Tree-tone** or other fruit tree specific food *after* the first year.

**TIMING:** Fruit trees are generally available in fall and late winter. These are ideal times to plant.

### SELECTION:

- Apples and stone fruit require sufficient 'chill hours'—the total number of hours the plant experiences above freezing but at and below 45 degrees. We've selected for you the trees that grow best in North Texas, needing the lower range of chill hours at about 750 or more.
- Most fruit trees produce best with a second pollinator tree present. *Apples, pears, and plums produce much better with one.* Plan for room for at least 2 trees of compatible varieties within at least 400 feet of each other.

### SITE:

- Plant all fruit trees in full sun, in soil that drains well. Higher elevated areas will drain better, and offer more air circulation. Make sure your planting area is easily accessible.

### PLANT:

- Basic planting is best for fruit trees. Never add any soil amendments. *See the reverse for proper planting details.* Always water the tree in thoroughly with a **root stimulator** solution.

### CULTURE:

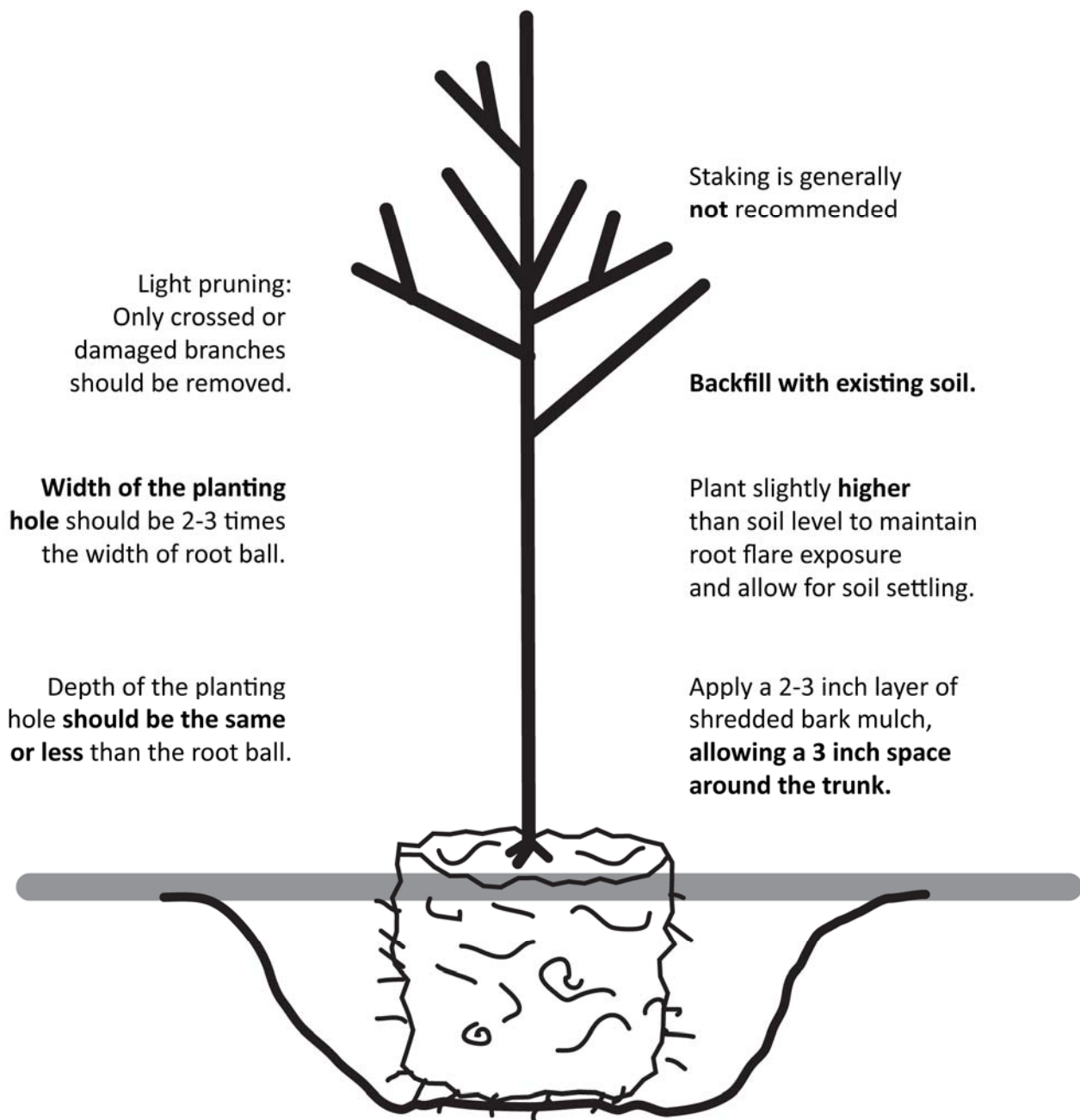
- *Proper watering is critical to get your tree established.* This will necessarily be done by hand, and not an irrigation system. Maintain the application of **root stimulator** each month for the first year.
- Once your trees are established, in general you can **fertilize** in early spring before bud- or leaf-break, and again in fall after the leaves drop.

(continued on reverse)

- For preventative care, spray **dormant oil** once in January and once in February to minimize insect or disease issues.
- If there appears to be a problem, the safest approach is to bring in samples of multiple leaves, along with clear pictures. Early detection will enable our Garden Advisors to assist you in the best way.
- Fruit trees will always attempt to set more fruit than the plant can support. *It's best to remove all the fruit the first year.* In the second year, remove 75%, and later years, you can leave about 50%. This way, long term you'll produce larger, higher quality fruit. *There are several different approaches to pruning fruit trees for production. Consult a Garden Advisor for fruit tree pruning techniques.*
- *Be patient until the tree grows and establishes.* Remember that any fruit tree can take from 2-5 years to produce fruit, depending upon the variety you've selected.

## Proper Fruit Tree Planting

To ensure healthy plants, start with **right plant for the right location**. Once you select a tree suited for your site and its microclimate, be sure to plant it correctly:



Speak with a Garden Advisor for questions and additional help in growing successful fruit trees.