

# Figs

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Figs have been grown on Texas homesteads since the state's earliest recorded history. The trees can grow all across Texas and do exceptionally well along the Texas Gulf Coast. However, figs need supplemental irrigation in the state's drier areas and need protection from the cold in the far northern and western regions.

## Grow it

### Varieties

- 'Alma,' 'Celeste,' and 'Texas Everbearing'

### Planting

- Plant trees in late winter or early spring.
- Set the plants at the same depth that they grew in the nursery, at least 16 feet apart.
- Do not apply fertilizer at planting.
- After transplanting, cut back the dormant trunk by about  $\frac{1}{3}$  to develop lateral branches and encourage vigorous growth the first season.

### Training and Pruning

- In Texas, figs are grown in the stool multi-trunk system, or simply put, as a bush, because it better protects the fig from freezes.
- While figs need little pruning, remove all dead, diseased, and weak limbs each dormant season. Thinning fruit can also increase fruit size in the next season.

### Watering

- Most fig roots are close to the soil surface and can easily dry out. Apply water to the trees as drought develops. If drainage is poor, be careful not to overwater.
- Mulching with straw or grass clippings helps maintain uniform soil moisture and reduces weed competition for available soil water.

### Freeze Protection

- Mound hay 2 to 3 feet above the ground line of mature trees or place wire cages stuffed with hay around young trees at the onset of winter. Remove after risk of frost has passed.

### Harvest

- Allow the figs to fully ripen on the tree. Pick them as they mature and remove overripe, spoiled fruit daily.
- Wear gloves and long sleeves to prevent the fig latex from irritating your skin.



Sun:  
Full



Soil:  
Well-  
drained



Planting:  
Winter-  
Early  
spring



Harvest:  
Summer



Life Cycle:  
Perennial

## Buy it

- Figs should be soft and should yield to the touch without being mushy. Only choose figs that are clean, dry, smooth, and unbroken.

## Use it

### Fig, Strawberry, and Arugula Salad

Course: Main Dish, Side Dish

Serves: 2 main dishes or 4 side dishes

#### Ingredients:

- 4 cups arugula
- 4 Tbsp balsamic vinaigrette
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced into quarters
- 6 medium-sized figs, sliced into quarters
- ¼ cup pecans, chopped and toasted

#### Instructions:

Wash your hands and clean the preparation area. Rinse all fruits and vegetables under cool running water before use.

Toss the arugula and balsamic vinaigrette together in a large bowl to coat evenly.

Arrange the arugula in bowls depending on your serving choice (two main dishes or four side dishes).

Divide the sliced strawberries and figs among your servings. Top with toasted pecans.

Serve immediately.

## Store it

- Figs will keep for 2 days if stored inside a plastic bag and kept in the coldest section of the refrigerator.
- For canning and preservation instructions, visit [nchfp.uga.edu](http://nchfp.uga.edu).

Unlike most fruit (in which the edible part is ovary tissue) the fig's edible structure is stem tissue.

## Learn about it

- Figs are free of fat, cholesterol, and sodium.
- They are good sources of dietary fiber and potassium.

Information gathered by Aggie Horticulture

