

# PLANTING BARE-ROOT FRUIT TREES

- 1:** Keeping the roots moist until planting is VITAL. Take your bare-root trees home immediately (don't go shopping and leave them in the trunk) and place them in a bucket of water while you prepare the hole for planting.
- 2:** If you won't be planting within a few hours, you can dig a shallow hole and lay the roots in it - covered with several inches of soil. Be sure to keep it moist! Trees can be stored this way for several days, if necessary.
- 3:** Dig a hole large enough so you can spread the roots out when planting. Add soil amendments to the soil you removed from the hole so you'll be ready to plant. In heavy clay type soils, use a coarse material such as Happy Frog Soil Conditioner, soil pep or compost. If your soil is gravelly and well-drained, you can use Happy Frog Soil Conditioner, compost, peat moss, etc. to improve the existing soil.
- 4:** Place the tree in the hole with the roots spread out and the bud union a few inches above the ground level. Back fill the hole with the amended soil, making a slight saucer-like depression for watering.
- 5:** Water in thoroughly to settle the soil around the roots. For best results, add a liquid root stimulator to the water. We recommend FertiLome Root Stimulator.
- 6:** Pruning the tree back will help it become established more easily and will also help it to have a better long-term shape for maximum strength and fruit production. If the tree is already branching, select 3 to 5 strong branches on different sides of the tree and remove all others. These branches should originate at least 4" apart on the trunk, and will eventually become the tree's main branches. Next, cut these main branches back 30-50% and remove the main vertical trunk above the highest chosen branch on peach, plum, apricot, and nectarine trees. Leave the main trunk on apple, pear, and cherry trees. If the tree has very few or no branches to begin with, just cut it back to a point 2 to 4 feet above ground level to encourage branching at the desired height.
- 7:** Adding a 3" deep layer of mulch such as blended brown mulch or shredded bark around the tree will help retain moisture and will also help to control weed growth.
- 8: Caring for your newly planted fruit tree:** your fruit tree will need to be deep watered 2 or 3 times per week during its first growing season. Lawn sprinklers are usually not adequate for trees. To determine if your tree needs water, insert a moisture meter right down into the rootball and take a reading there, as well as the surrounding soil. You can also dig into the soil with your finger or a screwdriver to see if the rootball and surrounding soil is moist. To protect your tree from sunscald, lawn movers and weed eaters we recommend that you wrap the trunk of the tree with tree wrap.
- 9: Be Patient!** Your bare-root tree will take time to leaf out. Sometimes mid to late June. Call us if you have any questions or concerns about your tree.



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