



*Gardeners Helping Gardeners Succeed*

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# All About Cherries

## Pollination

Most sweet cherries are not self-fertile. If you live in a densely populated area, purchase of a pollinizer may not be necessary, as long as another cherry is planted within a mile. Outlying areas or developing areas, however, usually require a second compatible tree be planted. Although we don't advocate peeking over your neighbors' fences, a drive around the neighborhood may help you to decide what is best for your particular yard.

Sour cherries are self-fruitful and can be used as pollinizers for sweet cherries.

## Pests and Disease

Cherries are subject to a long list of diseases and pests which are easily combated with planning and knowledge. Possibly the **most serious disease cherries face is bacterial gummosis**, which causes long, narrow, damp-looking gummy patches on the trunk or branches. This can be controlled by pruning; be sure to sterilize your pruning implement after each cut or use by dipping it into a 10-to-1 bleach and water solution. Without proper sterilization, you will pass the disease to other parts of your tree. Bacterial gummosis can also be prevented by following a regular fertilization and watering schedule.

**Dormant oil sprays** applied in January or February before the buds swell, when the tree is dormant, helps to control fruit-spoiling insects by killing overwintering insect eggs. Watch for aphids in early Spring, and pear psylla, a black leaf-eating slug 1/4" long, around July 4th. Insect control can be achieved by spraying with **Master Nurserymen Pest Fighter, Dr. Earth Fruit and Vegetable Insect Spray**. Read label directions carefully and thoroughly before applying these or any other pesticide.

Birds also pose a challenging problem. Bird netting sold by the foot or in precut packages can be one of your best preventative measures. Plastic owls and snakes, if moved two to three times a week, may also deter these fruit-eating pests.

## Pruning & Thinning

Cherries need no thinning and little pruning after the first two seasons of growth. Train young trees to wide crotches and give sweet cherries space to spread.

## Harvesting & Storage

Cherries are picked when fully ripe, usually with stems on fruit. They keep much better that way. If you plan to use fruit for canning or other processing, strip cherries from trees without the stems. This method is much easier and faster, but messy.

*Due to the uncertainty of wholesale grower stock, trucking, and weather, all varieties will not be available at all times. Although we do have the ability to special order some stock, we make no guarantee of its arrival and cheerfully encourage alternate selections.*

## Available Varieties

**Bing:** Consistently large, mahogany-red fruit is firm, meaty, sweet and juicy. **P:** Black Tartarian, Sam, Van or a sour cherry

**Black Tartarian:** Fruit is smaller than Bing, is bright purplish black, thick and sweet. This variety softens quickly when picked. **Pollinize** with any other sweet or sour cherry.

**Craig's Crimson:** Dark red, nearly black. **Self-fertile.** Perhaps the finest sweet cherry.

**Early Richmond:** (sour): Bright red fruits best used for jams, pies and preserves. **Self-fertile**

**Evans Bali:** (sour) Much sweeter than other sour cherries. The dark red fruit is approximately 1 inch in diameter and is excellent for baking and fresh eating. **Self-fertile**

**Garden Bing:** Genetic dwarf. **Self-fertile**

**Lambert:** Large, dark reddish purple fruit is firm and sweet. **Pollinize** with Van, Sam or a sour cherry.

**Lapins:** Large, firm, dark red sweet cherry. **Self-fertile**

**Montmorency:** (sour): Large, roundish, bright red fruit with yellow flesh. Mildly acidic taste. **Self-fertile**

**North Star:** (sour): Bright red to mahogany fruit has tart, juicy yellow flesh and red juice. A hardy sour cherry excellent for pies or canning. **Self-fertile**

**Rainier:** Medium to large. Yellow cherry with a red blush. Fine textured, very firm, yellowish-white flesh. Resistant to cracking. **Pollinize** with a sour cherry.

**Royal Ann:** Very large fruit with yellowish amber and blushed red skin. Flesh is firm and juicy with a sprightly flavor. **Pollinize** with Van or a sour cherry.

**Sam:** Medium-large, black skinned fruit is firm and juicy. **Pollinize** with Lambert, Bing or a sour cherry.

**Stella:** Large fruit has dark red, nearly black skin. Firm, sweet, dark red flesh with good flavor and texture. Resistant to cracking. **Self-fertile**

**Van:** Dark, shiny fruit is slightly smaller than Bing, however this variety bears 1-3 years earlier than Bing. **Pollinize** with Bing, Lambert, Royal Ann or a sour cherry.

**Utah Giant:** Larger and firmer than Bing or Lambert with excellent flavor. **Pollinize** with Van, Stella or a sour cherry.