

Cherry

Planting:

Plant cherries in full sun in well-drained soil. Space trees on Gisela dwarf rootstocks 10 ft apart and allow 12 ft between rows. Semi-dwarf trees should be planted 18 ft apart and 24 ft between rows. Plant with the top of the root mass just at soil level. Make sure that the graft is at least 1 inch above the soil level.

Feeding:

Feed cherries in the fall or winter. You can use fertilizer stakes or a good all-purpose fertilizer with a high phosphorus (high middle number – 4-**8**-4 for example). If lower grade mulches are used like bark or sawdust be sure to add more nitrogen as they deplete nitrogen as they're broken down.

Pruning:

Young cherry trees should be pruned to encourage a favored shape. As they age remove the leader (dominant top-most branch) and the inner branches should be thinned to keep it open. In older trees it is important to remove center sprouts and old fruiting wood. Dwarf trees will need a bit more attention initially to develop scaffold branches. There are entire books dedicated to the subject of pruning, investing a good one can ensure you have strong vigorous trees that will continue to produce heavily for it's lifetime.

Disease and Pest Control:

Cherries often get Blossom Blight, Leaf Spot, Brown Rot or Bacterial Canker. Insects like Scale, Leaf Roller, and Aphids can also affect cherries. For most of these scheduled sprays are required to keep the pest/disease in check.

See a **Spray Schedule** to best target your efforts.



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CHERRY VARIETIES

Bing – Most popular and widely planted. It ripens in July. Dark red cherries are firm and sweet. Crop is even-ripening, generally ripening all at the same time. Excellent fresh or canned.

Lapins – Self-fertile, ripens in mid-to-late July. Dark red cherries are crack-resistant, sweet, and juicy. Great pollinator.

Montmorency – Ripens in late July. It is a great pie cherry.

Rainier – An early cherry that ripens in late June. Blushed yellow cherries are large and firm with an exceptional flavor. Vigorous and productive.

Royal Ann – Ripens in late June to early July. Blush on yellow cherries that are sweet and strongly flavored. Top variety for canning. Very productive.

Stella – Self-fertile cherry that ripens in late July. Large almost black cherries are firm and very sweet. Great pollinator.

Surefire – Self-fertile cherry that ripens in mid-July. Later bloomer and heavier production than many other sour cherries. Sweet enough to eat fresh too!

Sweetheart – Self-fertile cherry that ripens in mid-to-late July. Large sweet bright red cherries. Resistant to storage rot.

Fig I: Cherry Ripening Chart

	June	July		
	Late	Early	Mid	Late
Rainier				
Royal Ann				
Bing				
Surefire				
Lapins				
Stella				
Sweetheart				
Montmorency				



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General Reference CHERRIES

	Canning	Freezing	Fresh	Dessert	Flavor	Productive	Color	Pollinator	Self-Fertile	Notes:
Bing	X		X		Sweet		Dark Red	No	No	Even-ripening
Lapins			X		Sweet		Red	Yes	Yes	Crack-resistant
Montmorency		X		X	Tart	X	Red	Yes	Yes	Very Productive
Rainier	X		X		Sweet	X	Yellow w/Blush	Yes	No	Large & Firm
Royal Ann	X		X		Sweet	X	Yellow w/Blush	No	No	Unique Flavor
Stella			X		Sweet		Dark Red	Yes	Yes	
Surefire			X	X	Tart	X	Red	Yes	Yes	Sweet enough to eat fresh.
Sweetheart			X		Sweet		Red	Yes	Yes	Stores-well



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