

Tree Fruit Varieties for Idaho

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Apples

Apples are among the most cold hardy tree fruits and are well-adapted to many parts of Idaho. It is important, however, to match the right varieties to your growing region and site. For the cool, short growing seasons found in northern, central, and southeastern Idaho, select very cold hardy and early-ripening varieties. The warmer climates in southwestern Idaho and in the Clearwater drainage around Lewiston increase your options in terms of varieties. All apple varieties require cross pollination to set fruit, so be sure to plant two or more compatible varieties together. Crab apples make good pollinators, as does Golden Delicious.

Apples perform best on deep, well drained loam soils that are neutral to slightly acidic. They bloom early in the spring and are sensitive to frost damage, so it is best not to plant in a frost pocket. Apples also require full sun to ensure tree health, high yields, and good fruit quality. Prune regularly to control size and maintain an open, productive tree.

Tree size is controlled by grafting desired varieties to special rootstocks. Malling 9, Malling 26, and Mark are the most popular dwarfing rootstocks. Malling 27 produces a very small tree that nearly always requires trellising or staking. Other rootstocks, such as Malling 106 and Malling 111 are available for problem soils, but do not reduce tree size much. When these rootstocks are used, growers typically insert an interstem of Malling 9 or Malling 26 to control tree size. Many rootstocks are available to meet growers' special needs. For a more complete description of apple rootstocks, you may wish to visit Pennsylvania State University's [Tree Fruit Production Guide](#).

There are thousands of named apple varieties, but nearly all U.S. commercial production comes from less than twenty varieties. Varieties that perform well in Idaho include:

Recommended apple varieties for northern, central, and southeastern Idaho		
Antonovka Cortland Duchess of Oldenburg Earligold Empire Fameuse or Snow Apple Fireside Freedom Golden Delicious Haralred Haralson Hazen	Honey Crisp Honeygold Jonathon Liberty Lodi MacFree Macoun McIntosh Mor-Spur McIntosh McIntosh Spur Northern Lights Paulared	Rambo Red Summer Red Fireside Redwell Regent Spartan State Fair Summer Rambo Summerred Wealthy Wolf River Yellow Transparent
Recommended apple varieties for southwestern Idaho and the lower Clearwater River drainage near Lewiston		
All of the above varieties	Varieties popular with commercial growers	
	Early season Fuji strains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September Wonder • Auvil Fuji • Ben Shogun Early season Fuji strains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September Wonder • Auvil Fuji • Ben Shogun 	Gala strains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buckeye Gala • Gale Gala • Pacific Gala

Apricots

Note: Apricots are quarantined by the Idaho Department of Agriculture to prevent the introduction of diseases. Except for the fruit, no plant parts can be imported into Idaho unless they have been grown in a disease-free area and are accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate. Homeowners should purchase their apricot stock at nurseries in Idaho.

Although apricots are somewhat more cold hardy than peaches, most varieties are still injured at temperatures of -20 to -25°F. The trees bloom very early in the spring and it is difficult to grow apricots in most parts of Idaho because of frequent frost injury to blossoms. The most reliable production will be in the fruit-growing region of southwestern Idaho.

Apricots are generally self-fruitful, but most experts recommend planting two varieties close together to ensure good fruit set. Varieties are commonly grafted onto apricot or Lovell peach seedling rootstocks, although more cold hardy rootstocks are sometimes available. The trees grow to about 20 feet tall and should bear their first crop in three to four years. Plant on well drained, light to medium-textured soil that is neutral to slightly acid. Place the trees on slopes away from frost pockets. The most cold hardy varieties include:

Apricot Varieties for Northern, Central, and Southeastern Idaho

Harcot - Produces medium-large fruits that have a slight red blush. The flesh is smooth, fine-grained, sweet, and has good flavor. Reportedly has good resistance to perennial canker, bacterial spot, and brown rot. Developed in Canada.

Hargrand - Produces large fruits to 2.5" in diameter. The orange flesh is smooth and contains a freestone pit. Suitable for fresh or processing uses. Reportedly tolerant of perennial canker, bacterial spot, and brown rot. Developed in Canada.

Harlayne - Produces medium-sized fruits with that have a red blush. Firm, orange flesh with good flavor and a freestone pit. Suitable for fresh or processing uses. Reportedly resistant to perennial canker and brown rot and moderately resistant to bacterial spot. Developed in Canada.

Harogem - Produces small to medium-sized fruits with a red blush. Firm, orange flesh with good flavor and a freestone pit. Developed for the fresh market. Reportedly resistant to perennial canker and brown rot and moderately resistant to bacterial canker. Developed in Canada.

Moongold - Produces medium-sized fruits with yellowish-orange flesh, sweet and slightly acid flavor, and freestone pit.

Suitable for fresh and processing uses. Reportedly vigorous and disease-free. Fruits may ripen unevenly and fruit cracking and premature fruit drop have been reported. Needs 'Sungold' as a pollinator. Developed at the University of Minnesota.

Sungold - Produces medium-sized fruits with orange flesh, sweet and mild flavor, and freestone pit. Suitable for fresh or processing uses. Heavy bearer. Pollinate with 'Moongold.' Developed at the University of Minnesota.

Apricots Recommended for Southwestern Idaho

Goldrich - Large, firm, fine-textured fruits with deep orange flesh. Vigorous, hardy, and productive but blooms early and is sensitive to apricot ring pox disease. Introduced by Washington State University.

Orange Royal

Perfection - Large fruits have yellowish to deep orange skins and flesh. Good fruit quality and flavor. Very hardy and productive.

Plumcot - Several named varieties are available. An interspecific cross of 50% apricot and 50% plum. Resembles a plum in appearance and has fine flesh.

Riland - One of the earliest-ripening commercial varieties. Fruits color up before fully ripening, have good quality, and ship well. A good pollinator for Perfection.

Tilton - A leading variety for commercial freezing, drying, and canning. The fruits have a sweet-tart flavor. The trees are vigorous and productive. Blooms very early.

Wenatchee - Also known as Wenatchee Moorpark. Large fruits with yellow skins and flesh. Flavor is good and the fruits are excellent for home fresh, dried, or canned uses. Compatible with Perfection and Tilton for cross pollination. Introduced in Washington State in 1908.

Cherries

Sweet Cherries

Sweet Cherries are only marginally hardy in much of Idaho, and the trees often suffer from sunscald. The buds can be injured at temperatures near -20°F. The trees grow to about 25 feet tall and bear fruit about five years after planting. Most cultivars require cross pollination. Select a pollinator that comes from a different pollination group. You may see Stella sweet cherry advertised. Stella is a good cultivar for warmer areas, but suffers freezing injury here. The most cold hardy cultivars include:

Recommended sweet cherry varieties for the warmest areas of northern, central, and southeastern Idaho

Hartland - The black fruits are medium to large and medium firm. Ripens in early- to mid-season. The tree is winter hardy and disease-tolerant. Developed in New York.

Hedelfingen - An old, European variety that produces Lambert type large, black fruits. Excellent fruit quality and suitable for fresh use, freezing, and canning. Vigorous, early-ripening, and reliably productive. Pollinate with Hartland, Hudson, Napoleon, Sam, Stark Gold, or Van. VII

Hudson - The late-ripening fruits are medium to large, very firm, sweet, and have good flavor. Resistant to cracking. A large, open, moderately productive tree. Pollinate with Hartland, Hedelfingen, Napoleon, Sam, Stark Gold, or Van. IX.

Napoleon (also known as Royal Ann) - The fruits are pale yellow with a bright red blush. The flesh is firm, fine-textured, and very sweet. Trees are vigorous and productive. Pollinate with any sweet cherry except Bing or Lambert. III.

Sam - The black fruits are medium to large. Late blooming helps reduce spring frost injuries. Self unfruitful but makes a good pollinator. Pollinate with Bing, Montmorancy, Napoleon, Stella, or Van.

Stark Gold - The golden fruits have a tangy flavor. Reportedly very cold hardy and disease resistant. Pollinate with any other sweet cherry. Pollination group VI.

Starkrimson - Very large, red fruits. Self-fruitful.

Van - Fruits are large, reddish-black, firm, and resemble Bing. The flavor is good and fruits are suitable for fresh, frozen, or

canned uses. Resists cracking. The fruits have commercial size and quality, but do not ship well to distant markets. Trees are vigorous, upright, bear early, and fruit heavily. An excellent pollinator. Pollinate with Bing, Napoleon, Rainier, Sam, or Stella. The most cold hardy sweet cherry.

Recommended sweet cherry varieties for southwestern Idaho and the lower Clearwater River drainage near Lewiston

Bing - Large fruits have dark red to brownish purple skins and firm, purple flesh. Excellent flavor and a standard commercial variety for fresh and canning markets. Only moderately hardy. Susceptible to cracking. Pollinate with Black Tartarian, Mazzard, Montmorancy, Rainier, Sam, Van, Windsor, or Stella.

Chelan - A popular early season, export-quality dark red sweet cherry. Similar to Bing in appearance, the fruit is medium-to-large in size, with a mahogany red skin and medium-to-dark red flesh. It ripens 10 to 12 days before Bing, has good firmness and flavor, and exhibits lower susceptibility to both rain-induced cracking and heat-induced double/spur fruit formation than Bing. It flowers precociously and fruits heavily, requiring good management to achieve optimal fruit size. Precocious rootstocks are not needed for early cropping and may make management for optimal fruit size more intensive. Cross-pollinizers include Rainier, Bing, Van, and Index. Chelan is incompatible with Burlat, Tieton and PC 7214-3. Do not propagate on Mahaleb rootstocks.

Rainier - A large, yellow fruit best suited for fresh use. Vigorous and very productive. Resistant to cracking. Pollinate with Bing, Montmorancy, Napoleon, Sam, or Stella. Stella - Self fruitful. Popular with home gardeners. Dark red fruits with sweet, rich flavor. Vigorous and productive.

Tart Cherries

Tart or pie cherries are more cold hardy than sweet cherries, being rated to -40°F or colder. They are more suitable for production in most Idaho locations than their sweet cousins. The fruits are tart and make excellent pastries. The trees grow from 6 to 15 feet tall, depending on variety, and bear about three years after planting. Most tart cherries are self-fruitful, so you only need one tree or cultivar. Montmorancy does crop best when planted with another variety. Recommended varieties include:

Meteor - The large, bright-red fruits resemble Montmorancy. The fruits are tart, juicy, and have colorless juice and a free pit. A natural genetic dwarf that grows 8-12 feet tall. Self fruitful. The most cold hardy tart cherry variety that is commercially available. Developed at the Minnesota Fruit Breeding Farm.

Montmorancy - This variety is the standard for tart cherries. The fruits are medium to large, bright red with yellow flesh and clear juice. Remains firm during processing. Self fruitful, but bears better crops with cross pollination. Very cold hardy. Developed in France in the 17 century.

North Star - The fruits are large with a thin, light-red skin, red flesh, red juice, and a free pit. The trees are naturally dwarfed, growing 6-12 feet tall. Very cold hardy and self fruitful. Developed by the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station from a seedling found in Yugoslavia.

Peaches and Nectarines

Note: peaches and nectarines are quarantined by the Idaho Department of Agriculture to prevent the introduction of diseases. Except for the fruit, no plant parts can be imported into Idaho from certain states unless they have been grown in a disease-free area and are accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate. Home gardeners should purchase their peach and nectarine stock at nurseries in Idaho.

Peaches and nectarines are generally poorly adapted to northern, central, and eastern Idaho growing conditions. The trees are sensitive to freezing injury and bloom very early in the spring when the flowers are often damaged by frost. Both peaches and nectarines can be damaged by winter temperatures of -10 to -20°F. The most reliable tree survival and fruit production will be in the fruit-growing region of southwestern Idaho and in the lower Clearwater River drainage around Lewiston.

Nectarines, by the way, are simply peach varieties that do not have fuzzy skins. They are not hybrids with plums or other fruits. Varieties of both crops are grafted onto seeding rootstocks. Special rootstocks are available, but seldom necessary in Idaho.

Plant peaches and nectarines on well drained, light textured soils that are neutral to slightly acidic. These crops do not tolerate heavy or poorly-drained soils well. Prune yearly to control size and maintain vigor. Mature trees grow to about 20 feet tall, but can be kept smaller with pruning and training. The trees bear fruit three to four years after planting. Thin the fruit to develop size. Peaches are self-fruitful, as are the nectarines listed below, so you only need to plant one tree or cultivar. The most hardy cultivars include:

Peaches

August Lady - The fruits are yellow-gold with a red blush and yellow flesh. The flesh is firm, fine textured, aromatic, and has a well-balanced taste and freestone pit. Well-suited to the fresh market and grown commercially in southwestern Idaho. The trees are vigorous, productive, and the fruits ripen early.

Autumn Glo - The large, greenish-yellow fruits have a red blush. The yellow flesh is firm and has a freestone pit. The fruits retain their quality on the tree for a week after ripening. This midseason variety is vigorous and productive. Susceptible to bacterial leaf spot. Grown commercially in southwestern Idaho

Canadian Harmony - The fruits are medium to large, yellow, and have a red blush. The yellow flesh is moderately firm and freestone. The fruits freeze well. Trees are vigorous and productive. Considered to be cold hardy. Developed in Ontario, Canada.

Eden - The white fruits have a red blush and firm, white, freestone flesh. Slow to brown for a white-fleshed variety. The flavor is sweet and rich. Ripens in midseason. Vigorous and productive. Considered to be cold hardy.

Harbrite - The fruits have a brilliant red over yellow, nearly fuzzless skin. The yellow flesh is firm, has good quality, and is freestone. Good for canning and freezing. Vigorous, productive, and cold hardy. Developed in Ontario, Canada.

Harrow Diamond - The red-blushed fruit has yellow, nearly freestone flesh. Ripens early in the season. Vigorous and requires thinning for good fruit size. Some resistance to bacterial spot, brown rot and perennial canker. Considered cold hardy.

Developed in Ontario, Canada.

July Flame - The fruits have a deep orange blush and firm, yellow flesh. The flavor is very good. A commercial variety grown in southwestern Idaho.

Madison - Fruits are medium-sized, bright red, and freestone. The flesh is yellow with a mild, sweet flavor. Excellent for canning. The trees are vigorous, resistant to spring frosts, and considered cold hardy.

Redhaven - The medium-sized, bright red fruits are nearly fuzzless. The fruit is yellow and freestone when ripe. Excellent for dessert, canning, and freezing. The standard for early-season peaches. The trees are vigorous and productive. Thinning is required for good fruit size. Reportedly susceptible to leaf curl, brown rot, Oriental fruit moth and twig borer. Considered cold hardy. Developed in Michigan.

Red Star - A yellow fleshed peach. A commercial variety grown in southwestern Idaho.

Reliance - Medium-sized fruits with a dull red blush. The flesh is yellow, medium soft, sweet, and freestone. The trees are vigorous and bear young. Widely considered to be the most cold hardy commercial peach variety. Developed in New Hampshire.

Saturn - A white-fleshed, semi-freestone, donut-shaped peach. The flesh is soft, sweet, and mild-flavored. Does not hang on the tree well without over-ripening and must be picked early. An early-season variety. The fruits adhere tightly to the trees and can be difficult to thin or pick. Good resistance to bacterial leaf spot. Considered quite cold hardy. Grown commercially in southwestern Idaho.

Snow Giant - The fruits have a pink blush and white flesh with a sweet, subacid flavor. Ships well. A commercial variety grown in southwestern Idaho.

Snow King - A white-fleshed peach that is similar to Snow Giant. Extremely sweet. Susceptible to flesh-corking. A commercial variety grown in southwestern Idaho.

Sweet Dreams - A yellow-fleshed peach. Grown commercially in southwestern Idaho.

Zee Lady - The fruits have an orange blush and yellow, freestone flesh. High-quality fruits are excellent for freezing. Heavy producer. A commercial variety grown in southwestern Idaho.

Nectarines

Arctic Joy - White flesh. A commercial variety grown in southwestern Idaho.

Arctic Pride - A bright red-over-white variety with white, clingstone flesh. The flavor is subacid. Produces heavily but susceptible to powdery mildew. A commercial variety grown in southwestern Idaho.

Fantasia - The large, bright red-over-yellow fruits have yellow flesh of excellent quality. Can be harvested firm and tangy or soft-ripe and sweet. The trees are small and reliably productive. Susceptible to peach leaf curl, brown rot, Oriental fruit moth, and bacterial leaf spot. Developed in California. A commercial variety grown in southwestern Idaho.

Harblaze - The red-blushed fruits are semi-freestone and ripen during the early-mid season. The fruit softens quickly near maturity. Good resistance to brown rot, bacterial leaf spot, and powdery mildew. The trees are vigorous and considered cold hardy. Developed in Ontario, Canada.

Summer Fire - The large, dark red fruits have yellow, high quality, clingstone flesh. The flavor is good. A commercial variety grown in southwestern Idaho.

Sunglo - The large, red-over-yellow have yellow, sweet, semi-clingstone flesh. The fruits have long storage and shelf lives and are excellent for the packed, retail, or roadside markets. Ripens in midseason.

Pears

Pears are less hardy than apples and can suffer freezing injury in some parts of Idaho. The buds and wood are typically hardy to about -25°F. The trees grow to about 18 feet tall, but can be kept nearly any size or shape by training and pruning. You can expect your first crop three to five years after planting. Seedling or Old Home rootstocks are commonly used. Plant on deep, well drained soil and away from frost pockets. Pears require cross pollination, so plant two cultivars close together. Seckel and Bartlett are not cross fertile and will not serve as cross pollinators for each other. Nearly all pear cultivars are susceptible to fire blight disease, particularly in humid climates. Fire blight can be a problem in Idaho.

Both standard (European) and Asian pear varieties are available. Asian pears are rounder and crisper than standard pears, and are sometimes likened to apples. Asian pears are less cold hardy than their European cousins and are not reliably cold hardy in northern, central, or southeastern Idaho.

Standard Pears

Bartlett - Bartlett is the standard for pears and many named strains are commercially available. The large, golden-yellow fruits have a reddish or brownish blush and classic pear shape. The white flesh is smooth, juicy, and pleasantly tart. Suitable for fresh and canning uses. Ripen the fruits off the trees for several weeks to develop a full flavor. Keeps in storage for three months. The trees are medium-sized, upright, and suitable for high-density plantings. Partially self-fruitful, but bears better with cross pollination in some areas. Can be difficult to ripen in cool, short-season areas. Introduced from England in 1797.

Flemish Beauty - Once known as Fondante de Boise. The fruits are large, round with clear yellow skin and firm, yellowish-white flesh that becomes sweet and aromatic when ripe. Dries well. Requires cross-pollination. The trees are vigorous and productive. Considered very cold hardy.

Harrow Delight - The medium-sized fruits have a red blush over yellow background. The flesh is very smooth with few grit cells. Similar to Bartlett but ripens 14 to 28 days earlier. Pollinate with Bartlett, Anjou, Moonglow, or Starking Delicious. Trees are vigorous and hardy in Plant Hardiness Zone 5. Developed in Ontario, Canada.

Moonglow - The medium-sized fruits are dull yellow with a pink blush. The white flesh is soft, mild, sweet, and has few grit cells. Excellent for fresh use or canning and stores well. Place in cool storage for 10 to 15 days after harvest to develop full flavor. Ripens 10 to 14 days earlier than Bartlett. Requires cross pollination. Adapted to Plant Hardiness Zones 5-8.

Asian Pears

Kikusui - The fruits are medium-sized with a thin, greenish skin. The white flesh is white and described as both sweet and tart. Keeps well after harvest but is not suitable for shipping. The trees are vigorous, medium-sized, and tend to droop. Very productive. Pollinate with Chojuro, 20th Century, or Bartlett.

Niitaka - The large fruits have greenish skins with a brown russet. The flesh is mild, sweet, crisp, and juicy. Fruit quality is good to excellent. Ripen on the tree. One of the best Asian pears in terms of keepability after harvest. Not suitable as a

pollinator.

20th Century - The best known Asian pear, derived from Japan. The medium-sized yellow fruits are round to lopsided and have long stems. The skin is thin and tender and the flesh juicy and crisp with a bland flavor. The fruits have excellent quality and store well. Very productive and requires thinning to produce well-sized fruits. Pollinate with Chojuro, Hosui, Bartlett, or Shinseiki. Susceptible to many diseases. Hardy in Plant Hardiness Zones 6-9.

Plums and Prunes

Note: Plums and prunes are quarantined by the Idaho Department of Agriculture to prevent the introduction of diseases. Except for the fruit, no plant parts can be imported into Idaho from certain states unless they have been grown in a disease-free area and are accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate. Homeowners should purchase their peach and plum stocks at nurseries in Idaho.

Prunes are simply plums that develop high enough sugar concentrations in the fruit to allow the fruit to be dried without spoiling. The trees grow 10 to 20 feet tall and bear fruit three to five years after planting. Varieties are budded onto rootstocks.

Both European and Japanese cultivars are available. Nearly all Japanese cultivars require cross pollination, as do many European cultivars. As a general rule, plant two or more cultivars close together. Plums are less hardy than apples. Japanese plums are injured at temperatures between -10 and -15°F. Many European plum varieties are injured at temperatures between -15 and -20°F, although a few are more cold hardy. Although adaptable to a wide range of soil conditions, the trees perform best on deep, well drained soil. Recommended cultivars include:

European Plums

Damson - ripens too late for some north Idaho locations
Earliblue
Ember - very cold hardy (pollinate with Underwood)
Empress
Fortune
Green Gage

Italian Prune
La Crescent
Pembina
Pipestone
President
Stanley - ripens too late for some north Idaho locations
Superior
Underwood - very cold hardy (pollinate with Ember)
Waneta

Japanese Plums

Black Amber
Catalina
Duarte
Friar
Shiro
Santa Rosa
Angelino
Burbank
Red Ace
Ozark Premier
Starking Delicious

Pluots

Dapple Dandy - Pluots are complex interspecific hybrids made up of 75% plum and 25% apricot parentage. Several named varieties are available. Dapple Dandy has large, firm fruit with distinctive, mottled skin color and pink to red flesh. Good acid to sugar balance with excellent flavor. Grown commercially in southwestern Idaho.