



Urban Harvest

Bring in Fruit by the Bushel with These Varieties

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Those of us living in metro Houston are fortunate in the opportunity to grow and eat a wide variety of outstanding fruit. We are in the temperate temperature zone where we can grow some tropical fruits as well as specific varieties of most non-tropical fruit trees. **Dr. Bob Randall** created a monthly harvesting calendar whereby every month there is some fruit that can be harvested. In fact, if we are careful in our selection of trees to grow, and open to eating some fruits that we may never have heard of before, we never need to purchase fruit. We can just go outside our door and pick.



Today I'm going to write about the fruit trees that provide the most abundant amount of fruit. By the end of this article you will have a good idea of what to grow so that there is enough for your family, your friends and neighbors and enough left over to donate a huge amount to food pantries. In the case of fruit, everyone will be anxious to receive your gifts. Of course, I will touch on only a few of the many types of fruit trees that are successful in the Houston area.



Citrus

It is usual for an orange or tangerine to produce many hundreds of fruit each year. The same is true for lemons, grapefruit, limes, limequats, satsumas, kumquats and pummelo. My **Republic of Texas orange**, which is four years old, has about 800 fruit on it this year, and my **Moro Blood orange**, which is also four years old has about 400 fruit. My **Meyer lemon** has perhaps 200 very large juicy lemons. Come to the **Bayou City Farmers' Market** this month and taste many of the great citrus varieties that are being grown in metro Houston, and when you find the ones you

The Republic of Texas orange is prolific and cold tolerant with very sweet fruit.

really like, come to the **Urban Harvest 9th Annual Fruit Tree Sale** on Jan. 17th, and pick up all those great-tasting varieties.

Figs

Figs are another fruit that is prolific in production. There can be thousands of figs on a mature tree, and we can grow many of the most outstanding varieties. Of course, birds like figs, but you can beat the birds by harvesting early in the morning. **Celeste, LSU Purple, Banana** and **Petite Negra** are some of the great figs for our area.

Blackberries

Blackberries produce an amazing amount of berries on each relatively small plant. Yes, the bushes are thorny, but a few scratches are well worth it. **Kiowa blackberry** is the sweetest, largest and produces the most abundant over the longest period of time. Everyone should have a few blackberry plants, and since they can be planted about 3' apart, most yards can easily accommodate 10 plants.

Peaches and plums

Peaches and plums also have very large production, and nothing is better than a perfectly ripe peach or plum, picked fresh off the tree.

Now, here comes the catch. It is critical to grow the varieties of fruit trees that work exceptionally well, and you can find them at the Urban Harvest fruit tree sale, where the varieties offered have been selected by fruit tree experts.

In order to help you learn about growing fruit trees, Urban Harvest has a **fruit tree series of classes** and a website full of information. One of the Urban Harvest classes, **Fruit Tree Sale Prep**, is an exciting PowerPoint pictorial pre-sale talk on all the fruit varieties that will be available at the sale, and how to plant and care for the trees. Part of the talk will cover High Density Home Orchards where you can plant fruit trees close together and get much more production than you normally would.

Visit the Urban Harvest website www.urbanharvest.org to learn all about the fruit tree sale and classes, and call 713 880-5540 to register for fruit tree classes.