



Urban Harvest  
Gardening for good.

## Muscadine Grapes

Category:	Temperate; deciduous
Hardiness:	Easily withstands freezes
Fruit Family:	Vine fruits
Light:	Full sun
Size:	H & W vary depending on training choices
Soil:	Well-drained
Planting:	Container grown grapes may be planted year round with proper care but they are best planted in January & February during their dormancy



Compared with table grapes (European or bunch grapes), domesticated muscadines are longer lived, much less disease prone, require less water, are more forgiving of pruning mistakes, and have a richer flavor with equal sweetness. The flavors of American grapes are complex. European grapes can seem bland in comparison. Don't confuse these muscadines with the wild muscadines of East Texas or the wild Mustang grape of Houston. This is a very sophisticated grape.

Instead of growing in bunches, sweet muscadines grow in many small clusters. They have firm skin and tender flesh. The berries are very large, with some seeds, and have thicker skins than bunch grapes, which aids with disease resistance. Buy one male plant for each two female plants, in order to have proper pollination.

### Care of Muscadine Grape Vines

**Planting:** Plant in a sunny to dappled sun location that is well-drained and where you have established a support system for the vine. Dig a hole that is twice as wide as the container, and the same depth as the root ball. Break up the soil you removed from the hole, but do not amend it. Set the root ball in the hole and backfill with the unamended soil. In all cases, water well after planting and apply an inch of leaf mold compost around the plant. Mulch with native mulch, pine straw, or well-rotted leaves.

**Pruning & Training:** Make a trellis with two 8' – 10' T-posts or sturdy stakes about 8' to 9' apart. Put a sturdy wire between the two stakes at the top and plant the muscadine half way between. Train the plant up a wire or stake using ties until it reaches the crosswire. As the vine grows, encourage one trunk by pinching back all side branches to less than 12" until the cross wire is reached. When the vine reaches the top wire, tie two branches, one each way, along the crosswire until it reaches the posts holding up the wire. This is the cordon that holds the fruiting branches. Discourage any branches that

try to grow high above the wire, but let side branches off the cordons grow horizontally in both directions.

Once the plant is trained on both horizontal branches of the trellis, you can prune during the dormant season. Prune the horizontal branches to about 6" apart, ideally one going to one side of the cordon, and the next to the other side. Cut each of these fruiting branches each winter to about 10 buds or less on wood that grew the previous summer. Blackberries can be grown under muscadines if they are on 9' tall wires.

**Production:** Grapes will begin producing two years from planting. It may take a couple of years for the vines to begin yielding their full potential.

**Watering:** The first summer after planting, check soil moisture 1-2 times per week and do not let the soil go dry. Grapes appreciate regular irrigation, but do not like soggy soils. They will tolerate short periods of drought.

**Fertilizing:** Grapes are not heavy feeders. Broadcast a few handfuls of slow release organic fertilizer around the base of the plant in February. Apply an inch of compost each year and use organic mulches.

**Harvesting:** Fruit is ready to harvest when it changes color and becomes soft, typically in August.

**Pests:** If birds become a problem, you may need a large net held above and around the vine. Mosquito nets work better than bird netting for this.

**Winter Protection:** Grapes are not affected by freezing temperatures and do not require protection.

### Varieties of Muscadine Grapes for the 2020 Sale

**Male:** *Dixie Red, Fry, Ison*

**Female:** *Darlene, Sugargate, Sweet Jenny, Sweet Mix (was 15-1-1)*

### Varieties of Muscadine Grapes for Southeast Texas

#### **Self-Fertile**

**Carlos:** Bronze juice/wine grape with 16% sugar. An extremely heavy producer of medium-sized grapes. 'Carlos' is the number one bronze muscadine for juice or white muscadine wine in the southeastern United States. 95% of North Carolina's Scuppernon grape industry is 'Carlos'.

**Cowart:** Black and 17% sugar. Good flavor, large clusters and medium size fruit. This grape has an edible skin and is very productive. Ripens early.

**Dixie Red:** Bronze-red and 17% sugar. It is very productive, cold weather tolerant, and vigorous. 'Dixie Red' makes a high quality wine. Large, 1½" fruits.

**Ison:** For fresh eating, or for tasty, flavorsome juice, jelly or wine, 'Ison' is the best self-fertile variety. This black grape is 19% sugar and has excellent size and production. The 'Ison' muscadine vine produces some of the best wine and jelly available because of its taste and flavor. The skin is edible and nutritious and unlike most muscadines, ripens uniformly as beautiful large clusters.

**Late Fry (PP#9924):** The 'Late Fry' muscadine variety is a late season grape that is bronze and self-fertile. It produces delicious fruit that contains 20% sugar. The fruit is large in size and is very vigorous with high yields.

**Noble:** Black grape with 16% sugar. An excellent grape for juicing, jelly or red wine with high yields, good disease resistance, but a short shelf life. Ripens early to mid-season.

**Welder:** 'Welder' is a medium-sized, bronze muscadine and is good for producing juice and wine. Very productive vines and sugar content of 18-19%.

**Not Self-Fertile – Must pair with one of the above within 50 ft. Plant one self-fertile "male" for every two non-self fertile "females"**

**Black Beauty:** The 'Black Beauty' muscadine vine produces very large black fruit with excellent taste and edible skin in large clusters. Fruits are 23% sugar. That is three times as sweet as watermelons. Needs pollinizer.

**Darlene:** Bronze female (requires pollinizer). A beautiful bronze female variety that contains 22%-24% sugar. The flavor is unbeatable. It is considered by most to be the best bronze muscadine variety available, and is not only a gourmet treat, but also one of the better flavored fruits you will ever eat. The 'Darlene' muscadine produces consistently large fruit that is 1 ¼" in diameter. Fruit is bronze that turns pinkish in color as it fully ripens. The pulp is melting and very juicy. Early to mid-season.

**Early Fry:** PP#9225 – Bronze female (requires pollinizer). 18% sugar. Produces large berries with excellent flavor and edible skin. Two weeks earlier than "Fry". Disease resistant, cold hardy.

**Sugargate:** PP#5831 – Black female (requires pollinizer). Earliest ripening black muscadine. Excellent flavor, large berries, edible skin. Vigorous and disease resistant. Allow to ripen fully on the vines for best flavor. 1.1/4" fruits.

**Supreme:** The purple black 'Supreme' is the biggest muscadine. It is a very heavy producer with large clusters and a long shelf life, edible skin. It is 22% sugar. Needs pollinizer.

**Sweet Jenny:** The bronze 'Sweet Jenny' muscadine vine produces very large delicious fruit on a vigorous, very disease resistant vine. It is a very consistent producer with excellent quality and taste, 23% sugar, and an edible skin. Needs pollinizer.

**Sweet Mix (15-1-1):** Black female (requires pollinizer). 21% sugar. Large, beautiful clusters of dark red berries that have exceptional flavor and edible skins. Berries have a dry scar for extended storage quality. 1.1/4" berries. Ripens mid-season.