



## PEACH TREE (PRUNUS PERSICA)

### TREE FACTS

Peach trees are a **stone fruit** belonging to the **ROSEACEAE** family. Plants of the rose botanical family are characteristic of having **serrated leaves, flowers with 5 separate petals, and 5 separate sepals** with numerous **stamens** and **styles**. *Can you I.D. other fruits of the ROSE family?*

Peach trees are native to the region of Northwest China between Tarim Basin and the north slopes of the Kunlun Mountains where they were first domesticated (1st cent. B.C.!) The latin name *persica* refers to the once-held belief they originated in Persia (present day Iran).

They live 15-20 years (short in fruit tree terms) and can grow to heights of 20 feet tall and wide.

### SEASONAL CARE

Peach trees are vigorous growers and require special care!

**WINTER/SPRING:** Peach trees are one of the only fruit trees pruned while flowering as opposed to dormancy! **Prune** up to 50% of growth to create an open center to allow for better airflow and sunlight. Apply compost tea or a seaweed **fertilizer** as a soil drench to the tree's base for a boost of needed nutrients.

**SUMMER:** **Thin developing fruitlets** to one every 5 to 8 inches - distance between your pinky and thumb. Harvest fruit when it's ripe (gives to the touch). Monitor regularly for common pest and disease challenges like **peach leaf curl, brown rot, oriental fruit moth, peach tree borer, etc.**

**FALL:** remove fallen leaves and fruit from base of tree and add **mulch!**

### NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS

**This delicious fruit** is also a high source of vitamin A & beta carotene (optimal vision), C (immune system), E (antioxidant), riboflavin & K (healthy clotting), 6 complex B vitamins, niacin, folate pantothenic acid (nerve and cell health).

### STARTING PEACH TREES FROM SEED

Peach trees are **true-to-seed**, meaning they produce fruit that's similar to the parent tree. Pick fully ripe fruit and clean the pit with a brush in clear water. Let the pit dry for a few days on your counter before cracking the pit open with a nut cracker or hammer. Until you're ready to germinate the seeds, keep the dry seeds in a sealed container in the fridge for at least 8 weeks. In the autumn, plant your seeds directly into potting soil, then bury the pot, and cover with straw mulch or a protective cage. When the seedlings grow to over a foot tall, choose a location to plant your peach tree that is in full sun with good soil drainage. Your tree should produce fruit in 3-5 years. Enjoy!

