



## *Tips for a Successful Backyard Orchard*

### **Maximize Space!**

Most potential backyard orchardists we speak to complain of the same thing – *Not enough backyard for an orchard!* We beg to differ. You just need to change your mind about what a backyard orchard looks like! Consider the following methods to squeeze a successful home orchard into your “small” backyard:

- **Plant more than one tree per hole!** That’s right....try planting 2-3 trees in the same hole. Choose rootstocks and varieties of similar vigor for best results. Close planting will also naturally restrict the vigor of each tree as they compete for space.
- **Hedgerow plantings** – plant trees 3-4' apart, in a row.
- **Aggressive early pruning to keep trees small.** Rule of thumb: keep a tree small in the first 2-3 years of growth versus trying to make a large tree small later. Also, try pruning your fruit tree twice a year! Once in the winter, which is the traditional time to prune, and once during the summer to maintain a smaller canopy. Choose your tree’s maximum height and do not allow the tree to get any taller.

### **Choose Varieties for a Summer Full of Tree-ripe Fruit!**

Home orchardists should consider choosing varieties by ripening date for their area. The goal is to have successive ripening of many different varieties and not get bombarded with three different varieties ripening the same week! Consider the following tips:

- Apricots and Cherries are typically early season fruit. Plan on those ripening in May and June.
- Nectarines are typically late July.
- Peaches can ripen throughout the summer depending on variety.
- Pears are late season fruit with most coming off in September.

Spread out your harvests to insure fruit enjoyment throughout the growing season!