

## Almond Trees

**Almonds** are the earliest-blooming of all deciduous fruit or nut trees. They should be grown only in areas that are free from frost during bloom. They are not suitable for most areas of Yavapai County; however, they can be grown as a flowering landscape tree.

Recommended varieties include **Texas (Mission)**, a large, upright, and vigorous tree with a small and round nut; **Thompson**, a medium size tree with a small nut with a soft, paper-thin shell; and **Hall**, a hardy tree which bears heavily. Most almond trees require a pollinizer to produce a crop. Hall can be planted with Texas as a pollinizer; Texas can be planted with Thompson; Thompson can be planted with Texas.

Almonds do well in most soils as long as soil is well drained. They do not tolerate salty soils. If trees make 8 to 15 inches of new growth each year, they do not need to be fertilized. If they are slow to grow, trees will respond to nitrogen applied at a rate of 0.5 to 1 lb. actual nitrogen per mature tree per year.

Prune young almond trees to a vase shape. Extensive pruning is not usually required.

Harvest almonds after hulls have cracked open and are partially dried. Nuts can be knocked or shaken from tree. Allowing them to fall naturally takes weeks and risks rain damage.

Remove hulls and place nuts in sun to dry for one to two days. When kernels rattle in their shells, they are dried enough. A properly dried kernel will snap in two rather than bend.

Almonds in the shell will keep up to six months stored in a cool, dry, well-ventilated place.



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Adapted from: Western Fruit, Berries & Nuts, by L. Walheim & R. L. Stebbins

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