



THE WALNUT TREE COMPANY

www.WalnutTrees.co.uk

Suppliers of quality walnut trees and reliable advice for forest, orchard, garden and amenity plantings

MORE ABOUT GROWING WALNUTS FOR FRUIT PRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Walnuts have been grown for fruit in the UK for many centuries but rarely on a commercial scale. With new modern varieties such as Fernor and Lara which start producing nuts only a few years after planting and are able to yield 4-5 tonnes per hectare at 8-9 years of age (under French conditions), there is increasing interest in establishing new orchards.

We recommend French varieties as these are better suited to our growing conditions compared to say American varieties.

MODERN VS TRADITIONAL VARIETIES

Modern Varieties

Modern varieties such as Fernette, Fernor and Lara have the advantages of being early bearing, ability to produce high quality nuts on lateral as well as terminal shoots, regular cropping behaviour, partial self compatibility, improved disease resistances and of course, improved yields compared to the old traditional varieties.

Traditional varieties

All traditional varieties are terminal bearing which means they are low yielding compared to modern varieties. They also take longer to start producing fruit. However, varieties such as Franquette and Ronde de Montignac produce very good quality nuts of excellent eating quality. They also can be planted as effective pollinators for modern varieties.

PLANTING SYSTEMS

Traditional orchards

Traditionally orchards are planted on a regular or offset square pattern with the distance between each tree varying between 7 and 10m depending on variety and intensity of production desired. A 10m x 10m planting distance would require 100 trees per hectare. Trees are managed individually and the branches on the stem usually removed up to 1 to 2 metres to allow access all around the tree. Each tree would then be pruned to the desired shape (e.g. either a central leading shoot is maintained or removed to create 'goblet') by the grower. At these wide spacings, trees have sufficient space to grow on for several decades.

Hedgerow systems

A more modern approach is to plant trees closer together within the row (e.g. 4m) and to reduce the distance between rows to 7 or 8m. The trees are then trained to form a solid wall of growth along the tree row, i.e. a hedgerow which is mechanical pruned on alternative sides at every other year. The hedgerow rather than the individual tree, becomes the management unit in the orchard. As access is along the hedgerows rather than across, the low primary branches are encouraged to develop low on the trunk and a wide A frame shaped hedge developed. This design increases the density of the planting considerable (a 4m x 8m planting distance would require 312 trees per hectare) and results in much higher yields per hectare. Only modern lateral bearing varieties can be grown in this system. The increased costs of establishment per hectare (more plants per hectare than in the traditional system) should be more than compensated by the earlier and increased production of nuts – up to 8 tonnes per hectare (under French conditions).

HEALTH BENEFITS

Walnuts like many nuts are rich natural source of many important nutrients such as calcium, potassium, manganese, selenium, Vitamin B6, niacin and folate. They are also a great source of Omega-3- fatty acids which in addition to helping heart disease may also help against arthritis and other inflammatory diseases.

In addition, walnuts are a good source of antioxidants and phytochemicals which are thought to play important roles in reducing cholesterol levels and decreasing the risk of heart disease, cancer and other chronic diseases.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE WALNUT TREE COMPANY

The Walnut Tree Company Ltd. West Cottage, Flimwell, Wadhurst, Sussex TN5 7PX UK.

Tel: ++44 (0)1892 890376

✉ contactus@WalnutTrees.co.uk ~ Website: www.WalnutTrees.co.uk

Company No. 4085362