



Size Doesn't Matter: Growing Fruit in Small Spaces

by Christy Wilhelmi

Pro Tips for Spring 2022

Plan for Pollinators

When designing space for your Mini Fruit Garden, be sure to include space for pollinator-friendly plants including native flowers. After all, 1 out of every 3-4 bites of food we eat exists because of the service pollinators provide. Apples, cherries, peaches, plums, some pears and blueberries require pollination assistance in order to fruit. Visit your local native plant nursery to find the best plants to include in your garden.

Shopping Tip

Don't be afraid to remove a fruit tree from its nursery pot while you're still at the nursery. Inspect the tree for circling or girdling roots, and look for roots growing above the soil line. That is a clear sign of girdling below. Avoid trees with roots making a sharp curve circling the trunk.

Compost Tea

Compost and compost tea are both beneficial for your fruit trees, during soil preparation and after planting. If you don't feel up to brewing your own compost tea, find a provider in your area. There are also some "put to sleep" teas available on nursery shelves. The microbes wake up once the bottle is open.

Citrus Treatment

Here's my trick for fixing most citrus tree problems (but it works on other fruit trees in distress as well). [Watch this video](https://youtu.be/N-jlU2Sv8Dk) (<https://youtu.be/N-jlU2Sv8Dk>) and put the strategy to work in your mini orchard. You'll see improvement in about 2 weeks. If not, repeat the process until you do.

Ixnay on the Avilgray

Old school experts used to advise adding a layer of gravel to the bottom of containers before planting. Turns out that's a really bad idea. Tree roots prefer straight soil instead. If you are concerned about losing soil through the drainage hole, you can add a small screen to the bottom of the pot before adding soil.