



BEST PRACTICES FOR FRUIT TREE OWNERS

Kee your yard clean and free of unwanted critters by following these simple but effective habits:

Pick fruit promptly. Harvest ripe fruit as soon as it's ready. Don't wait for it to fall.

Clean up fallen fruit daily. Even a few pieces on the ground can attract animals overnight.

Prune regularly. Keep trees at a manageable height so fruit is easier to reach and less likely to be overlooked.

Use wildlife-proof compost bins. If you compost fruit scraps, be sure bins are tightly sealed.

Install tree guards or netting. These can help deter climbing animals from reaching fruit.



WHY PICKING FRUIT MATTERS MORE THAN YOU THINK

Leaving ripe or fallen fruit on trees or the ground may seem harmless—or even generous to nature—but it can create unintended problems. Decaying fruit attracts rats, squirrels, opossums and other wildlife, turning your garden into a buffet. While these animals may appear harmless, their presence can cause property damage, spread pests and pose health risks.

A WIN-WIN FOR YOU AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Responsible harvesting doesn't just protect your property; it also supports a healthier ecosystem. When wild animals rely on human food sources, their natural foraging patterns

are disrupted, which can lead to overpopulation and the spread of disease. By keeping your fruit trees tidy, you're helping preserve the balance of your local environment.

RAINY DAY WATER SHUTOFF REMINDER

Gardeners, please note: On rainy days, water at the Garden Centers will be temporarily shut off to help prevent overwatering. Signs will be posted on the gates on days when the water is off.

If you have any questions, please contact the Garden Center office.



THE HIDDEN COSTS OF FEEDING WILDLIFE



- Rodents such as rats can spread diseases like leptospirosis and salmonella.
- Squirrels, though less threatening, may strip bark from trees and dig up gardens.
- Opossums often rummage through trash, leave droppings and can attract predators such as coyotes.

These animals are opportunistic feeders. Once they associate your garden with easy meals, they're likely to return, with friends.

A Note From Tom McCray

FALL GROWING SEASON TREE TRIMMING

I hope you're all enjoying the start of the fall growing season. As part of our seasonal maintenance, we'd like to share some updates about upcoming tree trimming.

If you rent a tree plot, you'll be contacted by Tami Halle, who will help take inventory of the trees in your plot and assess trimming needs. Once that assessment is complete, we'll request estimates from several tree service companies to determine the cost of the work.

Each gardener will be responsible for covering the cost associated with trimming the trees in their plot. If you prefer, you may

arrange for trimming independently, provided it complies with our operating guidelines. You can review the operating guidelines [here](#).

This coordinated approach helps reduce costs and address overgrown trees more efficiently, promoting a safe, healthy growing environment for everyone.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation. If you have any questions or need assistance, please reach out.

