

*Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office*



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Galveston County gardeners are fortunate to have a climate that is favorable for growing so many different kinds of fruit trees that you can have something wonderful, fresh, and packed full of flavor added to the fruit bowl on your table throughout the year. Pictured is Carnavale, a new apple variety for the Gulf Coast growing region. The fruit is yellow, the flesh is crisp and the flavor is complex—sweet with a tart overtone.

If you want fresh fruit right off the tree, every month of the year, you can do it. Galveston County gardeners are fortunate to have a climate that is favorable for growing so many different kinds of fruit trees that you can have something wonderful, fresh, and packed full of flavor in the fruit bowl on your table throughout the year.

Fruit trees—well adapted for our climate—will be available at the annual Master Gardener Fruit Tree Seminar & Sale on Saturday, February 2, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Heidi Sheesley of TreeSearch Farms will provide a seminar on

Fruit and Citrus Varieties for the Gulf Coast from 8:00 to 8:55 a.m., highlighting the star varieties. The plant sale will start at 9:00 a.m.

The seminar and sale will be conducted at Carbide Park's Wayne Johnson Community Center, located in Carbide Park at 4102 Main St. in La Marque. A printable copy of a map and directions are available on my website provided in this column or by contacting the County AgriLife Extension Office (281-534-3413, Ext. 1-2).

The fruit trees at the sale can offer you an endless banquet

of gorgeous, luscious fruit throughout the year.

**SPRING FLAVOR:** Spring rewards the gardener with juicy harvests of blackberries and ends with a cornucopia of peaches and plums.

Starting in May and going through June, our peaches come in, full and ripe. Several varieties of peaches will be available. Tropic Snow is an exceptionally sweet peach and still remains my favorite variety.

If you wish to extend the peach harvesting season, you should definitely consider

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multi-grafted peaches where more than one variety is grafted onto a single root-stock. These specimens are perfect for smaller gardens where a variety of flavors and an extended harvest season are desired. A selection of plum cultivars will be available, including Beauty, Gulf Beauty, and Gulf Rose and Scarlet Rose.

**SUMMER ABUNDANCE:** The Anna and Dorset apples signal the arrival of summer with crisp, juicy harvests right from the tree followed by flavorful figs, including Celeste and Banana.

As with peaches, several multi-grafted apples will be available where more than one variety is grafted onto a single root-stock.

Experienced home fruit growers know that the Master Gardener Fruit Tree Sale is an opportunity to obtain hard-to-find varieties and even new varieties. A new-to-the-market apple variety known as Carnavale will be offered. Carnavale is yellow, but with pronounced rosy-red blush overtones. The fruit is firm, the flesh is crisp and the flavor is complex—sweet with a tart overtone. A heavy bearer of uniform rounded fruits. It is originally from Brazil, early to flower, just slightly later than Anna, with a similar ripening date.

Pear trees then bring forth their golden harvests. Do they ever! Last year, folks had so many pears on their trees, the limbs would bend to the ground or break from the abundance. Pear varieties available this year include Acres Home, Southern King and Tennesoi.

**AUTUMN PLENTY:** Just when you think you've been buried in fruit, here come the persimmons to round out the year-round fruit, just before the citrus trees begin to go into production. We will have four varieties of persimmons will be available.

**WINTER CHEER:** In the late fall and early winter months, citrus fruit just

bursts from our Gulf Coast trees. Numerous types of citrus are included in this year's sale, including oranges, mandarins, satsumas, limes, kumquats, grapefruits, lemons.

**FILL-IN-THE-VOIDS:** We will also have a wide selection of other fruits including blueberries, grapes, jujubes, papayas and pomegranates. Several varieties of avocados will be available also.

The Fruit Tree Sale & Seminar is sponsored by Galveston County's Master Gardener volunteers. Of course, dozens of Master Gardeners will be on hand to help you select your fruit trees and will tell you everything you need to know about planting, pruning, fertilizing and caring for your fruit trees.

Proceeds from the sale of the plants are used to develop and maintain the Horticulture Demonstration Gardens located in Carbide Park which the public is invited to enjoy and learn from year-round. For more information, visit the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park at 4102-B Main St., La Marque or call 281-534-3413, Ext. 1-2.

