

Wild Pecan Tree *Carya illinoensis*

Plant Type: Native Nut Tree
Sun Exposure: Sun, Part Sun
Season of Interest: Summer, Fall
Bloom Time: Spring
Bloom Color: Yellow Catkins
Height: 70 to 100 ft.
Width: 40 to 75 ft.
Spacing: 75 ft.
Water Needs: Average
Maintenance: Prune suckers
Soil Type: Clay, Loam, Sandy
Soil pH: Acidic, Neutral, Alkaline
Soil Drainage: Well drained
Pests: Pecan weevils
Diseases: Leaf spot, Scab
Wildlife: Birds, Bees, Butterflies, Small mammals



Description: Growing your own pecans is an attractive idea if you have plenty of space—not just for one tree but for two or even three because pecan trees require cross-pollination from other pecan trees to produce the best possible crop. The Pecan Tree is the largest species of the hickory tree family. They feature massive trunks and wide-spreading oval or rounded crowns. They begin to bear nuts in 6–8 years, eventually producing an average of 70–150 pounds of nuts per tree per year, and the crops of sweet nuts will continue abundantly for up to 400 years. They grow at a medium rate, with height increases of 12–24 inches per year. These trees are prized in the woodworking world for their beautiful grain. The nuts are favored by squirrels, deer, raccoons, foxes, wild turkeys, ducks, geese, crows, blue jays and many other animals. For more information see: plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/carya-illinoensis.



Care and Growing Tips: Consistent water and fertilization are the two most important aspects of pecan tree care to make sure your pecan tree not only grows at the expected rate but also produces a large crop of nuts. Pecan trees need full sun with at least 6 to 8 hours of sunlight per day but can tolerate some shade until they are 50 to 80 years old. While pecan trees can grow in a wide range of soils, they produce best in sandy loam or clay soil. Just as important as the right soil texture is that the roots have ample room to grow. The roots of pecan trees, which mostly grow in the topmost 6 to 18 inches of soil, spread twice as far as the branches.

Sufficient water is very important for pecan trees during the establishment of a young tree over the first three years. A tree of nut-bearing age rarely requires supplemental watering. The ideal climate for pecans is hot and humid. For each inch of trunk diameter, feed your pecan tree a complete fertilizer (such as 10-10-10) up to a maximum of 25 pounds per tree. In addition, in the spring around the time of bud break, apply one pound of ammonium nitrate per inch of trunk diameter, up to a maximum of eight pounds per tree. Zinc is also an important micro-nutrient for pecan trees.