



Linking Edible Arizona Forests

Growing Edible Arizona Forests, An Illustrated Guide

Excerpt from *leafnetworkaz.org*

Edible Tree Guide

CHOOSE Planting Site and Design

- Water Supplies, Introduction

Water Supplies, Introduction

You cannot grow trees without water. Many native edible trees—if properly placed—can grow on rainfall alone once they are established in suitable locations. However, nonnative fruit and nut trees will require consistent, deep watering to produce quality fruit. Use a combination of native and nonnative edible trees to balance water demands and give you a diverse harvest. At the same time, use a diversity of water supplies to increase the resilience of your edible trees.

Rain falls freely on your site (the term “rain” is used here to include rainfall, snowfall, sleet and other forms of precipitation). Other potential water supplies for your site include graywater, air conditioning condensate and stormwater. Stormwater is rainfall runoff that has been collected in stormwater basins or flows into streets and is often ultimately discharged to stormdrains and streambeds.

Once you have fully used free and available on-site water supplies and stormwater, potable water (drinking water) may be needed to supplement irrigation. Public and private water providers deliver potable water that originates as groundwater, surface water or imported canal water. Since off-site water sources could be subject to drought restrictions and lowering groundwater levels, make good use of on-site resources first so you have multiple water sources for your trees:

- **Harvest water passively** to capture and infiltrate water directly into the soil.
- **Harvest water in rainwater tanks** to store supplemental rainwater beyond the rainy season.
- **Harvest graywater** to provide a reliable supply of water year round.
- **Harvest air conditioning condensate** to help support edible trees, especially during hot, humid months.
- **Harvest stormwater** to help support trees located in and near areas where stormwater is accumulated in large basins, streets and other areas where rainwater runoff is concentrated.

Strategies to use on-site resources and stormwater are discussed in corresponding sections at leafnetworkaz.org.

