



## Growing Edible Arizona Forests, An Illustrated Guide

Excerpt from [leafnetworkaz.org](http://leafnetworkaz.org)

### Edible Tree Guide

#### HARVEST the Abundance

- Prepare and Preserve

### Prepare and Preserve

Enjoying the produce from your trees is the fun part! Native mesquite, palo verde and ironwood provide flowers, pods and/or seeds. These may be eaten fresh, sprouted, roasted, cooked in savory dishes, or dried and ground into flour for baked goods. Spring ironwood blossoms may be eaten fresh, sprinkled on salads, used as garnish or candied. In early summer, native tree beans are picked in the green stage, parboiled, removed from the pod and served cool or warm with your choice of seasoning. In mid- to late summer, mature and dry seeds are easily split out of pods. Freeze them briefly to reduce common bruchid beetle activity, and store them completely dry. Mature ironwood seeds can be soaked for a period before sprouting. Once sprouted, they can be seasoned or roasted.

The sweet fruits of citrus can be eaten fresh, juiced, zested, dried, or made into marmalades, butters or candied rinds. Stone fruits and berries can be eaten fresh; made into jams, jellies and chutneys; cooked into delicious pies and breads; frozen into sorbets and made into many other delectable dishes. Fruit such as dates can be dried, made into date syrup or fermented into vinegar. Nuts from pecan, almond, and walnut trees are rich in essential oils and protein and can be processed for eating and/or pressed for their oils. Olives can be pressed for their oil or cured, dry salted or otherwise seasoned to eat in the long tradition of their European origins.



University of Arizona olive harvest pressed into oil and bottled. Each five-gallon bucket of harvested olives yields about 20 ounces of olive oil.



Peaches canned for later eating and use in baked goods.



Ironwood seeds soaked and sprouted for use in salads.