REEMS CREEK NURSERY

Hazelnuts
Corylus

A Garden Guide



Humans have been utilizing Hazelnuts for thousands of years. They have been used for food (the nuts are tasty and nutritious), the branches can easily be cut to create things, they have a long cultural history, as they have featured in numerous tales and legends. There are different types of Hazelnuts. The European Hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*) is prized for having large, sweet, tasty nuts. The American Hazelnut (*Corylus americana*) has small nuts with disease resistance to Eastern Filbert Blight (EFB). In WNC, we can grow American Hazelnuts, select European Hazelnuts with EFB resistance, and American/European hybrids. Currently, Turkey is the top global producer of Hazelnuts. In the US, Oregon is the top producing state. In addition to feeding people, hazelnuts are used by artisanal pig farmers.



Siting: Hazelnuts will be most productive in 6-8 hours of direct sunlight per day, but can tolerate lower levels of light. They need moist, well-draining soil. With their shallow roots (85% of roots are in the top 2' of soil), they do not do well with boggy or overly dry soils. Hazelnuts planted in a sunny clearing may also have fewer issues with animal predation. Pollination can be tricky with Hazelnuts, the more plants you have, and the more types you have, the better chances you have for bountiful production. Hazelnuts are wind pollinated.

Soil and Planting: Hazelnuts prefer a pH of 6.0-6.5, with moist, well-draining soil. A good soil test will tell you exactly what to add, but usually in our soils, Hazelnuts will need at least 1/3rd soil conditioner, up to 1/3rd rich composts, and some handfuls of

lime mixed with our native clay. Applying mycorrhizae directly to the roots, just prior to planting, will improve tree resilience. Espoma's Bio-tone® is an excellent starter fertilizer, containing both nutrients and mycorrhizae. Dig a hole 2-3x as wide as the pot, only as deep as the pot, plant the tree in the soil at the same height as it was in the pot or a little bit higher. Apply 2-3" of hardwood mulch to the root zone, do not let it touch the trunk or any woody roots that might be visible.

Fertilizing: Hazelnuts have high nutritional needs, especially regarding Nitrogen and Potassium. An excellent way to meet their needs is by applying Composted Chicken Manure, such as Harmony and Symphony organic fertilizers. Other organic options include Bat Guano, Blood Meal, Cottonseed Meal, and Soybean Meal for Nitrogen; Greensand and Kelp for Potassium. Apply organic fertilizers when foliage first appears in spring, in June, and in July.

Watering: Hazelnuts have shallow root systems. Slowly, deeply, and once weekly during the first growing season. Supplemental water will be needed during dry periods - drought can compromise nut production. Less water will be needed during rainy periods. Remember, too much or too little water can cause significant health issues.



Pruning: They may be left unpruned, or kept in hedgerows, as shrubs. European Hazelnuts can be pruned to a tree shape, with 5 or 6 major branches, and the lowest branches removed. Whatever shape you choose, they can handle heavy pruning. Pruned limbs can be used to create a variety of objects, such as wattle fences and baskets.

Organic Management: Aside from Eastern Filbert Blight, Hazelnuts in WNC do not usually suffer from any major disease or pest. Horticultural Oil for bugs will cover most bases. For managing Japanese Beetles: remove them daily and drown in a bucket of soapy water. You can also hang Japanese Beetle trap bags AS FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE from your Hazelnuts. We also carry Milky Spore, a biopesticide, that can damage and kill Japanese Beetles while they are still in their underground grub stage.

Wildlife: Wildlife can be the biggest challenge to growing Hazelnuts. Rodents love hazelnuts, as do many birds. Deer may also find them tasty. The easiest method is to plant more Hazelnuts than you'll ever need - after all, native Hazelnuts are important food sources for our native birds. For deterrence, properly secured bird netting can help. Planting your Hazelnuts in a sunny clearing can help attract birds of prey, to

assist with pest control. Giant 8-10’ fencing is usually the best method to deal with heavy deer pressure.



Harvesting: Hazelnuts start producing when they are around 4 years old, but don’t have significant production until around 7 years. The nuts are ripe and ready to harvest when the jacket-like husk is brown and easy to dislodge, which happens before they naturally fall from the plants. As soon as they are at this stage, or even a little before, wildlife will suddenly become interested in your Hazelnuts. You can hand pick off the plants. You can also lay a tarp down underneath your Hazelnuts and shake the trees. Discard any nuts that are empty, have holes in the shells, or otherwise look damaged.



Processing: Soak the nuts in water and discard any that float to the top. Start drying them within 24 hours of harvesting (the goal is to get to 6% moisture). They can be dried on screens, in a warm dry space. Stir or move them continually, and within 2-4 weeks they’ll usually be dried. You can also use a food dryer set at 95-105°F for 2-4 days. Removing the shells prior to drying will decrease the drying time. Thoroughly dried hazelnut meat will be firm and creamy colored. Use shelled nuts within a few weeks, or keep them in the freezer for up to a year. Properly dried hazelnuts with their shells still intact can last for several months to a year at room temperature, and up to 2 years in a freezer.

Hazelnuts can be eaten as a healthy snack (dry, roasted, salted, etc.), turned into homemade hazelnut butter or hazelnut milk, used in desserts and baked goods, converted into gourmet roasted hazelnut oil, and added to ice cream or gelato. Hazelnut famously pairs well with chocolate.



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