



*J & K Llamas*

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## *All About Cherries*

### **Pollination**

Most sweet cherries are not self-fertile. If you live in a densely populated area, purchase of a pollinator may not be necessary, as long as another cherry is planted within a mile. Outlying areas or developing areas, however, usually require a second compatible tree be planted. Keep in mind that the closer a pollinator is to your tree, the more fruit you should have set. While we do not advocate peeking over your neighbors' fences, a drive through the neighborhood may help you to decide what is best for your particular yard.

Sour cherries are self-fruitful and can be used as pollinators for sweet cherries.

### **Pests and Diseases**

Cherries are subject to a long list of diseases and pests which are easily combated with planning and knowledge. Possibly the most serious disease cherries face is bacterial gummosis, which causes long, narrow, damp-looking gummy patches on the trunk or branches. This can be controlled by pruning; be sure to sterilize your pruning implement after each cut or use by dipping it into a 10:1 bleach and water solution. Without proper sterilization,

you will pass the disease to other parts of your tree. Bacterial gummosis can also be prevented by following a regular fertilization and watering schedule.

Dormant Oil Sprays applied in January or February before the buds swell, when the tree is dormant, helps to control fruit-spoiling insects by killing overwintering insect eggs. Watch for aphids in early spring and pear psylla, a black leaf-eating slug  $\frac{1}{4}$ " long, around the 4th of July. Insect control can be achieved by spraying with Safer™ Yard & Garden Insect Killer, Dr. Earth™ Fruit & Vegetable Killer or BioGreen™. Read the label directions carefully and thoroughly before applying these or any other pesticides.

Birds also pose a challenging problem. Bird netting, sold in pre-cut packages, can be one of your best preventative measures. Plastic owls and snakes, if moved two to three times a week, may also deter these fruit-eating pests.

### **Pruning and Thinning**

Cherries need no thinning and little pruning after the first two seasons of growth. Train young trees to wide crotches and give sweet cherries space to spread.

## Harvesting and Storage

Cherries are picked when fully ripe, usually with stems on the fruit. They keep much better that way. If you plan to use fruit for canning or other processing, strip cherries from trees without the stems. This method is much easier and faster, but messy.

Due to the uncertainty of wholesale grower stock, trucking, and weather, all varieties will not be available at all times. Although we do have the ability to special order some stock, we make no guarantee of its arrival and cheerfully encourage alternate selections

## Available Varieties

### Early Season

**Black Republican:** Medium, round fruit with purplish black, tender, crisp flesh that has good, semisweet flavor. Pollinate with Van, Stella or a sour cherry.

**Black Tartarian:** Fruit is smaller than Bing, is bright purplish black, thick and sweet/tart. This variety softens quickly when picked. Pollinate with Bing, Royal Ann, Stella or sour cherry.

**Mona:** Is a replacement for the Black Tartarian and possesses the same qualities. It is less tart than the Black Tartarian. Is a great pollinator for Bing and Royal Ann.

**Royal Ann:** A large amber cherry with blushed cheeks. Tends to be sweet with a touch of tart flavor. Great for eating, canning, preserves and

baking. Ripens in early June. Pollinate with Black Tartarian, and Van.

**Utah Giant:** A large, flavorful fruit with dark red skin. Flesh is softer than a Bing and has a partially freestone pit. Great for canning. Has a high disease resistance. Ripens in late May/early June. Must be planted with at least two other cherry trees.

### Mid Season

**Bing:** Large, heart shaped with dark red skin, fleshy fruit have a sweet flavor. Great for eating, canning and preserves. Ripens in mid-June. Pollinate with a Black Tartarian, Van, and Stella.

**Stella:** Medium, heart shaped with dark red skin, fleshy fruit has a sweet flavor. Great for eating, canning and preserves. Stella is a vigorous producer and very cold hardy. Ripens in early to mid-June. This is a self-fruitful tree and great to use as a pollinator for other cherry trees.

**Van:** Large, heart shaped with black skin, fleshy fruit have a sweet flavor. Is a heavy bearer of fruit. Great for eating, canning, preserves and baking. Ripens in early June. Is cold hardy and the skin resists cracking. Pollinate with a Bing, Royal Ann, Black Tartarian, and Stella

### Late Season

**Montmorency:** SOUR!! Large, bright red fruit with firm, yellow flesh. This is a hardy and disease resistant tree that produces heavy crops. The fruits are great for canning and pies! Ripens in July. Pollinate with Bing or Royal Ann.