

THE AVOCADO TREE

This large evergreen tree originated in Southern Mexico but is now cultivated worldwide. It sheds leaves in early spring but is essentially evergreen. Grafted plants produce fruit within a few years but trees grown from seed take from 8 to 20 years.

Flowers appear in January to March. The flowers have male and female parts which are either receptive to pollen in the morning and shed pollen in the afternoon (type A) or are receptive to pollen in the afternoon and shed pollen in the morning (type B). Trees bear fruit on their own but production is improved with cross pollination between types A and B.

Avocado trees can grow in shade but will only produce fruit in the full sun. They require a wind-break from sea air and grow best in sandy loam. They do not grow well in poorly drained soil but can tolerate a range of pH's.

Do not prune the trees. Branches exposed to direct sunlight are susceptible to sunburn and will die. If any branches have been exposed, protect them by whitewashing.

Cultivars

- **Fuerte** - A tall open tree with large thin skinned fruit harvested from May to November. Bears in alternate years.
- **Hass** - A Medium sized open shaped tree. Medium sized fruit with a thick purple skin harvested between August and December.
- **Pinkerton** - A dense, productive tree. Fruit is variable in size, with a thick green skin, harvested in July.
- **Ryan** - A medium sized, upright tree with medium sized oblong fruit with a purple skin. Harvested from November to February.
- **Edranol** - A medium sized tree with pear shaped fruit from May to September.