

Around the Homestead Podcast
Getting Started With a Home Orchard
Transcript

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00:00:13,790 --> 00:00:20,660

Welcome to around the Homestead podcast, where we share information on topics from gardens to goats,

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our aim is to provide small farmers and landowners valuable education on projects that may arise around the homestead.

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Whether you have been on the homestead all your life or you had just began the farm lifestyle,

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we hope you garner helpful tips to make your lifestyle most rewarding.

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00:00:39,440 --> 00:00:47,380

Now here are our host Brad McGinley and Shaun Rhodes. All right.

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00:00:47,380 --> 00:00:51,550

Hello, and welcome to the next episode of Around the Homestead podcast,

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I'm your co-host Brad McGinley County extension agent in Grant County and my co-host Shaun Rhodes is over in Scott County today.

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Today, we're going to be talking a little bit about some home fruit production and there nothing better than a homegrown apple.

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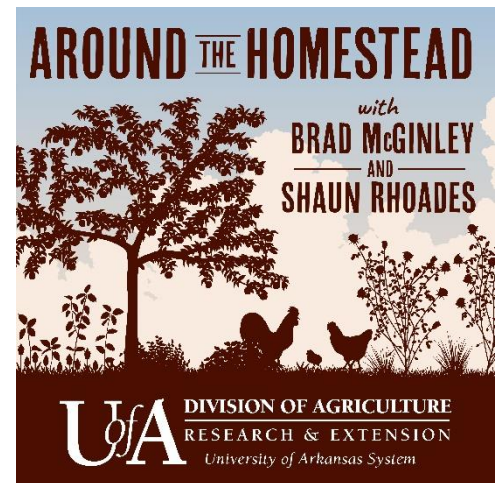
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I remember growing up as a kid, picking them apples off an apple tree pulling your pocket, knife out and cutting it up and eating it.

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00:01:13,750 --> 00:01:17,710

Though in the core to the horses, there's nothing better than that, Shawn. No, no.



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00:01:17,710 --> 00:01:28,000

We used to go by on a tractor, go into the field to work all day and come out and find a tree and grab a peach or apple off of it.

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00:01:28,000 --> 00:01:33,020

That was the best you ever had, Brad? Oh yeah, even the Green ones green apples is good on them.

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00:01:33,020 --> 00:01:44,230

Yeah, trees do so. But but there are a lot, a lot of things to talk about when we talk about growing fruit, you know, around the homestead.

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And one of the main considerations I think that you have to think about is the weather and climate limitations that we do have in Arkansas.

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You know, we we're kind of prone to late frosts.

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00:01:56,680 --> 00:02:08,140

And so we kind of have to think about those things as we, you know, when we plan what we want to grow in Arkansas.

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You know, there are some crops that are a little bit more susceptible to freeze and cold injury,

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you know, because you think about what's blooming around that time of year.

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00:02:21,070 --> 00:02:30,400

And so we have to think about that and be be mindful about that as we select what crops we want to grow and the different varieties you want to grow,

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00:02:30,400 --> 00:02:45,430

Shaun. Oh, yeah. Yeah, that that is definitely one of the biggest detriments to the yearly fruit crop with trees, especially is frost damage.

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00:02:45,430 --> 00:02:53,830

And there are some of them as we get into this weekend and just briefly that are more susceptible to that,

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00:02:53,830 --> 00:02:58,300

that actually bloom earlier than the other some others.

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00:02:58,300 --> 00:03:07,150

Yeah. You know, the other consideration that I think that we have to think about is that I always tell

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00:03:07,150 --> 00:03:11,950

people that when when they come in the office and they want to plant some fruit trees or,

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00:03:11,950 --> 00:03:22,270

you know, in their yard or around their homestead is the level of management that it really takes to grow fruit successfully.

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00:03:22,270 --> 00:03:26,140

So let's Shaun, let's just talk through some of these.

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00:03:26,140 --> 00:03:34,030

Let's start with the tree fruits, and let's just talk through some of these different species and what route,

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00:03:34,030 --> 00:03:38,320

what's required for their level of management.

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00:03:38,320 --> 00:03:45,860

So, you know, one of the first ones I want, the main ones I really won't talk about is peaches and nectarines.

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You know, we have people come in here and they'll sit down with me and my grandpa.

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00:03:50,540 --> 00:03:55,620

Will I remember he used to grow the best peaches in the world and I want to do that, you know?

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Oh yeah. And. And it can be done, but Peaches are one of the most high maintenance crops you're going to grow around the homestead, Shaun.

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00:04:08,200 --> 00:04:19,450

Yeah, that's true, and it's one of many more. It seems like it's pretty much if they are not managed intensely, they're not going to make,

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00:04:19,450 --> 00:04:23,260

you know, it's not that they're not just going to make a little.

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00:04:23,260 --> 00:04:33,080

Usually you're just not going to get nothing. And I tried to deter people from trying to grow them because.

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If you really don't know a lot about them and how to handle it, you're going to be disappointed.

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In the long run with how it goes.

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00:04:43,490 --> 00:04:50,570

Yeah, you really are going to be disappointed and especially, you know, we have a lot of people that want to grow stuff organically,

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00:04:50,570 --> 00:04:58,760

and it's almost next to impossible, if not impossible, grow organic peaches in Arkansas.

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00:04:58,760 --> 00:05:02,300

It's just not going to happen. Pretty much.

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00:05:02,300 --> 00:05:12,140

If you do get fruit said you might, you better be willing to spray ever 10 to 14 days regularly on a regular schedule.

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00:05:12,140 --> 00:05:23,170

If you're going to get fruit out of a peach tree. At least that's what I usually recommend to my clientele come in the office, Shaun.

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00:05:23,170 --> 00:05:31,290

Yeah, and that's just the years. That's a frost. Don't get you blooms, which is, you know what to put the three out of five?

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Yeah, and that's that's what we don't want.

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This is one we talked about earlier that that that you do have to think about, you know, that is subject to these late freezes and frosts.

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And, you know, we used to say, you know, or average freeze or frost date was this or such and such and April or

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But anymore it seems the weather pattern there. You know, the normal is there is no norm for the weather pattern anymore.

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You know, we're liable to get a light free late freeze in early May.

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00:06:03,780 --> 00:06:09,390

You know, so just hard to tell. Yeah, sure.

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00:06:09,390 --> 00:06:15,780

Is the next one kind of the next couple that are on my list that I think people,

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00:06:15,780 --> 00:06:23,280

if they want to grow tree fruits can be successful with are apples and pears.

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00:06:23,280 --> 00:06:33,360

I think that especially if you choose the right varieties as you're planting those I think most people can be,

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00:06:33,360 --> 00:06:38,610

most homeowners can be fairly successful with both of those crops Shaun.

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00:06:38,610 --> 00:06:45,740

Yes. And I don't know. I have heard I do have some.

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00:06:45,740 --> 00:06:49,140

Issues, and it's not foolproof, but.

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00:06:49,140 --> 00:07:06,210

They tend to bloom later if you select the correct ones, they they they end to be more resistant to some diseases that will destroy the fruit.

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They do have some insect issues, but a lot of times I can overcome those as well and make you some make you some nice apples.

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00:07:16,260 --> 00:07:23,520

Yeah, I think so. And I think one of the main issues that we fight on both of those is fireblight.

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And you know, we see that a lot, especially in pears in the spring or early summer.

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Basically, you know its name because it just looks like somebody took a torch to the end of that.

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Then, you know? And that limb? And so that's something we do see a lot.

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You know, it's not going to kill to completely kill the tree if you if you get it under control.

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But it's something you need to be be aware of, certainly.

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So but I think you can be successful with those, you know, the next next couple that are on my list is ones that we don't really talk a lot about.

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I don't have a lot of requests for information on these.

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You know, a lot of times plums, apricots, cherries, those are all ones that are a moderate level of management.

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But some of those again, you know, your chance of success is is is pretty low in Arkansas and some of those, Shaun.

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Yeah. You know, we're.

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00:08:26,860 --> 00:08:39,940

Oh, when I was a kid, maybe two or three times, I was actually seeing some apricot grown on a tree in my grandparents house, but not very often.

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And cherries the same way they were really a tree the year they made.

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00:08:45,760 --> 00:08:51,220

But it might have been one out of 10 plums used to make quite a bit.

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00:08:51,220 --> 00:08:57,610

And you can do all right with plums if you get the right trees that don't bloom them so early.

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One of the biggest things I see with them is is the early blooming and frost the real susceptible to frost.

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Because of that, there's a disease called Black knot that I see a lot in plums anymore that seem to.

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00:09:16,480 --> 00:09:25,170

At a problem level, you know, actually kills the trees, but cherries and apricot.

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00:09:25,170 --> 00:09:29,330

Yeah, you know, most people finally figured out it's not worth it.

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00:09:29,330 --> 00:09:33,330

Yeah, yeah, we had a plum tree. My parents said it's one tree was growing up in it.

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It was, you know, it made plums.

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00:09:35,130 --> 00:09:42,270

Quite often it did have some black knot in it and it looks like a black knight on the side of the tree, basically, you know,

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00:09:42,270 --> 00:09:51,900

and eventually that Black knot did take out the tree, basically, you know, but but the years that we had it, we were fairly successful with it.

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00:09:51,900 --> 00:09:55,830

Another one that that I think that that I don't know much about.

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00:09:55,830 --> 00:10:00,510

Maybe, you know more about Shaun is figs, figs.

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00:10:00,510 --> 00:10:08,310

You know, they are fairly low maintenance and you can have pretty good success with figs in Arkansas.

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00:10:08,310 --> 00:10:12,760

Yeah, it seems like again, it's kind of a.

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00:10:12,760 --> 00:10:21,020

Specialty type deal, and you're going to have to be very particular where you plant those seemed to me like an.

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00:10:21,020 --> 00:10:31,140

I have had some homeowners in the in in the town here where I'm at that that are successful with the figs and.

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You know, if you've never heard a lot of people's never actually seen or eat a raw fresh fig fruit.

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00:10:41,420 --> 00:10:50,240

And they're pretty they're really good. Yeah, I've not been completely honest, I've not had a lot of experience with those figs.

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I know that my my mother in law, she grows figs and she always makes strawberry fig jelly from the figs she grows.

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And that's really good. But you know, I've I've consulted with a lot of a lot of clientele and they seem to, you know, seem to do fairly well.

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00:11:07,850 --> 00:11:18,380

So one of the things that we were talking about, Shaun, all we were talking about, you know, each one of these tree fruits is that,

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00:11:18,380 --> 00:11:28,400

you know, when it comes to comes to going and getting a tree cultivars selection or variety selection is really important.

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00:11:28,400 --> 00:11:34,890

It's one of the most important things that we can do for fruit production.

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00:11:34,890 --> 00:11:46,030

Yes, it is, and you know. When we get into these fruit trees and things that are are grafted trees,

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00:11:46,030 --> 00:11:51,560

we've got to remember we have a variety and then we also have a root stock selection.

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00:11:51,560 --> 00:11:58,540

So you know, you've got two variables working there that you've got to line up to get what you need.

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00:11:58,540 --> 00:12:03,940

And everybody needs to remember that a lot of people don't realize the the bottom

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00:12:03,940 --> 00:12:08,680

part of that tree is totally different from the rest of it above the ground.

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00:12:08,680 --> 00:12:14,950

And so we'll talk about that rootstock to yeah,

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00:12:14,950 --> 00:12:26,350

and we might as well talk about it right now because that root stock really affects what size of tree you're going to have, you know?

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00:12:26,350 --> 00:12:39,910

Yes, that's the main thing, huh? Mm hmm. And besides the tree is important when it comes to things like pruning and spraying, you know?

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00:12:39,910 --> 00:12:46,660

You and I probably grew up when our, you know, our grandparents had apple trees that were 30 foot tall.

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00:12:46,660 --> 00:12:55,600

You know, they had the standard sized trees, you know, and you try to get up and prune that, you know,

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00:12:55,600 --> 00:13:04,990

or spray that that takes specialized equipment in a tractor and a, you know, whatever else to get up there to get to it.

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00:13:04,990 --> 00:13:18,430

Yeah, it's just it's not going to happen. But yes, so you need to know when you're ordering trees.

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00:13:18,430 --> 00:13:22,440

If their dwarf or semi-dwarf. You know,

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00:13:22,440 --> 00:13:28,050

it's been my recommendation pretty well to just recommend dwarf rootstock on

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00:13:28,050 --> 00:13:34,490

I about everything that people do because those trees will get plenty big,

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00:13:34,490 --> 00:13:42,970

you know? Yeah, yeah. And whatever you know, if we would, I would recommend that you look at a, you know,

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00:13:42,970 --> 00:13:52,080

a catalog, you know, and from a nursery or go online to a nursery web site.

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00:13:52,080 --> 00:14:00,270

And they will tell you, you know what? Those root stocks, how how big they will be if you're going to buy a dwarf tree, how big it was going to be.

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00:14:00,270 --> 00:14:07,410

And they'll even tell you, you know, once it's in full production, how much production you you're planning on getting from that size tree,

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00:14:07,410 --> 00:14:13,290

a dwarf tree or semi-dwarf or standard size tree didn't know what you want, but they'll tell you,

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00:14:13,290 --> 00:14:19,490

you know, the mature heart of those trees, how much production you're going to get from from all those trees.

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00:14:19,490 --> 00:14:26,130

So those are all good things that you need to think about as your planting trees.

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00:14:26,130 --> 00:14:31,620

You know, one thing we hadn't talked about when we talked, we hit those tree fruits.

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00:14:31,620 --> 00:14:37,250

But I really think and what I try to stress to to.

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00:14:37,250 --> 00:14:46,310

To homesteaders is really look hard at our small fruits because I think we can be pretty

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00:14:46,310 --> 00:14:52,400

successful with stuff like blueberries and blackberries and muscadines and fairly successful,

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00:14:52,400 --> 00:14:57,400

even strawberries in Arkansas. Oh, yes, yes, I believe so, too.

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00:14:57,400 --> 00:15:03,410

And if you're wanting fresh fruit, it's going to be your your best option.

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00:15:03,410 --> 00:15:10,820

Yeah. To to make sure you have some every year if you if you do some of these other other things,

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00:15:10,820 --> 00:15:15,770

a small fruit, as we call them, most of them are not necessarily on a tree.

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00:15:15,770 --> 00:15:20,510

Look, there they are fruit nonetheless. Yeah.

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00:15:20,510 --> 00:15:21,740

And really,

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Arkansas is known worldwide for blackberries just because we have one of the premier BlackBerry breeding programs at the University of Arkansas.

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00:15:35,000 --> 00:15:39,710

University of Arkansas Blackberries have grown all over the world.

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Dr. John Clark is the breeder fruit breeder up there at the university,

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00:15:44,300 --> 00:15:51,620

and he is well known and well respected for his BlackBerries that he has come up with over the years, Shaun

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00:15:51,620 --> 00:15:55,430

Oh, yeah, yeah, he's always told me, I think, what is it?

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00:15:55,430 --> 00:16:00,150

They're grown on every continent. Except Antarctica.

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00:16:00,150 --> 00:16:10,700

Maybe? Yeah. So basically, if you see a BlackBerry variety and it has an Indian name, Ouachita, Navajo.

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00:16:10,700 --> 00:16:17,900

All of those types of varieties that's in Arkansas developed BlackBerry.

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00:16:17,900 --> 00:16:24,890

And these aren't the blackberries that you probably grew up going and picking in as a kid.

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00:16:24,890 --> 00:16:30,410

You don't have to fight the chiggers, and you don't have to fight the thorns to get to these kind of blackberries,

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00:16:30,410 --> 00:16:35,720

and they're going to fill your bucket up a lot quicker than I was a little wild BlackBerry, Shaun.

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00:16:35,720 --> 00:16:42,090

Yeah, that's true. Most of those BlackBerry varieties that have been in the Newer,

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00:16:42,090 --> 00:16:48,050

BlackBerry varieties that have been developed, you know, there are thornless varieties.

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00:16:48,050 --> 00:16:52,340

And so they, you know, you don't have to fight the thorns,

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00:16:52,340 --> 00:16:59,240

and the fruit size is just incredible on some of those varieties you're talking about, you know, fruit as big as your thumb, you know?

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00:16:59,240 --> 00:17:06,350

So just keep that in mind because they have a lot of great varieties and they even have

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00:17:06,350 --> 00:17:13,550

some of the newer varieties that that are called primacane fruiting blackberries.

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Because blackberries usually fruit on the year, one year old wood the problem of converting blackberries, even fruit fruit on one year old wood.

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00:17:21,410 --> 00:17:26,960

So there's a lot of they've come a lot of ways with blackberries, and I think that's something you really should look at.

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00:17:26,960 --> 00:17:30,260

Consider looking at when you're talking about growing fruit.

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00:17:30,260 --> 00:17:37,580

The other one is blueberries that I think can be fairly successful with those blueberries.

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00:17:37,580 --> 00:17:40,250

The consideration is they are acid loving plants,

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00:17:40,250 --> 00:17:47,930

so they site selection and soil testing is going to be even more important for blueberry production, Shaun.

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00:17:47,930 --> 00:17:52,500

Yeah. Yes, they are going to.

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00:17:52,500 --> 00:18:02,700

They grow in a little bit different soil conditions than pretty much anything else, we try to grow in a garden or an orchard.

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00:18:02,700 --> 00:18:08,760

And so once you get past that, which is easy to do.

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00:18:08,760 --> 00:18:17,440

Blueberries are very popular. Everybody seems to do seems to want blueberries.

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00:18:17,440 --> 00:18:25,270

As far as harvesting my others, despite trying to pick myself with those things, I could take forever.

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00:18:25,270 --> 00:18:31,360

But yeah, anyway, that aside, most people really enjoy it and do enjoy the fruit,

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00:18:31,360 --> 00:18:39,850

and they're very healthy and is a good fruit, very versatile fruit that freezes well easily and can be used in things.

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00:18:39,850 --> 00:18:44,920

And so I understand why it is so popular.

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00:18:44,920 --> 00:18:49,840

But yeah, they can be grown. And the good thing about them is, I mean,

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00:18:49,840 --> 00:18:57,700

you can grow three or four or two or three plants and get a lot of blueberries and right there in the yard somewhere.

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00:18:57,700 --> 00:19:02,680

Yeah, not take up a lot of room. Sure. Yeah, that's that's a good point.

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00:19:02,680 --> 00:19:13,900

You could even, you know, a lot of people even incorporate the small fruits into their landscaping, you know, so that's even another consideration.

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00:19:13,900 --> 00:19:16,840

You know, when we talk about blueberries,

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00:19:16,840 --> 00:19:25,480

there are some variety considerations that we have to think about kind of broken down into three separate groups.

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00:19:25,480 --> 00:19:36,100

You have the northern highbush varieties that are typically grown in the northern part of the state and in further north southern highbush varieties.

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00:19:36,100 --> 00:19:42,400

You can grow them in the lower part of northern Arkansas, Arkansas through central Arkansas.

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00:19:42,400 --> 00:19:47,800

And the rabbiteye varieties, which you probably want to select if you're in far southern Arkansas, Shaun.

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00:19:47,800 --> 00:19:52,240

Yeah, that's that seems to be right.

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00:19:52,240 --> 00:19:57,270

And. Those lines aren't straight lines.

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00:19:57,270 --> 00:20:03,100

I have found and producers tell me that, you know.

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00:20:03,100 --> 00:20:10,720

They say you can't grow these here, but I'm doing it. You know, I think it's a badge of honor or something they're doing.

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00:20:10,720 --> 00:20:15,620

They say we can't do, but anyway, you do need to study that.

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00:20:15,620 --> 00:20:21,190

No, I mean, there could be a whole podcast. Yeah. Talking about blueberries.

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00:20:21,190 --> 00:20:24,700

Yeah. But so that is something you need to look into.

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00:20:24,700 --> 00:20:29,410

There are variety selection. Very important. Yeah. With the blueberries.

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00:20:29,410 --> 00:20:35,740

Yeah. You know, another small fruit crop that that I grew up on is muscidines.

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00:20:35,740 --> 00:20:44,260

And I mean, I grew up, you know, my grandparents, I grew up on muscadine jelly, basically, you know, they it.

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00:20:44,260 --> 00:20:52,540

You know, we never had a tame one what we call tame when ours were all wild in the mountains that we would go get ever fall.

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00:20:52,540 --> 00:20:58,560

Yeah, we pretty well. That was our that was pretty much our only fruit.

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00:20:58,560 --> 00:21:06,190

Mm hmm. That was put up around the homestead and used year round from frozen or jams and jellies.

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00:21:06,190 --> 00:21:08,940

We actually made a lot of pies. Hmm.

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00:21:08,940 --> 00:21:17,750

My great grandmother would make muscadine, two or three different types of mesquite empires was pretty well, the predominant way we used them.

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00:21:17,750 --> 00:21:23,770

Hmm. Well, you know, they're one of the probably the easiest ones to grow.

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00:21:23,770 --> 00:21:33,250

They have since they're native. You know, they have relatively few pests and problems that we have to try to get through.

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00:21:33,250 --> 00:21:38,710

And there's a lot of those tame varieties that have a lot of good varieties.

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00:21:38,710 --> 00:21:43,840

One thing you have to look at is they, you know, they do have male and female plants.

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00:21:43,840 --> 00:21:48,100

And so a lot of times I know you probably experiences and woods shaun.

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00:21:48,100 --> 00:21:53,620

You go out and you see a muscadine vine, but never has any muscadines on it.

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00:21:53,620 --> 00:21:57,850

Well, you know, because it's probably a male plant, you know?

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00:21:57,850 --> 00:22:05,680

And so it's going to ever have muscadines on it, so depending on what variety you select,

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00:22:05,680 --> 00:22:12,070

you have to have a certain number of male plants for a certain number of female plants you plant.

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00:22:12,070 --> 00:22:14,200

But they do have self fruitful varieties,

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00:22:14,200 --> 00:22:22,640

and I know I planted a few a couple of years ago that are self fruitful and you don't have to have a male and female plant.

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00:22:22,640 --> 00:22:29,630

So, but that's just another one you might want to consider. Really easy to grow.

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00:22:29,630 --> 00:22:33,670

One thing right on the muscadines, Brad.

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00:22:33,670 --> 00:22:43,750

The the commercially available ones that we're talking about, you don't have to plant a pollinator that's not going to fruit.

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00:22:43,750 --> 00:22:50,120

Nowadays, most of them are called soil fertile. Yeah. So they pollinate other plants and themselves.

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00:22:50,120 --> 00:22:56,150

Sure, they will produce for you. So you can you can get fruit off all your off, your all your vines.

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00:22:56,150 --> 00:23:01,300

Sure. Yeah. Yeah. So that's that's a good point in.

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00:23:01,300 --> 00:23:10,990

But yeah, they they they're easy to grow. It does require some pruning and some training does require a trellis because they are vine.

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00:23:10,990 --> 00:23:18,430

So it does kind of require some planning ahead and how you're going to grow them, but certainly one you can be successful with.

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00:23:18,430 --> 00:23:26,050

You know, strawberries is another one that if you want to grow a few strawberries in your yard, you can be successful with those.

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00:23:26,050 --> 00:23:32,620

We actually grow strawberries in our school garden and have been fairly successful with those actually really successful with those,

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00:23:32,620 --> 00:23:36,220

depending on the variety. Selection is again important.

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00:23:36,220 --> 00:23:46,270

They are one that are subject to frost and freeze damage because they are they are blooming during that time or we can have frost or freezes,

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00:23:46,270 --> 00:23:49,590

so it's something you might want to consider.

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00:23:49,590 --> 00:23:58,170

And the homeowners and the homeowner setting strawberries are treated, usually treated as a perennial crop,

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00:23:58,170 --> 00:24:02,400

so you can grow those, you know, keep those same plants year after year.

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00:24:02,400 --> 00:24:07,230

However, over time, if you have plants that are several years old,

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00:24:07,230 --> 00:24:13,710

you tend to build that start to build up some disease issues in those plants over the time they are subject.

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00:24:13,710 --> 00:24:16,500

You know, if we have a really, really wet spring,

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00:24:16,500 --> 00:24:24,390

they are subject to to some rot diseases on those berries because those berries are soft and tender and they're they

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00:24:24,390 --> 00:24:31,890

are subject to a few rot diseases that you need to think about in the way we treat them in our school garden.

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00:24:31,890 --> 00:24:35,580

And, you know, in commercial production, they're treated as an annual crop.

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00:24:35,580 --> 00:24:41,490

So we'll build plant strawberries usually around the first of October,

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00:24:41,490 --> 00:24:51,840

and we'll harvest those usually and you we'll put a cold frame on and we'll start harvesting them in late March and all the way through April one.

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00:24:51,840 --> 00:24:55,590

And then we'll put those plants out and start over in the next year.

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00:24:55,590 --> 00:25:02,160

But but it's one year if you want to be successful with, you know, you can be.

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00:25:02,160 --> 00:25:06,330

It is a little bit more high maintenance than, say, blueberries or blackbird Shuan.

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00:25:06,330 --> 00:25:12,300

Yeah, it is, especially if you're going to grow them as we call Matted Row.

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00:25:12,300 --> 00:25:20,910

Yeah, permanent type weed control is very intense and usually it involves the hands and a hoe.

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00:25:20,910 --> 00:25:24,540

And so it's something that can't get away from you.

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00:25:24,540 --> 00:25:27,810

Pretty easy. Yeah, for sure. For sure.

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00:25:27,810 --> 00:25:34,920

Well, let's talk a little bit about now that we've kind of worked through some of those different species and fruits that we can grow in Arkansas.

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00:25:34,920 --> 00:25:41,820

Let's talk a little bit about site selection and I think here locally.

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00:25:41,820 --> 00:25:50,760

One of the most important things that I think that we need to think about for site selection is drainage.

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00:25:50,760 --> 00:26:00,060

And so, you know, all these plants, you know, they like they like water, but they don't like wet feet.

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00:26:00,060 --> 00:26:05,370

So drainage is is key that that, you know,

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00:26:05,370 --> 00:26:14,850

if you're a good heavy rain that that water comes in and it drains off and it's going to have to drain off fairly quickly.

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00:26:14,850 --> 00:26:21,720

And one of the ways that we usually tell people to check the drainage is basically,

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00:26:21,720 --> 00:26:26,130

if you were to dig, you know, just a hole in your yard about three foot deep,

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00:26:26,130 --> 00:26:33,210

they just take a pair and just posthole diggers, dig a hole eight inches around three foot, they fill it with water.

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00:26:33,210 --> 00:26:42,030

If that hole drains in twenty four hours, pretty much all fruit crops can be grown in that location.

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00:26:42,030 --> 00:26:49,680

If it drains, if it takes about 36 hours or drained, we can grow apples and pears,

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00:26:49,680 --> 00:26:57,180

and probably even pecans we didn't really hit the pecans, but you can probably grow some pecans there.

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00:26:57,180 --> 00:27:02,610

And then if it doesn't drain in 40 48 hours, you still got standing.

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00:27:02,610 --> 00:27:09,090

Water in that hole is probably not a suitable site for fruit production, Shuan.

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00:27:09,090 --> 00:27:15,420

No, it's not. And it's it's just it's not going to work.

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00:27:15,420 --> 00:27:24,540

They're going to die. And they may struggle along for a year or two, but they're eventually not going to make it the they are in that wet ground.

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00:27:24,540 --> 00:27:38,910

Yeah, yeah. You know, another consideration is try to avoid planting these in frost pockets, especially stuff that's kind of susceptible to,

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00:27:38,910 --> 00:27:48,630

you know, susceptible to late freezes and frost like peaches, blueberries and those kinds of things.

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00:27:48,630 --> 00:27:50,730

You know, if you if you're in a frost pocket,

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00:27:50,730 --> 00:27:58,110

it basically if you're in a if you're in a valley where that cold air kind of settles down in the bottom of that valley and you're in a frost pocket,

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00:27:58,110 --> 00:28:02,050

you're going to be more susceptible to a late freeze or frost.

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00:28:02,050 --> 00:28:07,380

So just those are all just considerations that you might want to think about.

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00:28:07,380 --> 00:28:12,810

You want to again, we want to set our roads and in where we have good air movement around those plants.

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00:28:12,810 --> 00:28:20,040

And so just those are all considerations that we have to think about when we go to think about site selection.

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00:28:20,040 --> 00:28:25,860

And really, drainage is even more important than fertility, in my opinion.

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00:28:25,860 --> 00:28:33,700

So it's really important that drainage is right. So, you know, anytime we want to plant a new crop, Shaun,

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00:28:33,700 --> 00:28:40,220

we always want to recommend that we would take a soil test before we before we get started on that.

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00:28:40,220 --> 00:28:51,880

Yes, that's very important. And realistically, it's probably more important just to get an idea where we are on our pH.

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00:28:51,880 --> 00:28:56,390

Mm-Hmm. Especially, you know.

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00:28:56,390 --> 00:29:06,770

If we're talking about blueberries, it's it's the number one most important thing to do so that you know where you need to be with those.

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00:29:06,770 --> 00:29:18,200

And other than that, I think it's kind of like trees is the first year we need to be careful with our fertilization.

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00:29:18,200 --> 00:29:30,100

But you know, if, if, if areas well drained, I don't care what kind of soil it is, you can feed it enough and it's going to work.

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00:29:30,100 --> 00:29:35,240

More better learned, and it will be if it's not well drained and you think it's better, soil.

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00:29:35,240 --> 00:29:45,910

So yeah, you know, it's always best to go to that well drained area and no matter what kind of soil there is versus the wetter or soil.

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00:29:45,910 --> 00:29:50,680

Yeah, for sure. Yeah, those are all things and taking a soil test.

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00:29:50,680 --> 00:29:58,960

It doesn't take just a few minutes to get a soil sample down to your local county extension office, and the soil testing service is completely free.

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00:29:58,960 --> 00:30:00,880

We need about one pint of soil.

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00:30:00,880 --> 00:30:09,740

So just go around to your area that you're thinking about playing your fruit crop and take you four or five, you know, dozen sample sub samples around there.

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00:30:09,740 --> 00:30:16,990

Put that in a bucket mix all that together. So we get a representative sample of the whole area and then bring down to your office.

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00:30:16,990 --> 00:30:23,530

About one pint of soil. We'll send it off to the soil Lab usually takes two to three weeks to get results back.

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00:30:23,530 --> 00:30:29,290

So and that'll kind of give you that snapshot that Shaun was talking about specifically about soil pH,

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00:30:29,290 --> 00:30:37,360

because that's really important when we talk about blueberries to make sure that soil pH in the right range and really for all the fruit crops,

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00:30:37,360 --> 00:30:42,760

but blueberries more than any other because they just don't do very well and soils

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00:30:42,760 --> 00:30:47,710

that are that are hot the age and they just have a totally different requirement,

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00:30:47,710 --> 00:30:53,980

they require that acid soil. And so they're in the same family as azaleas, so they can't they take that acid soil.

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00:30:53,980 --> 00:31:00,130

So so they that's that's critically important with that as well.

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00:31:00,130 --> 00:31:04,360

So we've talked about site selection, we've talked about what we can grow.

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00:31:04,360 --> 00:31:12,450

So let's talk a little bit about choosing plants and how to how to get quality plants.

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00:31:12,450 --> 00:31:19,060

So I think getting a quality plant is always key no matter what we're talking about, fruits, we're talking about, you know,

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00:31:19,060 --> 00:31:27,040

home vegetable garden, butterfly garden, whatever we're talking about, getting quality plants is really key and important, Shaun.

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00:31:27,040 --> 00:31:31,180

And you know, you can get a lot more varieties.

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00:31:31,180 --> 00:31:35,230

If you think about it, you look at these bareroot fruit tree varieties.

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00:31:35,230 --> 00:31:43,030

There's a lot of those out there and you know, the variety selections, a lot, a lot broader if you think about some bare root options.

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00:31:43,030 --> 00:31:48,500

Yes, and it's usually quite a bit less expensive and.

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00:31:48,500 --> 00:31:55,610

In planting fruit trees, I try to recommend most of the time people to go to bareroot route just because of the expense,

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00:31:55,610 --> 00:32:01,460

and they seem to do just as well, not better than container trees.

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00:32:01,460 --> 00:32:05,280

I have people all the time. You probably run across this too.

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00:32:05,280 --> 00:32:12,300

They'll look. They'll see those big trees somewhere set out for sale.

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00:32:12,300 --> 00:32:17,370

You know, in those pots and they're blooming little bit there like man I can peaches

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00:32:17,370 --> 00:32:22,530

fruit next year? This year they're already there?

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00:32:22,530 --> 00:32:30,270

You know, maybe, maybe not because of stress and shock of moving those trees into the ground is usually pretty severe,

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00:32:30,270 --> 00:32:36,870

and they don't just do as good as you might think they will. And so my is a good option.

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00:32:36,870 --> 00:32:41,100

Plus, it'll seem to be less expensive and you can get what you want.

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00:32:41,100 --> 00:32:47,010

You don't have to just take what's there. Yeah, most of the time those will be mail order type deal.

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00:32:47,010 --> 00:32:49,770

Yeah. And they will be shipped to you.

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00:32:49,770 --> 00:32:56,670

Yeah, you have to be careful about going to the big box stores and seeing all those fruit trees they have set out there.

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00:32:56,670 --> 00:33:01,290

But there's just a variety that they have at those those stores.

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00:33:01,290 --> 00:33:05,970

Just because it's a varieties for sale here in Arkansas doesn't mean it's a variety that we would.

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00:33:05,970 --> 00:33:12,660

We would recommend that we grow in Arkansas. You know, most of the time when I look at them, I'm clueless at what it even is,

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00:33:12,660 --> 00:33:17,640

and I've never even heard of those varieties that you've seen most of the time.

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00:33:17,640 --> 00:33:23,160

Yeah, it's it's usually obscure stuff from I don't know where.

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00:33:23,160 --> 00:33:26,670

Yeah. So that's that's really important.

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00:33:26,670 --> 00:33:33,600

And there's a lot of great mail order catalogs, lot of great websites you can go to in really order some quality plants.

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00:33:33,600 --> 00:33:37,620

It might cost you a little bit in shipping, but in the long run,

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00:33:37,620 --> 00:33:46,230

you're going to be happier with the result by just ordering the right varieties and getting those quality plants shipped to you.

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00:33:46,230 --> 00:33:51,900

Plus, you can you can pretty much determine what time of the year you know you want those shipped.

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00:33:51,900 --> 00:33:59,580

Now one thing that we haven't talked about Shuan , you know, we had a previous podcast where we talked about planting trees in general,

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00:33:59,580 --> 00:34:08,730

you know, but the time of the year that we want to plant some of those, you know, that February March timeframe is a great time to plant fruit trees.

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00:34:08,730 --> 00:34:17,750

But if we're going to order mail order, we may have to be a little bit proactive and think about ordering those ahead of time.

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00:34:17,750 --> 00:34:26,630

Be honest with you, if you're going to plant containers, you need to be a little more proactive, many more from what I have found.

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00:34:26,630 --> 00:34:33,690

I had a gentleman just this week that was wanting to plant some trees and you know,

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00:34:33,690 --> 00:34:43,940

I asked them if they had actually tried to find any yet like we were talking about variety selection and came back a couple days.

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00:34:43,940 --> 00:34:56,000

And sure enough, you know, they were out already and were like, Know, if it didn't come a light freeze, they might get some in in February.

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00:34:56,000 --> 00:35:03,680

But so if you're planning on planting fruit trees and you want to have the ability

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00:35:03,680 --> 00:35:11,120

to pick what you want and be sure you plant what you think you to plant

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00:35:11,120 --> 00:35:21,350

I would advise. And in early fall, late summer, most of these nurseries, you know, most of them seem to be in Tennessee.

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00:35:21,350 --> 00:35:27,110

A lot of them that sell these fruit bareroot trees that will ship'em to you.

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00:35:27,110 --> 00:35:32,630

They will take your orders sometime in the summer when they start lifting trees,

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00:35:32,630 --> 00:35:38,000

and then you can have them shipped to you whenever you want, when they lift.

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00:35:38,000 --> 00:35:43,850

And that seems to be the best way to make sure you're going to get what you want when you want it.

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00:35:43,850 --> 00:35:53,210

Yeah, that's a good point. You know, one thing we didn't talk about Shuan, we talked about variety selection is pollination requirements.

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00:35:53,210 --> 00:35:55,010

Something like, you know, apples.

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00:35:55,010 --> 00:36:03,320

If you're going to plant an apple tree, you may have to consult with that nursery about, you know, if you're going to plant a certain tree,

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00:36:03,320 --> 00:36:10,820

you may have to have a pollinator tree in order for that apple to be pollinated at the correct time and for you to truly get fruit.

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00:36:10,820 --> 00:36:18,350

Yeah, I know I planted as an apple trees about three years ago and two or three years ago,

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00:36:18,350 --> 00:36:23,270

and and that was one of my considerations was I was really wanted in Arkansas Black Apple,

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00:36:23,270 --> 00:36:28,250

so I had to really look and consult with the nursery and a couple of different websites.

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00:36:28,250 --> 00:36:33,380

And I actually talked to a fellow county agent that's fairly knowledgeable about fruits,

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00:36:33,380 --> 00:36:41,180

about what variety should plant with an Arkansas black apple in order to get it pollinated the way it needs to be pollinated.

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00:36:41,180 --> 00:36:46,190

Yeah, exactly. So those are all things that you need to think about.

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00:36:46,190 --> 00:36:50,840

And as far as maintenance on fruit crops, you know, again,

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00:36:50,840 --> 00:37:01,340

there are a variety of insect and disease issues that that once you have that tree in the ground that you're going to have to think about,

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00:37:01,340 --> 00:37:08,680

you may want to consider getting on a regular spray schedule. Just a, you know, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

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00:37:08,680 --> 00:37:16,170

the old saying and and so just to prevent some of those those issues because they're going to arise if you have fruits or,

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00:37:16,170 --> 00:37:18,740

you know, specialty tree fruits.

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00:37:18,740 --> 00:37:30,140

There are a whole lot of diseases that we have that we could talk about and insect, especially on peaches, but something you need to think about.

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00:37:30,140 --> 00:37:34,190

Annual pruning maintenance is something you also need to consider.

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00:37:34,190 --> 00:37:44,960

Keep those trees pruned up so that you can get an adequate amount of sunlight down in there to those to those buds so they can grow those fruits.

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00:37:44,960 --> 00:37:52,580

So those are all maintenance considerations that you need to think about if you're going to plan on planting fruit trees, Shuan.

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00:37:52,580 --> 00:37:57,830

Yeah. And that's something that once you are doing that, you need to drill in there a little bit deeper.

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00:37:57,830 --> 00:38:01,700

And you know, we're not going to cover all of those things today.

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00:38:01,700 --> 00:38:09,080

But no, there's things you need to to research and do correctly.

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00:38:09,080 --> 00:38:14,090

Yeah. And that's where you know you need to call us or or go to our website.

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00:38:14,090 --> 00:38:20,840

And we have great publications for that and variety selection, too.

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00:38:20,840 --> 00:38:25,850

Brad, I would mention before we close, we need to make sure everybody goes.

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00:38:25,850 --> 00:38:35,450

We have great fact sheets that have Arkansas varieties listed and for each different fruit and small fruit.

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00:38:35,450 --> 00:38:47,330

Yeah, we do have some great fact sheets. Our website is uaex.edu, excuse me, uaex.uada.edu.

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00:38:47,330 --> 00:38:51,500

You can access those under the home and garden section.

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00:38:51,500 --> 00:38:58,820

There's all kinds of fact sheets and we actually give you recommendations on like Shaun said about variety selection.

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00:38:58,820 --> 00:39:03,440

There's some fact sheets on individual fruit crops far as you know, growing those.

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00:39:03,440 --> 00:39:05,720

So there's a lot of great information on our website,

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00:39:05,720 --> 00:39:12,440

so I would encourage you to find that looked at up and and it'll help you make an informed decision.

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00:39:12,440 --> 00:39:17,270

Contact your local extension agent. Reach out to Shaun or I. We can put you in touch with your local.

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00:39:17,270 --> 00:39:22,770

county extension agent, if you can't get hold of them, we'll be happy to help you in any way we possibly can.

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00:39:22,770 --> 00:39:28,590

We hope that you have enjoyed this episode of Around the Homestead podcast.

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00:39:28,590 --> 00:39:30,960

I know we walked through a lot of these fruit considerations,

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00:39:30,960 --> 00:39:37,080

and I hope we didn't discourage you from growing fruit because you be you can be successful with growing fruit in Arkansas,

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00:39:37,080 --> 00:39:42,330

but you do have to be mindful of your your selection of what fruit you want to grow.

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00:39:42,330 --> 00:39:47,250

But until next time, we'll see you around the homestead.

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00:39:47,250 --> 00:39:53,340

We hope you enjoy this episode of Around the Homestead podcast to learn more about today's topic.

352

00:39:53,340 --> 00:39:59,490

Be sure to visit our website at uaex.uada.edu

353

00:39:59,490 --> 00:41:20,809

Be sure to join us next time on around the Homestead podcast.