

GREEN MAMA'S ORGANIC GARDEN CENTER

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Plants

Starting this year Green Mama's will have a "Tree of the Month" and "Plant of the Month", each and every month. We'll have special pricing on each of our selections every month. Each selection will be an adaptive or native plant to North Texas, and will be selected so that you'll see the beauty and ease of caring these wonderful plants and trees.

Tree of the Month is Brown Turkey Fig.



Fig trees bear their sweet crop in late summer, and it is a reward worth the wait. Figs ripen when so much of the garden has stopped producing, after weeks of intense heat and drought. Growing your own fig tree is essential if this sweet, succulent fruit is one of your favorites. Fresh figs are best if eaten within a few days of harvest. Since they do not ship well and have a short shelf life, fresh figs are hard to find even at a local farmers market.

A fig tree, really a large bush, is easily incorporated into the southern garden where winter temperatures do not routinely fall below 10° F. The shrub itself is very attractive, with its large, coarse textured leaves

and delicate earthy fragrance as the fruit ripens. These characteristics make it a nice addition to any landscape.

All figs require is sunshine, water and a little fertilizer. Figs will grow in just about any soil conditions, except where soil is poorly drained and stays wet.

These are shallow-rooted plants which need a layer of mulch two to three inches deep covering the ground underneath them. The mulch not only helps maintain soil moisture and control weeds, but it also helps moderate soil temperatures, keeping soil cooler during the summer months and warmer in winter. And mulch is very important when winter temperatures drop below normal.

Figs can develop into a tree 20-30 feet tall in the Deep South. As general rule, however, it is easiest to grow them as a large shrub. Figs bear their main crop on the current season's growth. An early summer or breba crop of figs is borne on last year's growth, but these figs are often tough. The main crop of plump sweet figs ripens in late summer and is well worth the wait.

Maintaining the plant as a large shrub, about 8 to 10 feet tall, also keeps the figs within easy reach. When winters are mild, as they have been the last several years, figs should be pruned to maintain a manageable size shrub that will still yield a bountiful harvest. No special skills are needed to prune figs. Remove about one third to one half of the previous season's growth in early spring when the danger of frost has passed but before new growth begins.

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