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Will my 3 year Negronne Fig die to the ground @ 13 degrees?

Moderators: [Viron](#), [Marsha](#), [gkowen](#)

Page 1 of 1 [9 posts]

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Will my 3 year Negronne Fig die to the ground @ 13 degrees?

Author	Message
<p>jafarj</p> <p>Joined: Fri Feb 09, 2007 1:21 pm Posts: 185 Location: SW Washington</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Will my 3 year Negronne Fig die to the ground @ 13 degrees?</p>  <p>This is about how big it is. Of course all the leaves are gone now. Its on the South side of my one story red house in SE Vancouver, WA 98683</p>

I've read varying accounts of the hardiness of figs.

Sat Dec 13, 2008 9:55 am

[PROFILE](#)

plumfun



Joined: Sat Apr 07, 2007
11:28 pm
Posts: 270
Location: Willamette Valley
near Scio

Jafar,

If it dried its wood down nice and brown, I say you have a chance of no damage at all. If, on the other hand, it got watered past the end of July and failed to harden off properly, it may lose that particular stretch of wood.

I always tell people to stop watering figs and grapes at the end of July. Make 'em hurt! It is good for their wood. Makes it brown, hard, and cold-resistant.

You could do something similar to what I am doing to my baby Triplecrowns in 3 inch pots, still connected to the mother plant -- heaping piles of leaves or sawdust over them. You could heap stuff around the stem of your fig. You could also bend it over and cover it with a large trashcan. Or all the above!

I have 3 or 4 baby apple tree grafts that I will just dig up, cover with moist sawdust, and bring into the garage for a week or two. I don't want to lose those particular ones.

I have already dug some experimental leek bulbils and brought them in. I will put them pack out possibly end of January. These were just rooting on top of the ground and I had not put them in a proper row yet. I felt they would freeze a little too solid if left to the elements.

Nice picture, by the way! I like red. Is that to stimulate figs like red stimulates tomatoes?

Sat Dec 13, 2008 10:33 am

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jafarj



Joined: Fri Feb 09, 2007
1:21 pm
Posts: 185
Location: SW Washington

Thanks plumfan. I probably did some watering and definitely didn't keep rain off the roots. The tips probably aren't hardened completely. I generally expect winter temperatures to stay above 20 degrees.

I'll go out and see what I can do. Its hard to picture the limbs being flexible enough to bend 180 degrees while dormant. I may still have some bags of leaves I can pile around and tie or something. At least I'll be able to protect it from the sun and wind.

Its growing into a nice bushy tree. Thank you! It made 2 little delicious breba and 1 good main crop fig. That was with the young tree and crappy season this year so I'm hopeful that once its in full swing I'll regularly get 2 crops from it. I airlayered a couple of suckers from it too to see if it is any easier to get a decent looking gift size plant with less fuss.

I chose the red just because I like the color. My wife thought I was crazy but everyone seems real happy with the finished product. It certainly makes more of a contrast with my green landscaping. It didn't have much to do with the plants but wouldn't that be great if it made the figs ripen faster 😊

It is turning into a nice bushy tree. I

Sat Dec 13, 2008 11:23 am

[PROFILE](#)

Viron



Joined: Thu Jan 27, 2005 11:27 pm
Posts: 590
Location: Yamhill County, Oregon

Jafarj; the fig looks great... though I'd be a bit nervous about its roots so close to your foundation ... but we can save that for a latter discussion... I'd encircle mine, at that age, with wire "hog fencing" & "chicken wire" lined, then fill em up with dry leaves! Only problem, mice bedded down and began chewing during the winter. So whatever you do I wouldn't leave it covered *all winter*...

Also, so close to your house, with an "overhang," you might consider running an extension cord and 'clear' glass bulb, maybe 75 to 100 watts (depending on what your 'fixture' could handle) and allowing it to help off-set the cold..? It wouldn't do much if the tree were encased in leaves or barkdust though...

I wonder if wrapping it with some plumbing "heat tape" would work? The encased *wire with thermostat* used to wrap water pipes..? Doesn't seem it would get hot enough to damage the tree, even wrapped in (dry) leaves? But I'd get a bit worried if it were covered with sawdust..?

Not much time to plan or gather - it sounds like **Monday night** will be the killer - with an entire week below freezing - **Work fast!**

What's your USDA Zone? Find out: <http://www.landscapeusa.com/usda.asp> - looks like I'm Zone 6 -

Viron

Sat Dec 13, 2008 12:51 pm

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jafarj

Joined: Fri Feb 09, 2007
1:21 pm
Posts: 185
Location: SW Washington



I put up 4 squares of cattle panel and put a tall T-post next to the trunk and then draped in it thick plastic sheet mulch that has holes on the West side.

I didn't fill it with anything. My leaves aren't that dry.

Thanks for the responses. I'm not worried about the foundation. There have been discussions about that in the fig forum on Gardenweb. Besides, Negronne isn't an especially vigorous variety.

I would probably be worried about my espaliered plum tree next to my chimney before this.



Sat Dec 13, 2008 6:10 pm

[PROFILE](#)

lonrom



Joined: Wed Sep 08, 2004
8:14 pm
Posts: 85

FWIW, even if the fig freezes to the ground, it will grow back and will have fruit on the new shoots next year.

Sun Dec 14, 2008 11:47 am

[PROFILE](#)



Viron



Joined: Thu Jan 27, 2005
11:27 pm
Posts: 590
Location: Yamhill County,
Oregon

"even if the fig freezes to the ground, it will grow back and will have fruit on the new shoots next year." -- I don't know about having fruit next year (other than their attempt at a 'second crop') but I did want to add the same information. Since they're propagated from root cuttings every "sucker" is the same as the 'above ground' plant.

My suggestion now is to insulate it's base; perhaps some sawdust piled around the roots / trunk. If you were to lose the top growth that might spare some shoots near the base that would easily start a new tree.

It had been suggested to me long ago that I allow my figs to "clump" - establishing multiple shoots or 'mini-trunks' around their base - as opposed to a 'stand along' single-trunked tree. The longtime fig grower said that in severe cold you may lose a few of the 'outside' shoots but the larger ones inside seem to be protected; she'd never lost an entire 30 year old clump, most having reached diameters of twenty feet!

...But with your enclosed plastic job a 'trouble light' with a 40 watt bulb snuck in near the base might work wonders. Fingers crossed - my *fig clumps* are all on their own, we'll see 🙄

What's your USDA Zone? Find out: <http://www.landscapeusa.com/usda.asp> - looks like I'm Zone 6 -

Viron

Sun Dec 14, 2008 2:06 pm

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jafarj



Joined: Fri Feb 09, 2007
1:21 pm
Posts: 185
Location: SW Washington

Thanks for the advice Lon and Viron. Its comforting to know that worst case I'm likely only set back about a year and may have some chance at some main crop figs next summer. I would have gotten some of of new suckers this year with maybe 10 days more of summer weather.

I think its unlikely that I go out there again before the storm is done.

We've been hustling to move my wife out of her apartment by tomorrow so the 20 minutes or so I

stole to do that it is about all its going to get.

This should be a good learning experience one way or the other. We have an remote thermometer out there. I'd probably prefer it inside the enclosure but we'll also want to know the temperature outside in general.

Sun Dec 14, 2008 2:20 pm

[PROFILE](#)

boizeau



Joined: Thu Dec 25, 2008 3:58 pm
Posts: 79
Location: Just east of Tacoma WA

I'd also check the soil pH and bring it up close to pH 7.0. Figs come from a semi arid climate and most would appreciate a sweeter soil.

I don't think that overall they are heavy feeders, but have seen a positive response to Boron. We are very boron deficient in the Puget Sound region. Careful though, and get the Extension bulletin that provides rates/acre. With boron we are talking rates as low as 5 lbs actual boron / acre.

And of course, one more bit of sage advice:

Plant the tree on the south side of your house--- about 300 miles south.

Tue Dec 30, 2008 5:03 pm

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