

Fig

Ficus carica (Moraceae)

Fast Facts: Number of Growers: less than 30
Acres in Washington: less than 100
Per Acre Value: \$850-\$1100

Description Of Crop:

The fig tree is deciduous and can grow up to 50 feet but is usually held to a maximum size of 12-15 feet by pruning. It can remain productive for 12 to 15 years and after that the crop generally declines. Fig trees have shallow spreading roots and large leathery leaves with deep lobes. For maximum fruit production, figs need full sunlight and prefer minimal wind. The fruit is generally pear shaped and is 1 to 2.5 inches in diameter. It has a tough, rough, ridged surface. The exterior of a fig can range from pale green when ripe to almost black and usually the rind of the fig can be eaten along with its contents. The inside consists of numerous very small seeds imbedded in a sweet pulp. The skin of the fig is thin and tender and the flesh is sweet when ripe and gummy with latex when unripe. There are four primary types of fig: the common fig, the Caprifig, the Smyrna and the San Pedro. The common fig is the most heavily cultivated commercially and this type produces figs without fertilization. The Caprifig requires pollination by a fig wasp *Blastophaga psenes*. The Smyrna and San Pedro figs both produce fruit that is fertilized by the Caprifig and these fig fruits contain seeds. Fig trees usually bear 2 crops a year, the early season fruits being inferior and only those of the second year are of actual value. The fruits are usually hand harvested and workers generally wear gloves and protective clothing because of the latex. Figs are extremely fragile and will not keep for more than a few days under refrigeration. They freeze and dry well.

In Washington, figs are grown on limited acreage and are used for personal use or local fresh markets. They grow well in western Washington but aren't hardy enough on the eastern side of the state due to our cold winter. The fruits are eaten fresh or can be stewed, dried, canned, used in pies, baked goods, and jams.

Key Pests: Weeds are generally not a problem once figs are established since they are very wide and sprawling and will choke out any undergrowth beneath them. Weed pests in early fig development include, thistle, kochia, cheatgrass and grasses. Figs don't have any serious insect or disease problem.

Key Pest Issues: Weeds are controlled with glyphosate.

Critical Pest Control Issues: Growers should choose disease and pest resistant varieties when available.

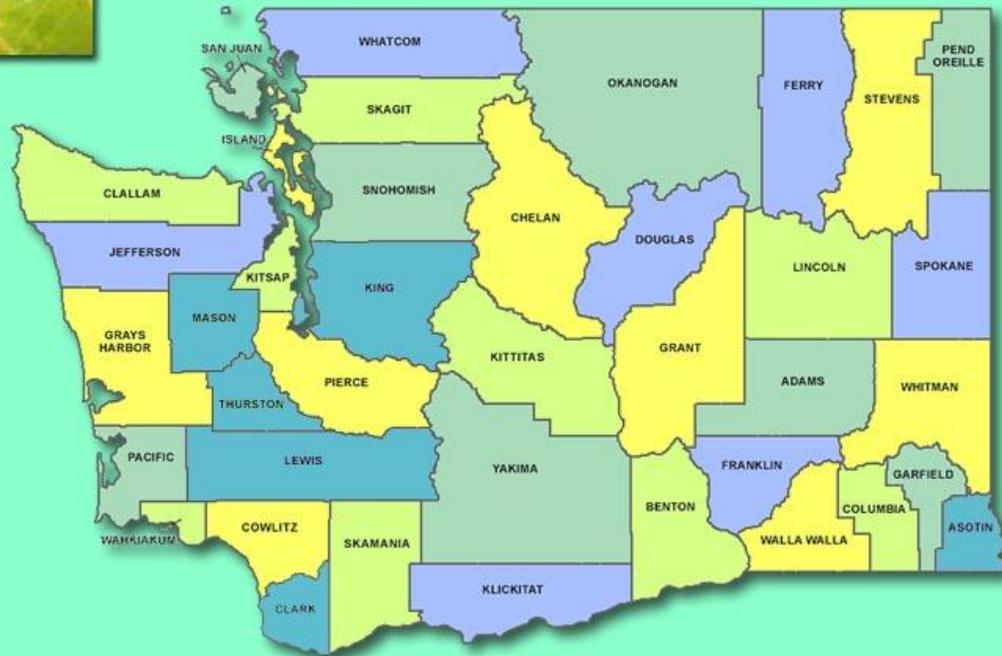
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Location Of production: Asotin, Clark, King, Lewis, Mason and Thurston counties.



Figs Production in Washington State

Figs



■ Area of Figs Production



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