

FILBERT CULTURE

Filberts, also called hazelnuts, are delicious nuts, eaten out of hand and in candy, cookies and other baked goods. Filberts can be grown in eastern Washington. In fact, there are native filbert trees in our area as far north as British Columbia.

There is a limiting factor to filbert production in eastern Washington. While the trees themselves are hardy, blooms are damaged by temperatures below 15°F. These temperatures are not uncommon during the bloom time, which runs from late February through March. Consider this risk when deciding whether to try filberts.

The filberts grown for nut production in our yards and commercially are *Corylus avellane*, the European filbert. There are other filberts that one may consider for ornamental purposes.

SELECTIONS/VARIETIES: You must have two different varieties within about 50 feet of each other for good pollination. Filbert varieties are generally designated as either producers or pollinators. Pollinator trees produce good nuts, just not as much as producers.

See chart below to select filbert cultivators:

CULTIVAR	NUT SIZE	YIELD	HARDINESS	BEST USES
Barcelona	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Producer
Ennis	Medium	High	Moderate	Producer
Tonda di Giffoni	Medium	High	Moderate	Pollinator
Santiam	Small	Low	High	Pollinator
Hall's Giant	Large	Low	High	Pollinator

PLANTING SITE: Filberts like sun and deep, well-drained soil. They will do okay in shallower soils, but watering becomes an important concern. Plant trees about 20 feet apart. If you want to create a hedge with the filberts, then plant them about 5 feet apart.

Visit our website at <https://extension.wsu.edu/spokane/master-gardener-program/home-lawn-and-garden/>
e-mail your garden questions to: mastergardener@spokanecounty.org

Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.

HABIT: Most filberts are 15 to 20 feet tall at maturity and are equally wide. Filberts do well when allowed to grow naturally as a shrub. If left alone, the filbert can become a “Trub”. A “Trub” is a plant that cannot decide if it is a tree or a shrub. If a tree is desired, remove suckers and unwanted branches. Filbert trees are trained with central leaders.

LIFESPAN: Filberts will live about 50 years. They begin bearing after an average of four years. But it takes about seven years for filberts to become fully productive.

WATER: They need average water. Do not allow them to dry out during our hot, dry summers. Be especially careful to keep the ground moist if your filbert is planted in shallow soil.

FERTILIZER: No fertilizer is needed if there is good growth and dark green leaves. If fertilizer is required, apply 1/2 to 1 pound of nitrogen per year per tree in early spring.

PRUNING: Young trees are trained to develop three to six strong scaffold branches. Mature filberts need moderate pruning each year to stimulate stem growth. The best nut production is on shoots 6 to 9 inches long. If filbert is grown in shrub form, remove excess suckers when suckers are less than 10 inches high.

DRYING: Hazelnuts should be dried before eating or storage. Begin the drying process within 24 hours of harvest. Optimum drying temperatures are 95 to 105°F.¹

Preparing nuts for consumption: Roast dried hazelnuts to bring out their flavor. Roast in a shallow pan in the oven at 275°F for about 20 to 30 minutes, until the skins crack. The roasted skins can be removed easily by rubbing the warm nuts with a rough cloth.²

STORING: Nuts can be refrigerated or frozen in the shell or as kernels. Store shelled nuts in plastic freezer bags or jars to minimize absorption of external flavors and moisture.

Dried hazelnuts will maintain eating quality for up to a year in the refrigerator. If frozen at 0°F, storage can extend to 2 years.³

PESTS & DISEASES

Information about pests and diseases of filberts can be found at WSU extension website: [Hortsense](#).

¹ Consult Oregon State University publication FS146 for complete information: [Harvesting, Handling and Storing Nuts from the Home Orchard](#)

² *ibid*

³ *ibid*