

Your first Cherry Tree from a Pit

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I am a cherry lover and endear a couple of cherry trees to plant on our homestead. Many people inquire as to whether they are able to grow a cherry tree from a pit of a store-bought selection of cherries. The answer is yes, you can. Perhaps your next question will likely be how to you grow them? That of course brings me to the subject of this article.

Growing a cherry tree from the seeds of the tree is inexpensive and fairly simple to accomplish. The process is fun and makes a great project to do with your children. Where else can they have fun growing something that tastes so good? Your primary concern should be whether a cherry tree will grow in your section of the country. Cherry trees will grow successfully in zones 5-9, since Delaware is in zone 5, we can grow these delightful trees with no problem. A word of warning, however, be cautious of using cherries which originate from the local grocery store, but rather seek out those from the farmers market or which may be grown by a local farmer.

Now that you have uncovered a trustworthy source for your cherries, you will have to force yourself to eat some of them, but as you do be sure to save the pits. Place the pits into a bowl of warm water and let them sit for five or ten minutes. At the end of the waiting period carefully scrub them clean, removing any flesh which adheres to the seed. You can forget about removing the hard portion of the shell which surrounds the pit.

Spread the pits which you just cleaned within a paper towel and place them in a warm area to dry for five days, then, transfer them into a Ziploc bag. Label the container with the contents and the date. Store the cherry pits in the refrigerator for a period of 10 weeks. Cherries, like a lot of other trees require stratification which imitates the winter season. Keep the paper towel moist and never let it dry out. At the end of the ten weeks, remove the seeds and allow them to come to room temperature. They are now ready to plant.

The tree can be started in a flower pot and later planted outside. When planting it in the pot, place the seed about 1/2-inch-deep and place it in a sunny location. Growth should take place in a few weeks.

When the cherry seedlings reach a height of 2 inches, thin them by removing the smaller and weaker of the plants. Your goal is to keep the strongest seedling in the pot. Put the pot in a sunny indoor location until the danger from frost has passed, at which time it can be transplanted outside.

If planting more than one tree space them out 20 feet apart. To plant the seeds of a cherry tree, one method is to do so directly into the garden. If you use this method you will be skipping the refrigerator cold period for the more natural outdoor stratification. The process involves taking the seed in the fall and planting them directly in the outside soil. Always plant several just in case some fail to germinate. Place them in the ground

approximately 2 inches deep and about one foot apart. Be sure to mark their location so you will be able to find them in the spring as they sprout. When the seedlings reach 8-12 inches in height, transplant them to their permanent location. Place mulch around the transplanted seedlings to aid in water retention and weed rejection. Planting your cherry seeds is really very simple, now you only have to wait.