

The Sitka Fruit Tree Initiative – 2011



What: Planting 200 fruit trees in Sitka was one of the goals chosen by public participation at the 2010 Sitka Health Summit. Due to their proven productivity in Sitka, several apple varieties will make up the majority of the trees planted.

Why: Why plant fruit trees? The main benefit of these trees will be the fresh, tasty, nutritious fruits produced. Local food production reduces Sitka's carbon footprint and improves our food security. These trees will also sequester carbon and beautify the landscape. Apple, cherry, plum, and pear trees all have lovely spring blossoms.

Where: The goal is to plant fruit trees in a variety of locations throughout the community on both public and private property.

Public Trees have been paid for through the generosity of individual donors that purchased shares in a tree. The Tree and Landscape Committee has kindly taken on the task of placing four of the trees on City property. Additional public locations are being identified and may include the Senior Center, Pioneer Home, etc...

Private Trees will be owned and cared for by the property owners. These trees need a "sunny" location with good soil (we can help you create good soil).

Who: You can participate in this project! If you would like to add fruit trees to your property, please contact Linda Wilson, 747-3096 (evenings/weekends) or e-mail lawilson87@hotmail.com. Assistance will be provided by the Tree Planting Initiative work group as needed to:

- Select and prepare a planting site
- Select appropriate tree varieties
- Help with planting the trees
- Train the tree's owners in their long-term care and maintenance

How: Penny Brown at Garden Ventures will have several good apple tree varieties to choose from along with some cherry trees. These are six to seven year-old, bare root trees that retail for approximately \$30 each. Depending on the condition of your planting site, additional materials will be required and may include: soil, sand, compost, mulch, tree stakes, pruning shears, etc... The cost to prepare a site that requires a lot of soil amendments is estimated to be between \$50 and \$75 for each tree. NOTE: for apple trees to produce fruit, they need to be pollinated by another variety close by. So you need at least two apple trees of different types.

When: NOW! Yes, it is time to select and prepare a planting site. When these trees arrive in the spring, they will need to be planted right away. That means having the site prepared and ready to plant. There are a limited number of trees available, so for best selection, you need to reserve yours as soon as possible.

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