

## Fact Sheet

# Pears & Nashis

### General Information:

Like apples, pears need a mild summer and a cool-cold winter in order to bear well. Hot summers may cause sunburn on exposed fruit. They flower a few weeks earlier than apples therefore are more sensitive to late spring frosts. Pears are an extremely long lived productive tree and can bear successfully for 50 years or more. Attractive blossom in spring and good autumn colour are added attractions.

They can take 5 years to bear fruit (3-4 years after planting) although if branches are trained horizontally earlier fruiting is likely.

Plant bare rooted stock in winter into well prepared soil enriched with blood & bone (up to 1kg per tree), ensure that the grafting union is about 8cm above soil level and the surrounding area is free of weeds and grass. Pears require a more sheltered warmer site than apples, they love sunshine and will tolerate heavier even saturated soil although in a dry summer water well. Once established feed with a balanced fertiliser (Dynamic Lifter or Gro Plus Fruit & Citrus Fertiliser), pears have a higher nitrogen requirement than apples but need less potash.

They will grow into large trees if unpruned unless grafted onto quince stock however they are usually grafted onto a strain of wild asiatic pear.

Pears make marvellous espalier subjects where the horizontal arms can be trained along a fence/wall. They will fruit on 2 year old wood, forming flower buds on spurs on older wood. Pruning should not be too heavy otherwise strong unproductive vertical shoots will form. Prune to confine fruit to main thicker branches and shape to a vase shape or else a central leader will grow too tall.

Bees are generally not attracted to pear flowers so there may be times that fruit set will be difficult. Most varieties will need a pollinator (i.e another variety flowering nearby at the same time) to fruit well. No thinning is generally needed.



### **Harvesting:**

Pears are more difficult than apples as to knowing when to pick. If picked too early, they won't mature, will be relatively tasteless and will shrivel. If picked too late they will go mealy, begin to rot from the centre and will be inedible. So how do you know? Pick the fruit when it has reached full size, is still quite hard and the skin has lost its deep green colour. To avoid damaging fruit spurs hold by stalk, twist and lift sideways. After picking store in ventilated plastic bag in fridge, remove when needed then store in kitchen for a few days until flesh has softened, full flavour will thus be attained.

### **Pests & Diseases:**

Main pests as per apples are codling moth and light brown apple moth. Pear and Cherry Slug will skeletonize leaves, you could either spray with Carbaryl or dust leaves with lime or woodash. If pear scab (black spot) is a problem, spray with Bordeaux or Lime Sulphur before flowering.

### **Varieties:**

#### ***William Bon Chretien (syn. Bartlett)***

Main canning variety. White flesh. Large sweet flavour. Fruit ripens in January. Harvest while still firm. Not a good keeper.

*Pollinators:* Beurre Bosc, Comice, Nijisseiki.

#### ***Packham's Triumph (Australian variety)***

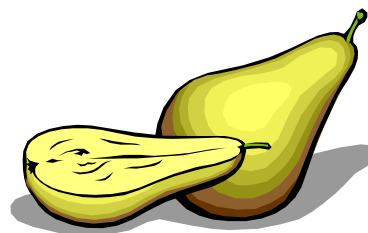
Good quality, large yellow green pear.

Firm white flesh. Matures March.

Good for bottling and a good keeper.

Store in fridge 2 to 3 weeks for fruit to ripen.

*Pollinator:* Winter Nellis.



#### ***Beurre Bosc***

Good baking and eating pear. Long neck, gold russet colour. Yellow - white flesh. Excellent storage qualities. Flavour develops more fully after 3 to 4 weeks refrigeration. Ripens March.

*Pollinators:* Williams, Nijisseiki, Comice.

#### ***Winter Cole***

Vigorous grower. Green to pale yellow skin, white flesh. Sweet juicy flavour. Good keeping qualities. Matures March. *Pollinators:* Williams, Beurre Bosc.

## **Nashi**

Originating from China & Japan, Nashis are increasing in popularity. They are different from European pears in shape tending to be more apple shaped than pear. They are similar to apples in that the fruit remains firm and crisp when ripe. Nashis are generally smaller than European pears, will bear earlier and are hardier to pests and diseases.

They will thrive in similar conditions to apples and pears, thriving on all soil types but need to be watered regularly to obtain good fruit set.

Fertilising and pruning needs are similar to European pears.



They tend to be partly self fertile, will flower profusely, but pollen from another variety will improve yields. They are very free fruiting so will need to be thinned heavily to about 10cm apart. Harvest when fully ripe thus pick when slightly soft to touch. The skin is fairly thin so handle carefully. They will store in fridge for weeks.

Nashis are less liable to fungal or insect attacks. Codling moth is the main pest problem and pear scab the main disease as with pears.

## **Varieties:**

### ***Nijisseiki (syn. 20th Century)***

Most popular variety, round fruit greenish yellow skin. Mild taste. Flavour is a cross between a pear and an apple. Matures March. Good for fresh fruit and juice. Allow to ripen on the tree. Partially self fertile.

*Pollinators:* Williams, Hosui, Kosui, Shinsui.

### ***Shinsui***

Very sweet juicy golden brown fruit. Matures February.

*Pollinators:* Hosui, Nijisseiki.

