

FGCU Food Forest

Plant Database

Avocado (*Persea americana*)

Origin: Mexico; Central America.

Description: Medium to large evergreen tree that can grow up to 70 ft. tall; produces large, delicious

Harvest: June-March; multiple

year long in south Florida.

Flower: Spring to Summer.

Tolerance: Many varieties are cold hardy to 25°F; moderate drought



General Description: Avocado trees are medium to large (30-70 ft.) tall evergreen trees that produce large berries with single seeds. The fruit contains between 3-15% oil, and depending on the variety, may be black, green, yellow, or reddish at maturity. Avocadoes are very important and popular throughout the American tropics, and are grown commercially in south Florida. Fruits ripen up once picked from the tree. There are numerous avocado varieties, and the FGCU Food Forest features 6 different varieties that will flower and fruit up to 10 months out of the year.

- **Native Origin:** Mexico; Central America. There are 3 distinct ecological races: “Mexican”, “Guatemalan”, and “West Indian”. Most popular varieties are crosses between two of the races.
- **General History:** Avocados have been a very popular and important fruit for centuries, and were commercially cultivated in Florida and California as early as 1833. Production in Central America can be traced back a few hundred years.
- **Distribution:** Tropics and subtropics worldwide; Grown commercially in South, Central, and North America, southeast Asia, Oceania, Africa, and Europe.

- **Season of Harvest:** June-March; growing multiple varieties allows production almost all year long in south Florida.
- **Culinary Uses:** Avocados are most commonly eaten raw, although there are many popular dishes and drinks, such as guacamole, milkshakes, ice cream, juices, etc. The fruit is high in fat, mostly monosaturated, and has a smooth, distinct flavor and texture. Avocados are very popular in vegetarian dishes due to their high fat content. In Mexico and Central America, avocados are commonly used as a base for guacamole, and mixed with spices and spread on corn tortillas. In Southeast Asia and South America, avocados are frequently used in juices and milkshakes, and are more commonly consumed as a dessert.

Avocado Scientific Classification	
Kingdom:	Plantae
(unranked):	Angiosperms
(unranked):	Magnoliids
Order:	Lurales
Family:	Lauraceae
Genus:	<i>Persea</i>
Species:	<i>P. americana</i>

Sources:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/ST/ST43500.pdf>

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/MG/MG21300.pdf>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avocado>

<http://goqii.com/blog/fatty-fruit-avocado-is-an-all-star-nutrient/>