



# PEAR



Department of Horticultural Science | University of Minnesota

## Pear Cultivars Recommended for Minnesota Gardens.

Cultivars marked with indicate a University of Minnesota release.

Cultivar	Hardiness in Zone 4	Hardiness in Zone 3	Fireblight	Description
<b>Golden Spice</b>	Excellent	Very good	Resistant	Recommended as a pollen source for 'Ure'. Fruit isn't as good as other cultivars, so not recommended for Zone 4 where other cultivars grow well. Grows to 20' tall. Good for canning.
<b>Gourmet</b>	Very good	Poor	Tolerant	Medium-sized fruit that are juicy and sweet with a firm, crisp texture. 'Gourmet' is pollen-sterile, so it cannot be used to pollinate a second pear tree. Harvest mid- to late-September.
<b>Luscious</b>	Very good	Poor	Tolerant	Medium-small fruits with a flavor similar to 'Bartlett'. Texture is firm but melting. Generally known to be pollen sterile, so it cannot be used as a pollen source for another tree. Harvest mid- to late-September.
<b>Parker</b>	Good	Poor	Susceptible	Fruit similar in size, flavor and texture to 'Bartlett'. Seen to set some fruit without a second variety. Harvest mid-September.
<b>Patten</b>	Very good	Poor	Susceptible	Fruit comparable to 'Bartlett'. Known to set some fruit without a second variety. Harvest mid- to late-September.
<b>Summercrisp</b>	Very good	Poor	Resistant	Medium-sized, red-blushed fruit with mild flavor and crisp texture strongly reminiscent of an Asian pear. Harvest in mid-August when fruit is still crisp.
<b>Ure</b>	Very good	Good	Susceptible	Smaller tree (to 15') produces small 'Bartlett'-type fruit with good flavor. In areas too cold for other pear varieties, 'Ure' can be grown with 'Golden Spice' for pollen. Harvest in mid-August.

Left to right: 'Patten', 'Parker', and 'Summercrisp'. The two pears on the left are at the proper stage for picking. The 'Summercrisp' is overripe and should be picked while still green and firm. Photo by Laura Stenseth, <http://minnesotapears.blogspot.com/>.



## Pear Tree Tips

Pear trees require full sun for best fruit set.

Pear trees can reach 40 feet tall at maturity, so give them a lot of space when planting.

Two cultivars are generally needed for successful pollination and maximum fruit set, however a single tree is likely to produce some fruit.

It can take up to 10 years for trees to start flowering and setting fruit.

Fireblight is one of the only problems pear trees have in the upper Midwest.

Annual pruning increases productivity, reduces disease and insect problems, and keeps the tree looking good.

Pears should be picked before they are fully ripe.

### Pear cultivars NOT recommended for Minnesota:

- ✗ D'Anjou
- ✗ Bartlett
- ✗ Bosc
- ✗ Comice
- ✗ Asian pears - some cultivars are listed as being hardy to USDA Plant Hardiness Zone 4, however these have not exhibited long term success in University of Minnesota trials.

## Pear rootstocks

Cold-hardy pear rootstocks are limited and aren't used for size control as extensively as apple rootstocks. There are a few size controlling rootstocks for pear, but they are not reliably winter hardy in Minnesota.

Rootstock info may only be available from nurseries specializing in fruit trees.

Common pear rootstocks:

- Seedling: produce large trees up to 40 feet in height.
- Old Home x Farmingdale (OHxF) series: semi-dwarfing rootstocks that have performed fairly well in U of M research trials. OHxF 333 is reportedly one of the hardiest semi-dwarfing rootstocks, producing a tree that is 12 - 18 feet tall at maturity.



Pear trees are substantial and make a statement in the landscape. Keep their large size in mind when planting, and remember that they will eventually have fruit in the upper reaches of the tree.

Photo by Dr. Sarah Hobbie.