

## Peach Trees for Central Florida

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*Figure 1. Mature Tree.*

New peach tree varieties developed for warm climates have now made it possible for Central Florida homeowners to raise peaches and nectarines in their backyards. These small trees make a nice addition to the home landscape, and their compact size, beautiful flowers, and tasty fruit increase interest year round.

Traditionally, peaches and nectarines have required long cold periods to induce flowering. New University of Florida varieties have been developed that need minimal cold periods for fruit production. “Chill hours” are the cumulative amount of time the temperature is below 45 degrees, and Central Florida averages between 150 and 310 chill hours per year. It is important to select trees with a minimal chilling requirement for your area. Weather will vary year to year, and a cooler winter may have more chill hours than a warmer

winter. Selecting the varieties with low chill requirements will now make growing these delicious fruit possible on a reliable basis.

Peach trees reach an overall height of 10-15’ tall with a spread of 5-10’ feet wide. As seen in Figure 1, the trees have a bowl-shaped branching structure. Trees should flower in February- March with fruit setting in April to May (Figure 2). These trees are deciduous, so homeowners should expect the trees to drop their leaves in late fall.



*Figure 2. Peach flower*

### **Peach Varieties for Central Florida**

FlordaPrince (150 chill hours)

Flordaglo (150 chill hours)

TropicBeauty (150 chill hours)

UFGold (200 chill hours)

### **Nectarine Varieties for Central Florida**

UFQueen (250 chill hours)

Sunraycer (250 chill hours)

Sunmist (275 chill hours)

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