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# NURSERY, GARDEN CENTER, GREENHOUSE & PATIO

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**Edible Fig- *Ficus carica***

Figs are one of the oldest cultivated crops, predating even the growing of wheat, and were enjoyed by the ancient Egyptians, Romans and Greeks. Common varieties include Brown Turkey, Black Mission, Celeste, Texas Everbearing, and LSU Gold.

**Fruiting:** The common fig is a deciduous, small tree usually growing 10’+ tall, with large, lobed, deep green leaves that lend a tropical air to the plant. The flowers of the common fig are all female and don't need pollinating to set fruit. The first crop of fruit in spring is called the "breba" crop, maturing from buds set the previous season. The main crop that follows in the fall matures on the new growth made that summer. Because they are deciduous, fig leaves are likely to drop in the fall and new leaves will emerge in early spring. Expect your tree to go dormant over the winter and do not rely on it being a decorative houseplant year-round.

**Harvesting:** Fruits should be completely ripe before they are picked. Ripe figs will be fully colored, starting to bend over at the neck and will be slightly soft. Pick them with the stem still attached. Some people find the milky sap of the tree irritating, so you may want to wear gloves when harvesting.

Fresh figs will keep in the refrigerator for 2 or 3 days.

Figs for small spaces or areas with hard winters thrive in containers where they can be moved indoors for winter. Provide well-drained soil, a large container and even moisture. Fertilize in spring to promote the new flush of growth and formation of fruit. The plant needs little pruning except when young to help create a strong frame.

**Pruning:** The best time for pruning fig trees is after fruit has ripened, usually in mid-summer. This allows time to harden off the fresh growth that is stimulated by cutting. Young trees respond well to light pruning that creates an even scaffold of strong branches. Fruit is born on the previous season’s growth, so avoid removing those terminal branches. Remove any suckers that come up from the rootstock and trim off excess branches to leave 3 to 4 strong peripheral branches. Choose one straight stem for a central leader.