

Botanical Name: Persea americana

Common Name: Avocado

Type of Plant: dicot: tree Character evergreen

Habit of Growth:

Overall Shape a mostly erect, single-trunk, wide-spreading tree, with vigorous growth to produce a large dense oval-rounded canopy; bark is gray, rough, wood brittle; young stems are green

Height 25-40' (60') Spread 2/3 to equal Growth Rate rapid

Environment:

Exposure outdoors full sun preferred (for best fruit production)

Soil well draining loam (decomposed granite soils are best)

Hardiness tender (zones 19,21,23,24); requires mild coastal habitats

Morphology:

Leaves pinnate, alternate, elliptic-oval or oblong; 4-10" (12") long, dark green and glossy above, paler beneath; slightly aromatic when crushed

Flowers greenish, small, in terminal compact panicles, Feb.-June

Fruit a drupe: large, fleshy, pear-shaped or oval, 4-6" long

Propagation: seed

Usage: mostly as a fruit tree; as an ornamental, is best used as a large shade tree; hard to grow other plant materials under the canopy because of the dense shade and messy drop of leaves

Landscape Care:

Watering regular, especially in summer; not drought tolerant tree (can survive severe water stress but looks very unthrifty)

Fertilizing balanced; in early spring, mid summer and fall

Pruning for fruit production, very little needed; thin out; head

Pests/Diseases Phytophthora root rot (avocado root rot)

Special Conditions

Origin: Central Am./Mex Family: Lauraceae