



## KNOWING IS ½ THE BATTLE: FRUIT TREE CARE

Common fruit bearing trees in the greater Charlotte area include; apple (*Malus spp*), pear (*Pyrus spp.*), peach (*Prunus persica*), and plum (*Prunus spp*). Caring for fruit bearing trees differs from care of ornamental and shade trees. To maximize fruit production a biannual pruning program is recommended.



Excurrent

The first round of pruning should be scheduled for late winter. Dead, diseased, and dying branches should be removed. Heading cuts should be made to promote good form and promote vigorous new growth. Apple and pear trees should be ‘trained’ to encourage excurrent growth, while peach trees should be pruned to encourage a ‘vase-shape.’ During the summer vigorous water sprouts should be removed to promote light penetration to the crown.



Vase-Shape

Fruit trees have been cultivated for centuries and have many associated pests and diseases. Bacterial fireblight, scab/ rust fungi, and boring insects are just a few of the pests that plague fruit trees. An integrated pest management program beginning in the early spring and continuing through out the growing season may be prudent.



Fire Blight