

Chinese Chestnut

Castanea mollissima



As the American chestnut struggles with disease, the blight-resistant Chinese chestnut is quickly gaining popularity. The sweet-tasting nuts are often roasted for holiday eating and have been made famous in turkey stuffing recipes across the country.

But this is more than a nut tree. The shade of its spreading canopy is dense, providing relief in the hot, dry climates the Chinese chestnut does well in.

The Chinese chestnut grows to a height of 40-60' and a spread of 40-60' at maturity. This tree grows at a slow to medium rate, with height increases of anywhere from less than 12" to 24" per year. Full sun is the ideal condition for this tree, meaning it should get at least six hours of direct, unfiltered sunlight each day. The Chinese chestnut grows in acidic, loamy, moist, sandy, well-drained, and clay soils. It is drought-tolerant. While the chestnuts are valuable for human consumption, they are also valuable as food for wildlife. This tree is native to northern China and Korea. It was introduced in 1853 and 1903.

This tree:

- Should be planted in pairs or groups to ensure pollination.
- Yields a ripened nut crop mid/late September through October. A prickly 2-3½" seed husk encloses 1-4 nuts. The nuts are large, meaty, crisp, and sweet, although less sweet than American chestnuts.
- Begins to bear nuts in 4-5 years if grown from seed.
- Provides dense shade with a handsome, spreading canopy.
- Has wood that is very durable and resistant to rot.
- Features simple, alternate leaves that are 3-5" in length and dark green in color with a toothed margin.
- Does well in hot, dry climates.
- Grows in a rounded shape.
- Is highly resistant to chestnut blight.