



Almond: Site establishment

What is site establishment?

Site establishment are the operations needed to establish an orchard or a nursery. Site establishment is similar for both orchards and nurseries.

How do you establish your site?

Note: An orchard is a 20-25 year investment so invest time at the beginning to establish the field correctly. Aim to replace about 5% of your orchard trees each year.



Avoid waterlogging

Land preparation

- Plough: Plough the field and deep rip the field to at least 1 m
- Level: Level the field to avoid standing water and to allow a gentle flow of water through the field
- Fumigate: In the USA, fields are often fumigated. Read all manufacturer labels and follow all safety procedures.
- Ridge: Ridge the field. Ridging aims to keep the crown above water level.
 - 4.5 m row spacing is often used for orchards).
 - 1-2 m spacing for nursery trees

Irrigation

- Flood irrigation: Develop head and tail ditches as needed. Develop a system that will avoid standing water and waterlogging.
- Drip/micro-irrigation: Layout field for efficient water application.

Fertilizer

- Orchards: Apply NPK around 50 units N/application in Spring and Summer. Apply around 0.15 kg (the equivalent of a small food tin) per established tree of a balanced fertilizer (e.g., 15:15:15). Adjust rates based on the health of the trees and soil fertility. Add manure if available. Apply a typical bucket load of manure in strips near the tree or in a ring around the tree. Do **not** apply in the planting hole.
- Nursery: Fertilize as necessary to keep plants vigorously growing

Pest control

- Monitor and spray as needed to control biting insects to keep the tree growing tips healthy. Always follow manufacturer's safety instructions.
- The most common pests include: Mites, Peach twig borer, Oriental Fruit Moth, and Sometimes Aphids

Field rotation

- Rotate nursery fields
- Have 2-3 years between using the same field for a nursery block
- Plant crops such as wheat or barley – which are non-hosts for nematodes

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