

# Trees

A vineyard is enhanced by large, free-standing trees not only in terms of landscape appearance. Trees play an outstanding role for many animal species in the truest sense of the word. They are often important ecological stepping stones in a cultural landscape impoverished in structures. For decades, trees were considered unnecessary and disturbing from a purely economic point of view and were cleared. In recent years, there has been a rethinking here as well. Trees are not only beautiful elements that are so valuable for nature, they are also part of our culture and landscape that has grown over centuries.

## Why trees are so valuable

- Flowers provide nectar for insects.
- Tree hollows and branches provide nesting opportunities for birds and bats.
- The foliage is an important food source for various small animals.
- The bark provides protected spaces for the development of many larvae.
- Even a single tree can be ecologically very important. As part of a biotope network system, it increases this importance even more.
- Trees enrich the landscape and are an aesthetic asset to any vineyard.
- Last but not least, fruit trees provide valuable food for people.





## Which tree?

- ***Is the respective tree species suitable for the prevailing soil, climate and water conditions?***  
It is particularly important to choose varieties that come from the region and are adapted to the location from the outset.
- ***Should the fruits of the tree be used?***  
It does not always have to be a fruit tree - a pedunculate or sessile oak, for example, is a magnificent and biologically at least as valuable tree.
- ***How much work is involved in caring for the tree?***  
Here, too, wild-growing deciduous trees such as the oaks mentioned are much less labour-intensive compared to fruit trees.
- When choosing the right fruit tree variety, regional varieties should definitely be preferred. There are associations that provide lists and addresses for the respective region.
- In principle, trees from organic farms are to be preferred.
- Bare-root products are better and often cheaper than so-called container products.

- Because of their roots, young trees should not be stored for long. They must be protected from frost or drying out, Pay attention to high trunks on well growing rootstocks.
- The combination of different varieties is important for good pollination. There are varieties that are excellent pollinators and provide cross-pollination for neighbouring fruit trees.

## The choice of location

- Stand-alone trees grow particularly well in sheltered, sunny locations.
- An increasing problem in times of climate change is the adequate supply of water. Especially newly planted trees on sites without groundwater access or on slopes that dry out quickly may need to be watered during the first few weeks.
- Do not plant trees in shady, damp locations (e.g. north-facing sites or forest edges). Here fungal diseases (e.g. mildew) pose a serious danger.

## The planting

Trees compete with each other for light, water and nutrients.

- The distance between plantings should be at least 12 metres.
- An „adult“ fruit tree thus requires an area of about 150 square metres.
- Planting in autumn is more promising. The well-warmed and usually moist soil offers ideal conditions for fast and abundant root growth.
- Do not plant too deep! The planting hole should be about 50 cm deep and 75 cm in diameter.
- Only on particularly poor and undeveloped sites can fertilisation with compost be useful. In some areas voles are a big problem for young trees. Here a wire basket (mesh size approx. 10 mm) can provide protection.
- 2 stakes each must be placed in the prevailing wind direction and opposite each other. Distance to the tree approx. 50 cm
- A browsing protection helps against damage caused by deer or so-called „sweeping damage“.
- Be sure to water well after planting. You can make a watering ring with the cut out parts of the grass.

## Fruit tree care

- The first pruning should be done immediately after planting.
- Regular pruning is necessary for the stability of a fruit tree. This will bring out a few leading branches and promote a beautiful and long high trunk.

## Where trees should not be planted

Planting trees changes the structure and conditions of a previously open meadow area so much for some rare animal and plant species that they migrate. This is true, for example, for some birds (e.g. skylark) and light-loving plants. A meagre meadow on a slope may represent a valuable and rare habitat that should not be planted.

## Learn more



[baden-wuerttemberg.NABU.de/natur-und-landschaft/landwirtschaft/streuobst](https://baden-wuerttemberg.NABU.de/natur-und-landschaft/landwirtschaft/streuobst)



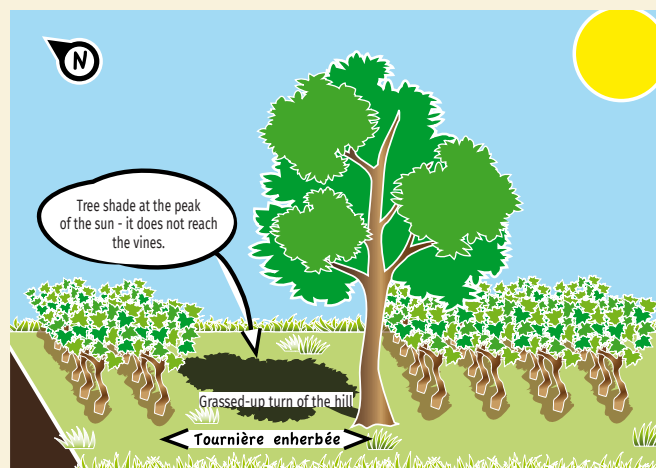
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## Trees in the vineyard

The best location for individual trees is where they least interfere with vineyard management, e.g. at the edge of a plot or headland. Here they enrich the landscape and serve as an orientation aid.

It is essential to consider the shade cast by even the older tree by planting only on the north side of the plot.

Please discuss plantings with your plot neighbours. Thus, the fear of the cherry vinegar fly and the associated aversion to certain fruit trees such as cherries must be taken seriously.





## Winery André Stentz



Climate change has made us rethink our cultivation methods and, in general, the position of the vine as part of an ecosystem. Vines need to be protected against the increasing pressures. We believe that trees can add resilience to our plots because of their multiple functions. Trees have always been for us a heritage to be preserved, the memory of a place and a haven of biodiversity. On some plots we can observe that the vines feel much better near trees than unprotected in the blazing sun. That is why we have decided to reforest part of our plots, at the edges but also in the rows. In this way, we want to find a balance in which the tree contributes to soil fertility, forms a protective shield against climatic imponderables and makes it an indispensable ally in the winemaker's work.

*Xavier Stentz, Wettolsheim*

## The partners



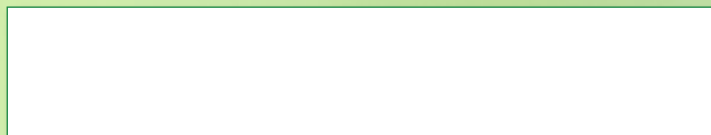
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