



# BLACK WALNUT

*Juglans nigra*

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## Native Range

It is native to the eastern one-half of Kansas.

## Mature Size

Black walnut reaches a height of 70 to 90 feet and spread of 30 to 40 feet.

## Growth Rate

This tree grows about 2 to 3 feet per year.

## Leaves, Stems and Fruit

Leaves are compound, alternately arranged on the stem and range from 12 to 24 inches long with 13 to 23 leaflets. The leaflets are 3 to 5 inches long, 1 to 1 ½ inches wide. They are rounded at the base, tapering to a sharp point at the tip and are paired except at the tip of the leaf. When crushed, the leaves give off a pungent odor. Flowering occurs in May and June. Fruit is a large round nut covered by a husk ripening in September or October. Bark varies in color from brownish to brownish-gray on young stems to a dark chocolate brown at maturity.

## Use

### Timber

Walnut is the premier timber species in eastern Kansas. The wood is used in making high quality furniture, cabinets, veneers, paneling, gun stocks and novelties.

### Human Food

The nut meat has a delicious flavor and is highly prized for its food value. It is used in candies, ice cream, cookies, etc.

### Wildlife

The nut serves as an important food source for squirrels as well as other wildlife species.

### Firewood

Black walnut's moderate growth rate and heat value, along with ease of splitting, makes it worth considering for use in firewood plantations.

## Adaptation

Statewide.

**Soil**

Black walnut grows best on deep, fertile, well-drained, bottomland soils. On upland sites, growth often is greatly restricted and isn't adequate for timber production, but may be adequate for wildlife habitat.

**Spacing**

Spacing for timber, fuelwood and nut plantings may vary from 8 x 8 feet to 15 x 15 feet. Periodic thinnings during the life of the stand are used to reduce the number of trees for maximum productivity.

**Culture**

One-year-old, bare-root seedlings, 12 to 18 inches tall or stratified nuts (those that have undergone cold treatment) are used in plantings. Successful plantings require that a proper site is selected, the soil is thoroughly prepared and good weed and grass control is practiced.

Stratified nuts may be planted instead of seedlings if adequate protection from rodents is provided. Squirrels have been known to eat an entire field of recently planted nuts. It is best to plant at least two nuts at each planting spot to ensure proper stocking rate. The soil must not dry until the new roots are well established.

**Pests**

Walnut has very few major insect enemies. The most serious is the walnut caterpillar. Trees defoliated by heavy infestations may suffer loss of growth but are seldom killed.

Disease is not a major concern in walnut plantings on good sites. However, on poor sites or on damaged trees, walnuts may be subject to canker.

It is susceptible to some chemicals commonly used on Kansas crops.