

HOW TO MAKE A PUBLIC FRUIT MAP

LOOK FOR FRUIT TREES

Walk or bike through a neighborhood you know. Some neighborhoods are teeming with fruit trees, and others have almost none. We call the good ones "generous" neighborhoods and the other ones "stingy."

Fruit trees tend to change their look throughout the year. They usually bloom in the spring, leaf out and bear fruit in the summer, and lose their leaves in the fall. Of course there's lots of exceptions, like citrus and subtropical fruit. If you can't recognize the trees without fruit, you may have to walk your neighborhood every few weeks throughout the growing season. There are lots of tree identification guides in print and online.

WHAT IS PUBLIC FRUIT?

Public Fruit is any fruit growing in or over public space, such as the street, the sidewalk or an alley. Parkways (the strip of land between sidewalk and curb) and even parks, medians and parking lots can have Public Fruit. Many trees may originate on private space, but in most localities common law rules apply, so public fruit can be picked by anyone who wants it. Public Fruit as a category poses some interesting questions about public and private property.

When in doubt, ask. People can be remarkably open to sharing their fruit, and often on Fallen Fruit tours, people invite us into their yards to pick. A smile never hurts.

Sample the fruit, don't hoard it. Leave enough for others, and for the people that live nearby.

HOW TO START

Go to an online mapping site and print the area large enough to write on.

Devise a code, like Pe for pear, Pl for plum, and Pe for peach (lots of P fruits...). Mark the letter on the spot itself and make sure you expand your legend (key) on the bottom each time you sight a new fruit. Use a colored pen (red is good) so you can read your own marks later.

MAKING YOUR FINAL FRUIT MAP

Trace the map you downloaded or xeroxed. Most maps are copyrighted, but tracing doesn't count. Trace the streets thin at first & you can thicken them up if you need.

Mark the trees with their code letter in a circle (which is easiest). Don't worry about getting the location too exact. The point of the map is to get people to explore,

Add a legend at the bottom, fill in the necessary street names.

Scan the map onto your computer and turn it into a jpeg. If you're good with a computer, you could just scan the traced street outlines and add all the names, codes and information with a design program. We like the handmade look too though, and believe all maps should reflect their maker's hand. But for techies, Google Maps lets you create any kind of individual map and share it.

AND FINALLY

Copy and share the map with others. Send Fallen Fruit a .jpg (info@fallenfruit.org) and we'll post it (with or without your name, as you like) on the website.

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