

When you buy a fruit tree you actually get two trees – the rootstock and the variety grafted onto it, and both parts vary in vigour and therefore eventual tree size. While the rootstock has the biggest affect on tree size, the variety also influences how big the root system will be. This fact-sheet will hopefully clear some of the confusion (caused by nurseries' inexcusable refusal to state which rootstock is actually used). To me, a dwarf tree is less than 1.8m and a semi-dwarf is 1.8- 3.5m.

For some years now we've had very good truly dwarf varieties, mostly sold under the Trixie® label, such as Pixzee™ peach and Nectazee™ nectarine. Great for pots or small gardens, they can still grow larger than stated – I've seen a twelve year old tree in Nannup that is 1.8mW x 1.2mH and produces up to 25kg of peaches each year! You can buy any of these with confidence, but please note that some varieties mentioned below are also miniatures (Sunset peach, Sunset nectarine & Valley Red peach).

Listed below are the varieties supposedly grafted to semi-dwarf rootstock (most on a peach stock called 'Pumiselect'). Where retail labels say 'dwarf' and '1.5-2.0m' or '2.0-2.5m', these rootstocks are only semi-dwarf so please read up to 3.0m (but still much easier to manage than on traditional vigorous rootstocks).

MAJOR WHOLESALE NURSERIES:

PlantNet.com.au:

Wholesale only, but go to <http://www.plantnet.com.au/sunset-nectarine-stockists/> for retailers in WA

APRICOT: Bulida, Moorpark, Trevatt

NECTARINE: Crimson Baby, Flavortop, Royal Gem, Tuscany

PEACH: Fresno, Golden Queen, O'Henry, White Gold

Olea Nurseries:

Wholesale only. I'm still waiting to receive a list of varieties on semi-dwarf rootstock, but here's what I gather they supply to retailers:

NECTARINE: Crimson Baby, Royal Gem, Flavortop, Tuscany & Sunset (a miniature)

PEACH: Sunset (a miniature), Valley Red (a miniature)

Flemings Nursery (Monbulk, Victoria) is major a supplier to retailers in WA, but they haven't (or won't) reply to my emails.

BETTER RETAILERS:

Dawsons Garden World:

APRICOT: Bulida, Moorpark, Trevatt

NECTARINE: Crimson Baby, Sunset (a miniature), Royal Gem, Tuscany

PEACH: Fresno, Golden Queen, White Gold, Sunset (a miniature), Valley Red (a miniature)

Tass 1 Trees:

Joe has a great range of trees and is very helpful.

APRICOT: Bulida, Trevatt

NECTARINE: usually has a few varieties in stock

PEACH: usually has a few varieties in stock

NOTE: I have only listed suppliers that supplied me with lists - other good retailers include:

Floraland Nursery, Herbs R Us and Wandilla Garden & Gift Centre

PLUMS: Unfortunately, there are no dwarf or semi-dwarf plum rootstocks suitable for use in WA, though this may change over the next couple of years. However, if you're keen you can bud or graft plums onto a peach rootstock. The result will be a semi-dwarf tree that is not very long-lived and will need a trellis support (due to a weaker graft union caused by partial scion/stock compatibility).