

CHINESE CHESTNUT, A NUT CROP TREE FOR EASTERN KANSAS

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Introduction

The Chinese chestnut (*Castanea mollissima*) industry in the United States is in its infancy. Several groves exist in Kansas, but only one commercial grower at Lawrence. The University of Missouri is conducting several studies on the management of chestnut.

Plantation

In 1975, fifty-five trees were planted from Maryland stock on a Belvue silt loam soil. Trees were planted in 2 rows on a 15- x 20-ft. spacing. A low level of management was followed with occasional top pruning. Cultivation during the early years was reduced recently to mowing only.

Table 1. Nut yield at different ages

Harvest year (age)	Number of trees	Mean height (feet)	Nut yield per acre (pounds)	Annual precipitation (departure from normal)	
				(inches)	(inches)
--	--	(feet)	(pounds)	(inches)	(inches)
Individual Tree Nut Yield					
1994 (20)	4	23.0	4570	26.8	(-6.98)
1995 (21)	3	--	1799	41.8	(7.95)
1999 (25)	5	--	3983	37.4	(3.54)
2000 (26)	3	25.0	650	22.7	(-11.05)
Mean	--	--	3451 ¹	--	--
3-Year Mean ¹ (1994, 1995, 1999)					
Entire Planting Nut Yields					
2008 (33)	54	--	1807	43.5	(8.45)
2009 (34)	54	--	1760	38.7	(3.89)
2010 (35)	54	27.6	1155	33.3	(-1.46)
2011 (36)	54	--	1167	33.0	(-1.76)
2012 (37)	54	--	557	21.9	(-9.89)
Mean	--	--	1289	--	--



Typically 3 nuts per husk



Glossy green leaves

Results

- Mature trees growing in Riley County, Kansas, have produced moderate yields of high quality nuts
- Asian population consumption
- Trees on the decline because of disease and drought
- Heavy bearing fall crop; difficult to harvest

Acknowledgements



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