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CURRENT TOPIC

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Two distinct persimmon species are cultivated in the U.S. The American persimmon, *Diospyros virginiana*, is grown in Hardiness Zones 5–9 and the Asian (Oriental) persimmon, *D. kaki*, is grown in Zones 7–10. The enclosure “Persimmons? No problem” provides an introduction to the American persimmon.

A good source for a variety of American persimmon cultivars is Nolin River Nut Tree Nursery (1). The best source of information on American persimmons is through the North American Fruit Explorers (NAFEX) (2). NAFEX is an open-membership group of amateur and professional fruit growers. They share information on fruit culture through their quarterly journal, *Pomona*, and at national and regional meetings. Membership is \$10/year and includes four issues of *Pomona*.

NAFEX members have started interest and testing groups for different fruits. The chairperson for the American persimmons interest group is Jerry Lehman (3). NAFEX also operates a library with books and other publications loaned through the mail. The library has a file on American persimmons, and the out-of-print book, *Persimmons for Everyone* by E.N.M. Griffith, may be borrowed. A complete NAFEX library booklist is available for \$2 from NAFEX (1).

Asian persimmons are more suited to commercial production than the American persimmon. The enclosure by Dr. Ryugo provides the details of Asian persimmon culture. The enclosure from *Pomona* pertains to marketing Asian persimmons, an important consideration for this crop, which is still unfamiliar to many Americans. Chestnut Hill Nursery (4) in Florida has one of the widest selections of Asian persimmons (34 cultivars) in the country.

Finally, Mitchell, Indiana, is home to an annual persimmon festival (contact their Chamber of Commerce for more information).

References:

- 1) Nolin River Nut Tree Nursery
 797 Port Wooden Rd.,
 Upton, KY 42784
 502-369-8551
- 2) NAFEX
 1716 Apples Rd.
 Chapin, IL 62628
<http://www.nafex.org>

- 3) Jerry Lehman
7780 Persimmon St.
Terre Haute, IN 47802-4994
e-mail: JWLehman@aol.com

- 4) Chestnut Hill Nursery
Rt.1, Box 341
Alachua, FL 32615
800-669-2067

Enclosures:

Preston, W.H., Jr. and J.B. Shanks. 1991. On marketing Oriental persimmons. *Pomona*. Vol. 24, No. 3. p. 39-43.

Reich, L. 1988. Persimmons? No problem. *National Gardening*. November. p. 39-43.

Ryugo, Kay. 1994. Persimmon (*Diospyros kaki* L.) cultivars: their management and usages. *Fruit Gardener*. October. p. 8-10.

Websites:

<http://members.aol.com/mhenkassoc/nnga/persim.htm>
Northern Nut Growers Assoc. site.

<http://fruitsandnuts.ucdavis.edu/pers.html>
University of California, Davis, site, including links to other web sites and links to UC persimmon specialists.

http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/hort_sci/comm/persimmon.html
North Carolina State University site.

*Possum up a 'simmon tree
Raccoon on the ground
Possum says you son of a gun
Lay my 'simmons down.
—Old song*