

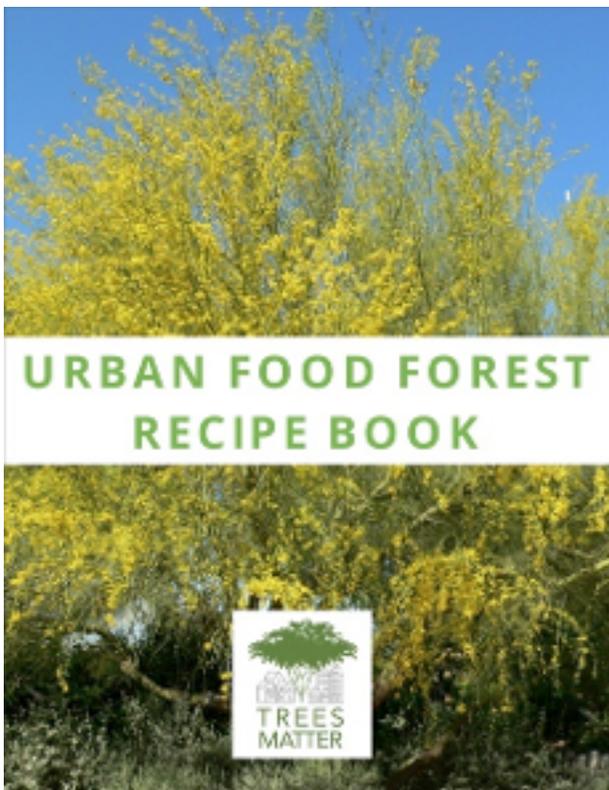
# Urban Food Forest

**Did you know** that a lot of the native trees in Arizona can provide us with food? This document contains information on our urban food forest such as tree types, harvesting and processing, and recipes! If you would like to learn more about the Valley's urban food forest, check out some of our workshops and events we host throughout the year at <https://www.treesmatter.org/UFF>



## LIST OF TREES IN PHOENIX'S URBAN FOOD FOREST

Almond  
Apple  
Apricot  
Carob  
Cherry  
Citrus  
Date Palm  
Fig  
Hackberry  
Hawthorn  
Ironwood  
Jujube  
Loquat  
Mesquite  
Nectarine  
Oaks (variety)  
Olive  
Palo Verde  
Peach  
Pecan  
Persimmon  
Plum  
Pomegranate  
Saguaro  
Sapote  
\*and more!



We have our own recipe book! It includes information and recipes for different foods gathered from Arizona's food forest. You can purchase our recipe book at our website, [treesmatter.org/store](https://www.treesmatter.org/store)

# Mesquite

We have a variety of mesquite in our area. The velvet mesquite, the srewbean mesquite, and the honey mesquite all grow here in the Sonoran desert. They have been used by native cultures for thousands of years.

## HARVESTING

Pods are generally ready in the Phoenix area from July to September . Harvest should happen prior to the first monsoon rainstorm to prevent exposure to an invisible mold. Place a sheet or a tarp underneath the tree and gently tap/shake the limbs for the pods to fall. You can also gently pull pods from the tree and collect them in a bucket or bag. The pods should come off easily, otherwise they are not ripe yet. Break open a pod to see if they are ready; it should snap clean.

## USE

Once the collected pods are thoroughly dry, store them in a clean, airtight container such as a large Mason jar or cloth bag. To make mesquite flour, first grind the pods in a coffee grinder or high-powered blender. Next, using a fine-mesh sieve, filter out any remaining pieces and seeds. Once Milled, mesquite flour can be added to nearly any recipe. Used with wheat flour. It adds a delightful sweet, nutty flavor!



## HEALTH

Mesquite flour is high in protein (11-17% per volume), lysine, calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron, zinc, and dietary fiber. Mesquite is also highly effective at balancing blood sugar levels.

# MESQUITE FLOUR TORTILLAS

- 1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1/2 cup mesquite flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 3/4 cup water

In a medium-sized bowl, mix whole wheat flour, mesquite flour, and salt.

Mix in olive oil then, gradually mix in water.

Knead the dough for about three minutes. It should come together into a big ball. Cover the bowl and let it sit for 30 minutes.

Separate the big ball into ten smaller balls and cover and let sit for another 30 minutes.

Heat a skillet on medium-low heat.

Roll out balls to 1/8" thick circles and heat both sides on the skillet.



# Carob

*Certonia siliqua* L. (commonly known as carob) is native to the Mediterranean region, where it was used by Romans for hundreds of years. Carob was then introduced to Arizona in the 1800s and it has since then adapted to the dry climate of the Sonoran Desert.

## HARVESTING

Elongated, leguminous carob pods take a year to develop. Once ripe, pods will fall to the ground and are then ready to be harvested. Be sure not to eat the pods from the ground! In the Phoenix area, harvesting occurs between September and November.

## USE

Because of their distinct, rich, and naturally sweet flavor, ground carob pods are often used as a substitute for chocolate in recipes. Carob can also be made into carob chips, which make a great substitute for chocolate chips in fresh based cookies.

## HEALTH

Carob is naturally low in fat and sodium, high in fiber and antioxidants, gluten-free, and unlike chocolate, is caffeine-free.



# VEGAN CAROB OATMEAL COOKIES

- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 1/3 cup rolled oats
- 1 1/2 tbsp carob powder
- 1/2 cup vanilla soy milk
- 1/2 tbsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp almonds, chopped
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- Dash of cinnamon
- Pinch of salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

Mix all ingredients

On a greased cookie sheet, place balls of dough spaced 2" apart.

Bake for 8 minutes. Check with a toothpick, continue to bake until toothpick comes out clean.



# BLUE PALO VERDE BEAN SALAD

- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 scant tablespoon butter
- 2 small fresh tomatoes, diced
- 1 tsp green chiles, chopped
- Few drops of soy sauce
- 1 cup Palo Verde peas, shucked\*

\*Pick the peas green on the tree before they dry. Shuck them at once and freeze them in double plastic bags.

Saute onion and garlic until clear in butter. Add tomatoes into the pan. Stir in green chiles and soy sauce. Blend, then add Palo Verde peas. Cook gently a few minutes and serve.

These peas are much more tender and green than any garden pea.



# Blue Palo Verde

*Urban Food Forest:*

The Blue Palo Verde is the Arizona State Tree and grows throughout the Southwestern US and Mexico. Each seedpod contains two beans which have long served as a food source for desert inhabitants.

## HARVESTING

Depending on precipitation, pods are produced between June and October, with optimal harvesting before monsoons. Pods are removed by picking or shaking, but should never be picked off of the ground.

## USE

Blue Palo Verde beans can be eaten raw, cooked as a side dish, added to a salad or can be ground into flour. The taste is comparable to edamame or lima beans, depending on preparation.

## HEALTH

Blue Palo Verde pods are high in protein content, and rich in vitamin A. Tea made from the bark is said to help with arthritis.



# Citrus

## PROTECTING FROM THE ELEMENTS

As with any tree, proper planting, placement and routine maintenance will be your tree's best protection against the elements. Citrus trees, however, are more sensitive so trying these tips may lead to a longer, happier life for your tree.

### SUMMER

- Citrus trees have sensitive bark that is susceptible to sunburn
- If foliage is not dense enough to shade the trunk, paint the trunk white to reflect the sun. You can find citrus paint at any hardware or gardening store.

### WINTER

- Citrus trees are sensitive to hard frosts.
- Cover young trees with frost cloth to protect but be sure to remove during the day!

Citrus is one of the 5 C's of Arizona; meaning in the state's early years it was an important part of the economy. Oranges, Blood Oranges, Tangerines, Grapefruits, Lemons, and Limes are some of the most common citrus trees found in the Phoenix Valley.

## HARVESTING

Harvest dates depend on the type of citrus; check the graph on the next page to see average harvesting dates.

## USE

Citrus can be used in a variety of ways; it can be eaten raw, juiced, mixed in a salad, etc. Check out our recipe book for multiple different ways to utilize the different varieties of citrus that grow here in the Valley.

## HEALTH

Citrus contains a plethora of vitamins and nutritional benefits. Citrus has a high vitamin C content, fiber, potassium, folate, calcium, thiamin, niacin, vitamin B6, phosphorus, magnesium, copper, and riboflavin. Citrus contains no cholesterol and has a very low caloric value. Increasing your intake of citrus fruits can help reduce the risks or slow progression of cardiovascular diseases, cancer, anemia and cataracts. (fao.org)



