

Cultural Information- Persea
(PER-see-uh)

<u>Light:</u>	Full to partial sun; a southern, eastern or western exposure. The more sun the better.
<u>Temperature:</u>	Maintain indoor temperatures above 35°. Will tolerate temperatures just below freezing for short periods.
<u>Humidity:</u>	Preferably 50% or higher; however, they will tolerate low levels with no harm.
<u>Watering:</u>	Bring the soil to a state of visual dryness between waterings. When watering, thoroughly saturate soil until a little water runs out of the bottom of the pot. Growing in a clay pot will help maintain a healthy root system.
<u>Fertilizer:</u>	They are moderate feeders so ¼ tsp of fertilizer per gallon of water once a week is a general recommendation. Under the fast growth of summer, use ½ tsp of fertilizer per gallon of water once a week. As growth matures in late summer and early fall, discontinue feeding. Use a balanced fertilizer lower than a 15-15-15.
<u>Pruning:</u>	Prune in late spring or early summer once flowering and fruit set is complete. Flower buds form on the new growth of summer so pruning later in the season will reduce bud formation for the next season's flowers.
<u>Insects and Disease:</u>	Few problems with insects although mealybugs and scale can be a problem if other infected plants are nearby. They do have problems with root disease so attention to proper watering is needed. We have found a periodic soil drench with the bacteria bacillus subtilis is helpful in mitigating root disease.
<u>Comments:</u>	Avocados are easy plants to culture, and they grow with great vigor. Although flowering will occur on young plants, they need to get to be larger specimens before they will hold fruit, generally in 14" to 16" pots and 4-6' in height. Buds form on the summer growth and it is important to reduce fertilizer at this time, which will help harden off the growth. During the winter, keep the plants in a cool spot 35° to 60° at night and with as much sun as possible. As they have good cold tolerance, plants that are wintered over in the north can be put outside early, just as the danger of frost is passing. Avocado are generally self-pollinating but need either hand pollination or insects to do the job. If grown indoors during flowering, then they need to be hand pollinated.