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# Why Doesn't My Pecan Tree Produce Nuts?

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**A weekly question/answer column**

**Why Doesn't My Pecan Tree Produce Nuts?**

*Tony Hatch\* answers:*

Pecans are harvested very much like walnuts are, except they generally are not bothered by the walnut husk fly. When pecans start dropping, it's time to harvest.

- Pecans are difficult to grow in climates colder than Washington County in Utah. The pecan tree, like most nut trees, has female and male blossoms, and the pollen from the male blossoms (the catkins) needs to be transported to the female blossoms (the staminate). The pollen needs to migrate to the female flowers within a given window for the fertilization process to be effective.
- Cool spring temperatures slow down the manufacture of pollen so female blossoms are not pollinated. Nut shells continue to develop, making one think there is a crop on the tree.
- When nuts start falling and the owner starts picking them up, he discovers the empty nuts. That is why nuts are not produced in areas cooler than the Washington County climate. The trees can survive cold weather, but without nuts, why plant a pecan tree?

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\* Tony Hatch is Utah State University Extension State Fruit Specialist