



Mulberry: A Well-Adapted, Underutilized
Tree for Florida



- Genus: *Morus*
- Family: Moraceae
- Primary cultivated species – *Morus alba*, *M. nigra*, *M. rubra*, *M. macroura*, hybrids
- Climatic range – USDA zone 4 to lowland tropics
- Domesticated for silk production.
- Dioecious.

Korean Commercial Production





Vietnam – commercial orchard



Highly
precocious
trees



- Cultivars of interest

- Tice – Old Florida standard. High quality, large fruit. Vigorous tree. Perhaps overall best for homeowners with room for decently big tree.
- Shangri La – Another Florida classic variety. Good fruit but nothing special. Could be valuable rootstock.
- 6th St – Gainesville selection. Mediocre fruit. Buds out a month later than others, valuable rootstock.
- Himilayan – Ultra delicious, long fruit. Unique fig/raspberry flavor. The standard for flavor.
- Skinner – Crafton introduction. 5 inch long fruit, unique *M. macroura* (fig like) flavor
- White Himilayan – Totally unique long fruit, like eating honey. Pure sugar, no acid.
- Taiwan Long – Perhaps the worlds largest mulberry. Not in Florida yet to my knowledge.
- DMOR9 – A newly available long-fruited *M. macroura* type cultivar.
- World's Best – Compact, ultra productive Thai variety. Fruit tolerant to handling.
- Chaing Mai 60 - Compact, ultra productive Thai variety. Fruit tolerant to handling. Possibly same as World's Best.
- Thai Dwarf – Similar to above cultivars.
- Mustang – Another compact Southeast Asian variety, better tasting but fruit is not durable.
- Tampa Pink – Pink fruit when ripe.
- Taiwan 4 Seasons – A new elite Asian cultivar. In California, probably not Florida yet.
- Dwarf Everbearing – The worst!

Himilayan – Ultra delicious selection



Skinner – Extra long selection







Himilayan White



Chaing Mai #60

Commercial Thai
cultivar, now in Florida





Cuttings – simplest form of propagation for many varieties. Some do not root, notably *Morus macroura*. Nematode prone varieties need to be grafted.











Challenges

- Nematodes
- Bird pressure, possums
- Tree size management
- Early budbreak, cold damage
- Dioecious, challenge to breed or grow seedlings
- Popcorn disease

Image from Craig Hepworth, difference in nematode susceptibility between cultivars



Difference in bud break between varieties



Aggressive pruning can trigger secondary cropping and be used for size management.





