

Greenhouse Grown Figs

Skip Paul

Wishing Stone Farm
Little Compton, R.I.

Over view:

~History of fig growing in RI

~growing in pots

~Greenhouse Production

~Over wintering solutions

~Pruning and Insects.



Wishing Stone Farm is a split designation farm. We farm about 52 acres Cert. Organic and also farm another 12 acres Bio~rational Organic which are Peaches, Swt Corn and ornamental squashes etc...

**We are considered
Zone 7B and come to
rely on our close
proximity to the
ocean to help extend
our growing season.
One of our biggest
advantage is that the
winters are so mild
and predictable!**



My first fig was the beginning of an odyssey and a full fledge obsession. We started with brown turkish figs. On the left is a typical Mission Calif. fig, which is a distant cousin to the brown turkish. Like a peach tree, the more available the light that gets to the fig the deeper brown/red it will turn.



Our early years were spent growing our expanding fig collection in five gallon pots. They are such weeds that a gallon pot planted to a five gallon pot would become root bound with in a single summer. It was also hard to keep the moisture level right with that system.



the pot option soon became a no go. My wife got tired of watering them and gave us (me and my figs) the final ultimatum. So I planted them outside in a row 12' apart. This worked out Ok and the first summers production was twice what the pots gave me, but the winter took its toll.



**And all the branches
burn right down to the
ground. Even with a
tall hoops and two
layers of remay.**

**The next year we built
a green house over
the figs and wrapped
them with shredded
remay and grain bags.
This worked well but
the voles got inside
the bags and almost
killed the figs.**



The next year we strung a 3/16 cable from one end to the other and hung a special heavy weigh perrenial plant cloth from Griffins G.H. Supply. It was thick enough to help trap the latent ground heat under the trees and did a great job keeping them warm enough have all the branches survive the winter cold, which got down to 7 degrees that winter.



**This is the perennial
blanket in position for
the winter.**



When the real winter weather comes in we clipped the ends of the blanket to trap the heat even more.



**of our system involves
'not' allowing the
house to get too hot
during the winter
months. This might
wake up the plants and
start them growing
again too early. Over
each four foot door we
installed a 18" height
window that can be
closed on the extra
cold nights. Most
weeks it is open 24
hours a day.**





This is an inside photo of the 18" window and the cable attaching rig.



Another shot of the window setup.

Our house in late april.



The same house in late November. On November 12 we harvested 35lbs of figs.



**A typical harvest in
October.**





This photo shows the sizing we got this season. It also shows one of our new problems, Spotted Wing Drosophila! Yes, they like figs too! We were guilty of letting bad fruit just fall on the ground and gave the Swd an invitation to setup shop!

Winter prep and clean up. We cut the trees back 80% and made sure the leave and trash were cleaned up so no Voles could have a cover to start nesting.





**All tucked in for a long
winters nap.**



**Be sure not to hire help
that like the taste of
figs!**





And be sure to hire good mouse control technicians to handle any rodents that may move in.



Thank you!