



## PLANTING GUIDE

### 'BIG O' WILD CRABAPPLE *Malus coronaria* (L.)

USDA-NRCS Jimmy Carter PMC  
Americus, Georgia



**SPECIES:** *Malus coronaria* (L.) P. Mill

**PLANT SYMBOL:** MAC05

**RELEASE NAME:** 'Big O'

**GENERAL INFORMATION:** Wild crabapple is a native tree which produces attractive blooms in spring and valuable fruit for wildlife in the fall. The Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center has released an outstanding line of wild crabapple called Big O.

**DESCRIPTION:** 'Big O' is a small deciduous tree that grows 20-30 feet tall from a slender trunk. The leaves are elliptic lanceolate shaped with a wavy margin. The blossom petals are pink/white fading to whitish. The normal blooming period in Americus is mid-late March. The fruit is a roundish green pome maturing to greenish yellow. Fruits normally begin maturing in November obtaining a size approximately 1 ½ inches in diameter. Big O fruit exhibits several levels of maturity into the winter season; some fruit will be firm while others are drying or rotting.

**USE:** The primary use of Big O is wildlife habitat enhancement. It provides food and cover as a general wildlife plant but is especially suited to providing abundant crops of fruit for deer consumption.

**ADAPTATION:** Big O shows potential adaptation further north but is primarily adapted to the piedmont and coastal plain of the southeastern United States.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:** Big O is a native crabapple from Floyd County, Georgia and has shown no weedy or invasive characteristics. Big O was rated as OK to Release in the Environmental Evaluation of Plant Materials Releases Form.

**ESTABLISHMENT:** The first step in establishment of Big O is fruit collection. The seed are then extracted from the fruit and stratified prior to germination. The germinated seed are then grown in the greenhouse and later transferred to pots.

**SOILS:** Big O is most productive on moderately well to well drained soils.

**PLANTING DATE:** Late winter/Early spring is the optimum time to transplant.

**FERTILIZATION:** Big O transplants should receive 300-400 pounds/acre of 10-10-10 fertilizer (or equivalent) for the initial growth years.

**PLANTING RATE:** Plants should be spaced about 15-20 feet apart for maximum growth potential.

**DISEASE AND INSECTS:** Big O is susceptible to cedar apple rust but no more than most naturally occurring populations.

**WHERE TO GET HELP:** For more information, contact Donald Surrency, Plant Materials Specialist, Thomson, Georgia, 706-595-1339. E-mail [don.surrency@ga.usda.gov](mailto:don.surrency@ga.usda.gov). Mike Owsley, Jimmy Carter PMC, Americus, Georgia, 229-924-4499. E-mail [mike.owsley@ga.usda.gov](mailto:mike.owsley@ga.usda.gov).

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