Muscadine Grape

The muscadine grape is native to Florida and has been cultivated in the state for many years. It is harvested as single berries instead of in bunches and has smaller leaves and fruit with thicker skins than the bunch-type grapes. One reason for its popularity is that the muscadine is seldom seriously affected by disease or insect pests. Muscadine grapes mature in August and early September. They should be picked from the vines and stored at 40°F if not processed into jellies, jams, or wine.

Fertilizing
Muscadine grapevines are fertilized with an 8-8-8 or 10-10-10 fertilizer applied in bands about 1 foot to either side of the vine. Fertilizer with added micronutrients can be beneficial. Fertilizer amounts and application times vary based on the age of the vine:

Year 1: Newly planted grapes should be fertilized in April (after growth begins), June, and August using 1/4 pound (1/2 cup) of 8-8-8 or 10-10-10.

Year 2: Fertilize in late March and July using 1 pound (2 cups) of 8-8-8 or 10-10-10.

Year 3+: Fertilize in late March and July using up to 3 pounds (6 cups) of 8-8-8 or 10-10-10.

Pruning
After a grapevine has been trained, it must be pruned to keep it manageable and maximize fruit production. The best time for major pruning is mid-January to mid-March (dormant season), although touch-up pruning can be done during the growing season.
The standard rule is to remove last year’s growth (fruiting wood), leaving spurs with 2 to 4 nodes (buds), and spurs spaced about every 6 inches of cordon (the main portion of the vine trained on the fence). Spur renewal may be needed every 3 to 6 years so that new fruiting wood (nodes) are never located more than a foot from the cordon. Spur thinning can be accomplished by removing entire spurs or part of them. After 5 to 10 years, it is not uncommon for cordons to lose vigor or die. Simply select another young shoot to train along the wire and it will become your cordon the following year.

Visual Instructions for Grapevine Pruning

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