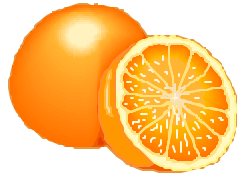




Citrus Tree Care

Citrus makes a beautiful tree with fragrant flowers that appear over a period of several months. Most citrus will grow in Central Texas; however, Heirloom Gardens recommends those varieties that show mature fruit faster, tolerate more cold weather, and adapt to most types of soil.



Meyer Lemon

- Thick-skinned citrus fruit
- Very juicy and less acidic than standard lemons
- Fruit-bearing at an early age
- Persian Lime
- Small, tropical thorny shrub with excellent, seedless fruit
- Fruit is small and green to yellow-green in color

Ruby Red Grapefruit

- Sweetest, least tart of all grapefruit
- Fruit grow to regular size
- Red blush of skin with pinkish flesh
- Sweet Kumquat
- Bright orange fruit, oval-shaped and one inch long
- Sweet, edible rind. Tart flesh
- Excellent for eating fresh or for marmalade or jelly

Satsuma Orange

- Sweet delicate flavor, few seeds, and medium to large fruit
- Easy to peel
- Fruit ripens early, normally by October, far ahead of cold weather
- Grows six to eight feet tall and six to eight feet tall wide
- One of the best citrus plants for Central Texas

Naval Orange

- Sweet, seedless fruit
- Best eating orange
- Thick-skinned but easy to peel
- Fruit ripens from December to May

Valencia Orange

- Vigorously growing tree
- Thin-skinned fruit
- Known as the juice orange

Calamondin Orange

- Small, tropical, evergreen citrus tree
- Noted for its relative hardiness, ornamental form, and foliage
- Small, juicy, acidic fruit with deep orange skin
- Louisiana Sweet Orange
- Juicy citrus with medium size, flavorful fruit
- Medium skin

Tangerine

- Medium size fruit with good flavor
- Upright growing tree with erect branches
- Tangelo
- Cross between an orange and tangerine
- Slightly larger than the tangerine
- Very easy to peel

ROOT STOCK

These citrus plants are budded on trifoliolate orange root stock. They bear well in the Brazos Valley area, as this root stock is a native plant with natural resistance to the common diseases that attack citrus.

Trifoliolate root stock tends to go dormant during the winter, which pulls much of the sap from it, enabling the tree to withstand

lower temperatures. Only trifoliolate is recommended by Heirloom Gardens.

WATERING

Citrus need moist soil, but should never be left in freestanding water. Citrus trees need to be watered thoroughly, but not too often.

SOILS

Citrus fruits will grow in any well-drained garden soil, from sand to clay, though these extremes are less desirable than a medium loam. In poorly drained soils, plant citrus above soil level or in raised beds. Slope the soil gradually away from the trunk.

MULCHING

Since citrus roots can grow near the surface, mulch will help them retain moisture and keep them cool. Use 2 to 3 inches of mulch.

FERTILIZING

When planting new trees, use a root stimulator at the recommended dilution rate. We suggest that you apply a root stimulator every four to six weeks during the first year after planting.

Your first feeding will be in February with a citrus fertilizer with zinc, then again in April or May. In September, use fertilizer with less nitrogen, such as 6-12-12. Normally, citrus extend beyond the drop line of the tree, so fertilize from the drop line out to a distance of two to three feet.

INSECTS AND DISEASE

White fly normally infest citrus trees. A monthly spraying of malathion or diazinon, beginning in March through September, will usually control these pests. Should a white fly infestation cause black sooty mold, which grows on the residue left on the leaf by the white fly, spray with either malathion or diazinon.

Dormant oil may be used on citrus trees to control scale or sooty mold. Use dormant oil only by itself, as it will burn the leaves when combined with malathion or diazinon, etc. Add spreader sticker to any spray solution to increase its effectiveness.

PRUNING

Commercial trees are allowed to carry branches right to the ground. Production is heaviest on lower branches, but you can

prune trees to the shape you desire. If sprouts develop from below the bud union, they should be clipped off while succulent because they will heal more quickly than if they have become woody.

SPECIAL COMMENTS

All citrus trees could freeze and should be protected during severe cold spells.