

NAPLES FERTILIZER GARDEN CENTERS



Citrus Growing Guide



Planting

There is nothing like the sweet flavor of homegrown citrus fruit. It is the ultimate convenient health food. The fresh fruit is packed with vitamin C, A, fiber, natural acids and sugars. The quality of your own fruit is unquestioned. You know exactly what has (and what has not) been sprayed on the fruit.

Besides the delicious benefits of the fruit, citrus trees are useful in the home landscape. They provide you with life giving oxygen and cooling shade. Their evergreen form is an effective screen and birds enjoy their shelter. Some people plant citrus trees only to enjoy the heavenly perfume of orange blossoms.

Growing your own fruit is fairly uncomplicated and the rewards are great. Follow the directions below and you will have fewer problems and the greatest yield.

The most important time of a citrus trees' 30 to 40 year life is its' first three years. If it is properly planted and maintained, it will grow two to three feet per year and bear fruit soon. If it is planted too deep and allowed to be over run with weeds and grass, it may never bear.

Location

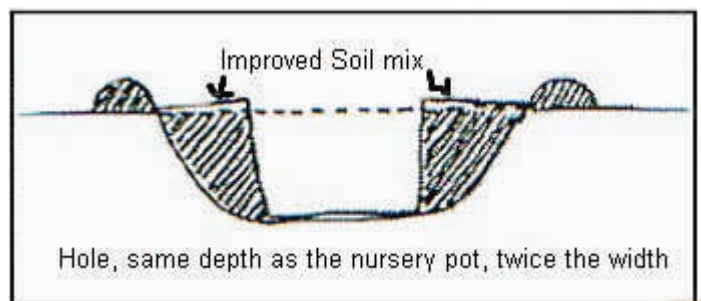
Citrus trees must have a good drainage. Select a planting site that is "high and dry". During heavy rains, established trees that stand in water for more than one week can die. Others growing in saturated soil may not bear fruit. Also, be sure the tree will get at least 6 hours of full sun per day.

Improve your soil

Mix Composted Cow Manure at a ratio of 50:50 with the existing soil. Backfill firmly to avoid any air pockets in the root zone.

The finished grade should be slightly higher than the existing soil. Make a dam around the planting area so it will hold 7 to 10 gallons of water. Then drench the area with a solution of Root Stimulator, which encourages root growth and reduces transplant shock.

Water your new tree twice a week for the first week, then once a week after that.





Maintenance

Fertilizing

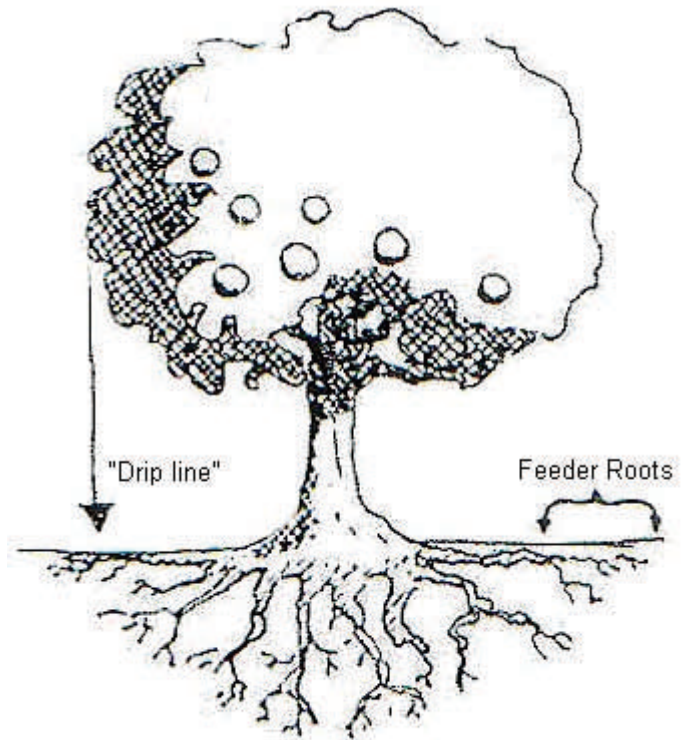
Beginning three weeks after planting, frequent light applications (1/4 cup) of 8-2-8 should be made every 6 weeks. Fertilizer should be placed only on the “drip zone”, the outside edge of the branch spread. This is where you will find the fine feeders roots. Do not fertilize between October and February. This will avoid flushes of tender growth which could be damage by cold. Remove any fruit that forms for the first year or two.

After 2 to 5 years young trees begin bearing fruit. The yield is light and the quality is sometimes mediocre. This is normal. Fertilize with Citrus Special 6-4-6 at the rate of 1 pound per inch of trunk diameter, 4 times per year.

To improve the quality of your fruit, supplement your fertilizer program with Sul-Po-Mag . This acid forming fertilizer adds potassium, which contributes to plant health and sweeter, juicer fruit.

Minor Elements

Our soils are deficient in available Manganese, Magnesium and Iron. Citrus trees can absorb these minor elements through their leaves. **Chelated Citrus Nutritional Spray** is a liquid minor element blend that is sprayed on the tops and undersides of leavers during the spring and summer spurt of leaf growth. Mix with Spreader/Sticker to increase absorption.



First Growth Secret

- 1. Remove all the competing vegetation from the base of your tree for at least three feet. Weeds and grass rob your tree of water and nutrients. Young trees have a great need for water and fertilizer. Bare cultivation assures that only the tree uses water and fertilizer. As the tree grows, so should this bare area.*
- 2. Fertilize once per month during rainy season.*
- 3. Water your tree deeply once per week when dry.*



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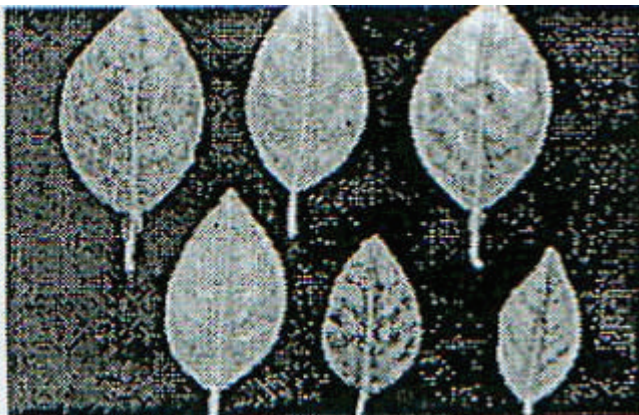
239-263-8858 / 239-992-0992

Pruning

Only prune off broken or crossed branches, otherwise encourage leaf and branch growth. More leaves, more flowers, more fruit. For aesthetic purposes, you may lightly shape your tree soon after picking the fruit.

Diseases

The most common diseases that affect the leaves and fruit are melanose, greasy spot and scab. These are best prevented by spraying with Liquid Copper. This fungicide is sprayed 2 weeks after the petals drop and again 3 weeks later. Commercial growers spray copper every 2 to 3 weeks until harvest to keep the fruit and leaves cosmetically clean.



Leaves showing minor element deficiency

Insects

Aphids, whitefly and scales are insects that suck plant juices and reduce yield. Generally, aphids appear on new growth where as scales live on branches and whitefly live under leaves. Dormant Oil is safe, effective insecticide to control these pests. Persistent insects can be sprayed with

*Leaf miner is more difficult to control. The adult is a small moth, which lay eggs on citrus leaves. They favor new, tender growth. The egg hatches and the miner, very small, green worm-like insect tunnels between the upper and lower surface of the leaf. If leaves behind telltale serpentine, squiggly lines on the leaves. Once the insect is in the leaf, it is too late. Best success is found by spraying with **Bagworm and leaf minor spam** when the leaves flush out and again in two weeks, continuing until the growth hardens. Mix Spreader Sticker with this improve its coverage and adhesion.*

Never spray a pesticide when the tree is in bloom. Bees are responsible for pollination and they are very sensitive to pesticides.

Chewing insects leave telltale holes on the edges of leaves. Weevils, beetles, katydids, grasshoppers and "orange dogs" all are large insects and can be handpicked and destroyed.

Carbaryl mixed with Spreader/Sticker is very effective against caterpillars and orange dogs. This organic insecticide is caterpillar specific; it does not harm any other insects. Because it has a brief residue it should be sprayed every 5 days until the insects are gone. For the other chewing insects, spray with liquid Carbaryl Garden Spray.

Always read the entire label and follow the directions before using any chemical



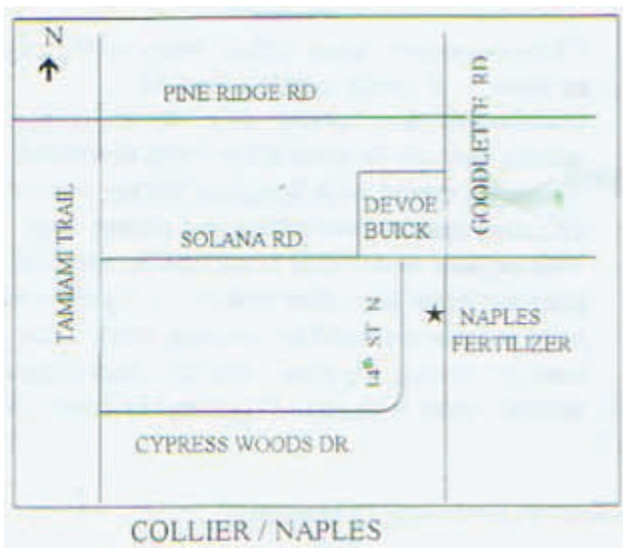
For more information, call or visit our garden centers. In Naples: 3930 14th Street North, off of Goodlette at Solana. We offer a walk-in plant clinic; just bring in a leaf, a weed or describe your growing problems, and we will be happy to help you.



	JAN	FEB	MAR	APL	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Young tree 1-2 yrs. Fert 8-2-8		X		X		X	X	X	X	X		
Mature tree 3+ yrs Fert. 6-4-6.		X			X		X			X		
Chelated Citrus Nutritional spray			X							X		
Sul-po-mag 0-0-21				X				X				
Liquid Copper Prevents fungus			X			X						X
Malathion oil 55% Scale, mites, aphids				X		X						
Triple action plus (Not sure here)			X		X		X					

Suggested Timing for Citrus Tree Care. Months are approximate. If you miss an application, apply it soon; don't wait until the next time. Consult pages 1-3 for explanations. We do not recommend frequent spraying of insecticides for prevention. Only after the insects have been identified and their numbers warrant should you spray.

A healthy, vigorous tree resists problems. We offer less-toxic alternatives and organic fertilizers.



- Fertilizers, sod, mulch
- Soils, chemicals, tolls
- Trees, shrubs, blooming plants
- Free delivery, no minimums
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