

CALENDAR OF BACKYARD GARDENING OPERATIONS FOR CITRUS FRUITS

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Winter Dormant Season:

- Prune out any crossing, broken, or shaded out branches from the interior of the tree. No topping or hedging is necessary and removal of the skirts around the lower portion of the tree's bearing capacity.
- If scale insects are present (appear as small bumps on twigs and a black sooty mold on the leaves), spray the tree with volk or superior oil. The best time to treat is February during cool weather. Thorough coverage is important.

Spring Bloom Season:

- Fertilize using 3 lbs. of Urea or 20-30 lbs. of animal manure for a large mature tree. Reduce rates for smaller trees. Split fertilizer applications into three, April - August.
- Protect tender trees from frost, especially limes and lemons, with burlap covering the top and sides of the tree. Do not totally enclose the tree. Prune out frost damage in May.
- A natural thinning, fruit drop, occurs in late May - July. If the tree is not water or nutrient stressed, less drop will occur. Excessive moisture (wet feet) can also cause fruit drop and yellowing of leaves.

Summer Growing Season:

- If spider mites are a severe problem and causing the leaves to yellow and drop, they may require treatment. Use insecticidal soap or plain water to wash them off. Use Kelthane as a last resort. Repeated treatments are usually necessary even for the miticides because eggs are not killed and new generations can develop very rapidly.
- During the summer months water trees about every 3-4 weeks applying 3-4" of water each time. The most critical period is during heat spells. To be more accurate, check to moisture level 12" deep under trees to determine dryness and water accordingly. Keep water away from the tree trunk.

Fall Harvest Season:

- Spray trees to prevent citrus brown rot. Coat all foliage and fruit. Use Bordeaux or other fixed coppers. A late winter application may also be necessary in wet years.