

CITRUS



Yes! It is possible to grow lemons, limes, and other citrus in the Pacific Northwest. Some special care is required when growing these plants. We advise that you grow citrus in pots in our area because they need to be moved indoors or to a heated greenhouse for winter protection. Unfortunately, citrus cannot be grown in the ground outdoors all year in our climate. We leave that to south California and Arizona.

SUN REQUIREMENTS

All citrus need full sun. This means at least eight hours of direct sun outdoors. When your citrus is indoors, a bright southern window usually does the trick. A grow light can be employed if you do not have a suitable window.

WATER REQUIREMENTS

Citrus likes moist soil, but never soggy. When watering, drench the root-ball completely, and allow water to drain through. Never leave roots sitting in a saucer full of water.

Frequency of watering varies with every situation. In the heat of summer, when your plant is outdoors, it may need a thorough drink twice a week. This frequency may decrease in cooler weather. Indoors, citrus need a weekly drink. If your citrus is near a vent or in a cool area, this watering schedule will need to be modified to your situation.

The most common problem with citrus is over-watering. Signs of over-watering include flower bud drop, fruit drop or loss of lower leaves.

FERTILIZING

Citrus are heavy feeders, and they are most hungry while their leaves are growing. Fertilize citrus when the new growth first appears until the leaves become leathery, indicating maturity. During this growth period, feed once a month. We recommend using EB Stone Citrus and Fruit Tree food. Avoid time-release fertilizers such as Osmocote because citrus has a specific window for fertilizer needs.

Citrus can suffer from micronutrient deficiencies. Signs include yellow spots on leaves, or yellowing between veins. In this situation, use Tru-Green Citrus growers mix as a foliar spray, or mixed with your fertilizer.

POLLINATION

Citrus plants are self-fertile, so only one plant is needed for fruit to develop. If you have only one citrus plant though, it may be necessary to assist your plant with pollination to increase fruit production. Touch a soft paintbrush to the pollen and move from flower to flower. Dropping fruit can also be a sign of lack of pollination.

PESTS & DISEASES

Citrus is prone to scale and spider mites. We suggest some preventative treatment in order to avoid an infestation. Spray with a summer oil to suffocate the insects. Avoid spraying when temperatures are above 75 to 80 or 24 hours before a freeze. Water thoroughly before application.

If an infestation does occur, (you are not alone), scale insects can be easily eliminated by wiping the top and bottom of every leaf with cotton balls dipped in rubbing alcohol. Especially focus on the region where the leaf meets the stem. Spider mites are controlled with alternating sprays of Safer's soap and time-release pyrethrins (i.e. 1600 X-clude).

TRANSITIONING YOUR CITRUS INDOORS AND OUT

Citrus thrive when they can spend the summers outdoors. It is definitely safe to move your plant outdoors in mid-May. To avoid shock, gradually transition your plant to outdoor temperatures. For one week put the plant outdoors for the day and indoors at night. After the week period, it is safe to leave the plant outside. Around October, this process is repeated in order to transition the plant to the warmer temperatures indoors. It is often wise to spray your plant with Safer's Soap before bringing it indoors (just in case you have any hitchhikers...).