

Limes:

Tahiti - Large light yellow fruit, excellent for lime juice

West Indian Lime - Main source of commercial lime juice. Not easily available.

Grapefruit:

Red Blush - Large orange-red fruit, pink flesh.

Marsh - Yellow skin and flesh.

Star Ruby - Seedless, thin skinned, very juicy sweetish fruit with pink flesh.

Naartjies:

Clementine - Thin orange skin. Seedless, good as a table fruit.

Empress - Light yellow fruit, very juicy.

Satsuma - Large orange fruit, no pips.

Calamondins are ornamental plants that are ideal in containers. Their fruit is edible.

Happy Gardening!

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Citrus

GardenCare
guide
to the
planting
and care of
Citrus



GardenCare



Introduction to Citrus

The citrus family contains many well-loved fruits, including Lemons, Oranges, Limes, Grapefruit, Naartjies and ornamental Oranges. They fruit from mid summer into the winter. Citrus is easy to grow and suffers from relatively few problems. Another advantage is the fruit hangs well so it can be left on the tree until it is needed. Citrus is generally self-fertile except for Satsuma Naartjies and Mandarins. Plant any one of the Orange cultivars to allow for pollination.

Positioning

Citrus prefer full sun and the soil should be well drained. Frost can be damaging to trees so keep them in a protected area. Lemons are the only citrus that will tolerate frost. If you are planting more than 1 tree, allow for 5m between each tree.

Planting

Citrus hate to be planted in a heavy soil. When planting, dig a hole approximately 75cm x 75cm x 75cm. Add a bag of compost, a good scooped handful of superphosphate and 2:3:2 to the hole. Mix in some of the excavated soil. Firm the soil down. Leaving the plant in its bag, lower it into the hole to make sure

that it will be positioned correctly, neither too deep nor too shallow. Once the levels are correct, remove the bag and add the remaining topsoil to the hole. Firm down well and water deeply.

Watering

Citrus requires regular, deep soakings. Water for about 45 minutes once a week. In July start watering deeply as this will increase the number of flowers. The more flowers that are set, the more fruit you are likely to get. Continue watering throughout the summer. If rainfall is heavy, then it is not necessary to water. Watering can be reduced from April.

Feeding

The most important feeding should take place in July. Mulch the area with compost or ready-made mulch. Water the area well. Sprinkle the area with fertiliser but try to keep it from touching the stem. Water the area again. Fertilise in the following months: July, December and March. In the first year feed with 150g LAN. The following season trees should be given 150g 3:1:5 per feed. Increase by 2.5kg per feeding per year (i.e. 7.5kg annually.) Each tree should be given 75g of Magnesium sulphate (Epson salts) three times per year.

Pruning

Pruning should be done in the early stages to obtain a good shape and strong framework, thereafter limit the pruning to removing any dead or damaged wood. Any pruning that is to be done should be carried out in July. All pruning sites should be sealed with a product like Tree seal or Steriseal. Finish off with a spraying of Lime Sulphur. This will kill off any fungus and insects that are on the tree.

Citrus in containers

Citrus does very well when planted into pots. Use only potting soil when planting and feed regularly with Multifeed or Nitrosol.

Recommended varieties

Lemons:

Eureka - Thin skinned and juicy - fruits almost all year round.

Variegated Eureka - Thin-skinned and juicy with a variegated leaf and fruit.

Meyer - Best suited for very cold areas.

Cape Rough Skin - Thick bumpy skin.

Oranges:

Valencia - Very juicy fruit.

Bahianinha - Thick skinned and juicy.

Palmer - Thin skinned and juicy.