



Caring For Citrus

About:

Citrus have beautiful glossy, evergreen foliage and intoxicatingly sweetly fragrant, white flowers that produce vitamin C rich fruit. With special care, you can be successful at growing a variety of citrus in the Pacific Northwest.

Growing:

In warmer climates such as California, Arizona, and Florida citrus grows outside, but in our area citrus plants need winter protection. To grow citrus successfully in Oregon you need to grow it in a pot that can be moved indoors or to a heated greenhouse during the cold winter months.

Requirements:

All citrus plants need full sun. During the winter months when you move your citrus indoors, you need to place it near the brightest window in your house. A grow light can also be used if you don't have sunny a location in your house

One of the most common problems with citrus is over-watering. Citrus plants like an evenly moist soil. Don't let the soil dry out completely or become waterlogged. During the summer you will water your plant more frequently and decrease your watering during the winter when you bring your plant inside. Generally, your citrus will need to be watered once a week, maybe more in summer and less in winter.

Fertilizing:

Citrus are heavy feeders! They require more fertilizer when they are producing new leaves. Fertilize your citrus when you start to see new growth. We recommend using an organic citrus fertilizer such as Dr. Earth Fruit Tree Fertilizer or Espoma Citrus-tone. Citrus plants can suffer from iron deficiency. If you notice yellow spots on your leaves or yellowing between the leaf veins your plant might need iron. Try adding chelated iron to the pot or applying a liquid iron as a soil drench or foliar spray.

Pests

Citrus is prone to scale and spider mites. Neem oil can be used to control both scale and spider mites. Avoid spraying on sunny days and when temperatures are above 80° Fahrenheit.

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Pollination

Citrus plants are self-fertile, so you only need one plant to get fruit. During the summer honeybees pollinate plants, but during the winter when plants are brought indoors plants suffer from blossom drop because pollinators do not have access to flowers. You can hand pollinate your citrus by touching a soft paintbrush to the pollen and moving the paintbrush from flower to flower.

Bringing Your Citrus Indoors

Citrus thrive when they spend the summer outdoors. It is safe to move your citrus plant outside in mid-May. To avoid shock, transition your plant to outside temperatures by placing your plant outside during the day and bringing it inside during the night. This should be done for one week, after which it is safe to leave your plant outside. In October you will repeat this same process to transition your citrus to the warmer indoor temperatures. When you bring your plant inside in the fall it is a good idea to spray your plant with Neem Oil to take care of any pests.

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