

## Mandarins

Very popular with families because they are great in school lunch boxes due to the easy peel nature of most varieties.

**Silverhill** a Satsuma selection, is the earliest, ripening June - July and is a very easy peel.

**Satsuma, Miyagawa** and **Miho** are also early ripening, June -July, easy peel and begin cropping as young trees and have more flavour.

**Clementine** has good flavour, is a high yielding reliable cropper, ripening July, but is not an easy peel.

**Corsica** is sweet and delicious and ripens June - July and is easy peel.

**Encore** has excellent flavour, ripening November - February and is easy peel.

## Tangelos

Rich, juicy flesh, ripening late August - October.

## Home Grown Favourites



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# Citrus

## for good health



Once upon a time fruit trees could be found in every New Zealand garden. With today's smaller gardens it is more difficult to find space, but with careful selection they can fit - citrus don't take a lot of space.

Without doubt citrus trees are the most popular fruit grown in home gardens and no wonder considering the usefulness of the fruit, the attractiveness of the tree and the ease of growing them.

With planning you can have citrus nearly all year.



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## At a Glance

- Warm sunny position
- Free draining soil
- Lots of citrus food
- Water in summer
- Dwarf varieties are ideal for small gardens and containers

Citrus have always been popular. They are vitamin rich, great tasting, can be picked progressively over quite a long time and are relatively easy to grow. Early mandarins begin to ripen from early June with oranges, grapefruit and lemons holding on until July/August onward. This winter to early spring fruiting makes citrus so valuable when other fruit is more expensive. They are also very attractive trees with their glossy green leaves, fragrant blossom in spring and coloured fruit in winter.

## Where to Plant

Citrus will grow in warm or mild climate zones. Providing frosts are not severe they will tolerate cool conditions. They will thrive in hot inland conditions providing they have water. They require a sunny position protected from cold winds. Citrus prefer a sandy or loam soil. They will tolerate clay soils providing they are planted on a raised area with lots of compost mixed into the soil.

## How to plant

Refer to the brochure on 'How to Plant'.

## When to plant

Citrus trees are available most of the year and can be planted anytime provided they are watered regularly in summer.

## After care

### Feeding

Citrus are big feeders. A moderately sized mature tree requires at least 500g of Tui General or Citrus Food each year, applied in Autumn and Spring. Pelletised Sheep Manure is also recommended. Do not cultivate under citrus trees as their feeding roots are relatively close to the surface. For those in pots, use Yates Liquid Citrus Food or Osmocote.

### Watering

Citrus must be watered regularly through spring and summer. Irregular watering can cause fruit drop and fruit splitting, not to mention reduced yield and dry fruit.

### Mulching

A layer of mulch spread over the surface under citrus trees will conserve moisture and improve performance. Take care however, to keep mulch away from the base of the tree trunk.

### Pests and Diseases

Citrus trees are relatively free of insect pests but occasionally can be attacked by scale, insects, aphids, white fly and mites.

**Grosafe Enspray 99 Oil** controls aphids, white fly, mites and scale.

**Grosafe Free Flo Copper** controls Verrucosis, a fungal disease which sometimes attacks lemons causing rough fruit –spray in spring and autumn. Refer to our Fruit Trees Pest & Disease Control brochure for full information.

### Pruning

Citrus tend to be self shaping and so need little pruning. Some mandarin varieties become a little thick and benefit from some thinning out. Lemon trees can sometimes require pruning back to make them more compact and easily manageable. Make sure that any shoots below the graft are removed (identified by different foliage). Paint cuts with pruning paste. Citrus fruit on new seasons growth.

## Making your selection

### Lemons

**Meyer** variety is most popular because of it's reliable high yield over an eight month picking period. The fruit is of medium size and sweeter than other varieties. **Lisbon** and **Villa Franca** are more acid and often preferred by chefs.

**Yen Ben** is an improved selection of Lisbon for those wanting a 'real' lemon for cooking.

### Grapefruit

**Golden Special** is the traditional grapefruit with pale orange skin and a strong grapefruit taste. Excellent for those who like a strong marmalade. Ripens July - November.

### Lemonade

This very sweet lemon does taste like delicious lemonade and deserves its increasing popularity. Ripens July - September, but some ripe fruit can be found most of the year.

### Limes

Limes have become very popular in recent years, largely because of the interest in cooking created by the many cuisine programmes on TV and in magazines.

Most popular is the **Tahitian Lime** or selections such as **Bears Lime**.

**Kaffir Lime** is mainly grown for the leaves and is an essential ingredient in Asian cuisine.

Limes need protection from frost until established. Will not tolerate heavy frosts. Ripens early to mid winter in most areas.

### Oranges

NZ navel oranges are rated very highly compared to imported oranges for flavour.

**Carters Navel** grows beautifully here and ripens August.

**Blood Orange** is another goody with lovely pink flesh, ripening late July/August.