

BUCHANAN'S

NATIVE PLANTS

Organic Citrus Care

Basic Care and Fertilization

- Citrus trees need to be planted in a well-drained, full sun location. If you don't have good drainage you should start by mixing in **Expanded Shale**, making it 10% of your medium.
- If you plan to grow the citrus in a container, **Life Below** is an excellent potting soil for this purpose.
- Make sure your citrus tree gets a minimum of 1" of precipitation each week, whether by hand or by nature. Water deeply each time you water, NOT in short spurts in which the water only goes down an inch or two each time. Cover the soil with 1-2 inches of **TGU Hardwood Mulch** to retain moisture and insulate from heat and cold. Refer to our "Planting a Tree or Shrub" handout for in depth planting tips.
- Always use a root stimulator, such as **Bush Doctor's Kangaroots**, when you first plant your tree. Follow manufacturer's directions.
- **Fertilize your tree three to four times a year between February and October.** The normal program is February, May, August, and October. Use a good granular fertilizer such as **MicroLife Citrus**. If you choose to use a liquid fish/seaweed product, such as **MicroLife Liquid Seaweed**, you will need to fertilize every two weeks for maximum effect.
- In winter, the tree's roots should be watered in deeply the night before a freeze in order to protect them from frost. When the tree is still small, it will be best to cover it with frost cloth as well. If you are growing the citrus in a pot, move the pot away from the North wind, water the roots and cover the tree with frost cloth. Small trees are especially susceptible to freeze damage.

This and other plant care tip sheets are available at Buchanansplants.com.

01/31/16

BUCHANAN'S

NATIVE PLANTS

Organic Citrus Care, continued

Common Pests and Diseases

- ❖ **Leaf Miner.** This is the larval stage of a flying insect which lays its eggs inside the leaf of new growth on citrus trees. When the egg hatches, the leaf miner feeds on the leaf as it mines between the layers of the leaf before going into its next stage of development.
 - **Treatment:** *This insect is NOT very detrimental to the health or production of fruit for this plant.* If you are concerned about the appearance, spray with **Spinosad (Captain Jack's Dead Bug)** or **Neem** on a weekly basis starting at the first sign of new growth. You might also want to try sticky traps that attract and contain the moths that produce the leaf miner.

- ❖ **Whitefly, Scale, Mealybug, Aphids, Psyllids.** If you see any of these pests on your citrus, it is most likely due the plant having been stressed for some reason. Most common reasons for stress:
 - The plant has not been watered as thoroughly as needed.
 - The plant is in the wrong place with too little sun or poor drainage.
 - The soil has been depleted of organic matter and nutrients.
 - Weather event.
 - **Treatment:** Spray with Neem, Safer Soap, or All-Seasons Oil, if necessary. Strengthen the tree with this "sick tree treatment": Scratch greensand into the soil, apply a liquid seaweed product such as Ocean Harvest and top-dress with compost.

- ❖ **Black Sooty Mold.** This fungus occurs in concert with the pests listed directly above, as these pests release a sticky honey-dew that attracts the mold.
 - **Treatment:** Treat for insects as above.

- ❖ **Giant Swallowtail Butterfly -- Not Necessarily a Pest**

Citrus trees are host plants to Giant Swallowtail Butterfly caterpillars. The caterpillars (which look like giant bird droppings) feed on the citrus leaves before forming their chrysalis. This will not seriously harm your tree nor will it diminish fruit production. However, it will result in a truly beautiful butterfly.

This and other plant care tip sheets are available at Buchanansplants.com.

01/31/16