



Gardening Uncovered: What Can I Expect with My New Citrus Tree

By Martha Vaughn

Citrus is a subtropical fruit and is limited to parts of Florida that don't regularly experience freezing temperatures. Special care needs to be taken when choosing the variety to grow. Nutrition, protection from the cold and amount of sunlight are important factors that gardeners need to consider when choosing their trees. In Marion & Citrus Counties, Kumquat and grapefruit grow really well.

Kumquat looks most like an orange; it is small and boasts a unique "Sweet-tart" flavor and is the only citrus that is meant to be enjoyed whole. This means you eat it like a grape peel and all! Cold hardy, Kumquats come in two varieties: Nagami and Meiwa.

About the size of a softball, Grapefruits are yellow but may have traces of pink or red in them. The outer surface is the rind, and it may look a little flat on either end. The inside flesh is usually a pink-red color with a slightly bitter or tart taste.

It is important to choose a Certified Nursery Plant. These are plants from nurseries registered with the state. Citrus disease can devastate a whole crop crippling our local farmers, so it is important to find trees who are free of disease.



We get asked a lot of questions from customers as they look for citrus trees. How much fruit will they produce? What to expect for the first year? Both of those depend on size of tree you purchase and will vary based on the type of fruit it produces. It is important to maintain balance within your citrus trees to encourage even fruit production as well as to ensure the branches can carry the weight of the fruit they produce. This is done through pruning.

Fruit trees must undergo two pruning phases. Young trees must get pruned to

select the primary and secondary scaffolds. This allows for aeration and light penetration to ensure the fruiting wood gets everything it needs to produce good fruit. Second, trees 5 years and older need to be maintained. This is done by thinning and heading fruiting and non-fruiting wood. Thinning cuts will remove branches to promote light and aeration and keep them from rubbing or causing damage to the tree. Heading cuts help create balance. Here you can force and direct branching, spur development and restrict the overall size of the tree.

Stripping can be done during the production phase of growth. This will happen yearly as you notice blooms or fruit growth. In medium size trees you want to make sure that the branch can support the fruit. Too much fruit will cause the branches to break. By stripping away some of the blooms, you are encouraging other branches to develop balancing out the fruit production.

Check out my latest video on Facebook for more information as well as our website www.ansonnurseries.net. Let us work with you as you choose the perfect tree for your year.

Jason will be the guest speaker at the Rainbow Springs Garden Club meeting in September, guests are welcome. The meeting is Thursday, September 23 from 1-3pm at the Rainbow Springs Community Center. For more info contact rgardenclub.net

To help keep customers and staff safe and healthy Anson Nursery have hand washing stations, curb side pickup, and delivery and installation services. Open Monday – Friday from 9am – 5pm and on Saturday's from 9am – 4pm, make plans to visit Anson Nursery today. Conveniently located at 5296 West Homosassa Trail, Lecanto, FL 34461. For more information, you can call 352-628-4554, visit www.ansonnurseries.net, or find us on Facebook. Be sure to watch for next month's Gardening Uncovered article.

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