



Lemon

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Site Selection: Select a well-drained site, avoid low lying areas and mound if necessary. Young trees need wind protection.

Site Preparation: Deep rip to break hardpan. Incorporate organic matter. A pre-plant soil test will indicate the required pH adjustment to about 6.5 with Dolomite and the amount of basal fertiliser needed.

Planting: Mound rows with spacings of 4 m between trees and 6 m laneways. Ideal time March / April, no fertiliser at planting time and mulch to retain water and cool root systems.

Selecting stock: Purchase grafted trees from specialist citrus or fruit tree nurseries. You cannot import citrus trees or budding material from Queensland because of disease issues.

The Importance of Rootstocks: Grafted trees take less time to bear fruit and produce better yields. The tree is smaller, suited to different soil types and is resistant to diseases.

Suggested Rootstocks for Lemon:

- Eureka on Benton, Troyer or Carrizo citrange
- Meyer on Troyer or Carrizo citrange

Fertilising:

- Non bearing trees - fertiliser every two months approximately 50-100 g/tree of 14N, 14P, 12K +TE. A minimum of two annual foliar sprays containing zinc, iron, copper and manganese. Foliar sprays should be applied on semi-matured, vegetative flush.
- Bearing trees - annual fertilizer - Nitrogen at 80-100 g/tree/per year of age, Phosphorus at 10 g/tree/per year of age, Potassium at 40-50 g/tree/per year of age applied July/August or after droughting. Apply dolomite at 100 g/m² before and after the Wet. A minimum of two annual foliar sprays containing zinc, iron, copper and manganese. Foliar sprays should be applied on semi-matured, vegetative flush.

Irrigation: Water to keep the soil moist but not soggy. Use under tree sprinklers. Monitor irrigation using tensiometers to keep moisture in the root zone. Droughting after the Wet for 4-6 weeks can improve flowering.

Pruning: When trees are young the most important thing is to get a canopy quickly, so don't over prune but rather shape the tree.

In mature trees remove all dead wood, suckers and "skirt" the lower part of the tree by removing all branches and shoots below a height of 30 cm from the ground.

Pests: Scale insects, mealy bug, sooty mould, mites and citrus leaf miner. Visit <http://pestinfo.nt.gov.au/>

Diseases: There are minimal disease problems and most can be avoided by using the correct rootstock and good irrigation practices, especially by keeping sprinklers and mulch away from the tree trunk.

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Maturity: Mature lemons take 5-6 months to ripen, display a light green colour and will have high juice content. Use a brix acid test to determine sugar to acid ratio to market standards.

Harvest Time: December-February is the market window available to NT growers.

Post Harvest: Fruit are washed and brushed to remove dirt followed by a fungal dip, an ICA treatment if required, waxed and dried. An ICA treatment is required for all states except Queensland.

Fruit exported to Western Australia requires an ICA treatment and a quarantine inspection.

Fruit needs to be degreened or gassed to achieve full colour.

Refer to the Lemon Fact Sheet – FF8.

References: <http://www.austcitrus.org.au/>

<http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/thematiclists/1080.html>

<http://www.sardi.sa.gov.au/>