

# ANNUAL Fertilizer Requirements for Citrus Trees

Apply 1/3 in January/February, 1/3 in April/May, and 1/3 in August/September



| All Citrus Trees<br><b>except Grapefruit</b><br>(see note below) |   | Pounds<br>of Actual<br><u>Nitrogen</u><br>Required<br>for the<br>Year | % Nitrogen In Fertilizer<br>(First number written on fertilizer container) |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|
|  |   |   | 5<br>(Blood<br>Meal)   | 10  | 15  | 21<br>(Ammonium<br>Sulfate)                 | 25  | 33<br>(Ammonium<br>Nitrate)                 | 46<br>(Urea)                                 |  |
| Number of years since planting                                   | Newly Planted Tree<br>You may apply <u>small</u> amounts of nitrogen after tree is established and new growth has emerged | 0 – 1 year after planting   | None to 0.12 lb  | * None to 2.5 lbs. <u>fertilizer</u> per year | *None to 1.25 lbs. <u>fertilizer</u> per year | *None to 0.5 lb. <u>fertilizer</u> per year | *None to 0.5 lb. <u>fertilizer</u> per year | *None to 0.5 lb. <u>fertilizer</u> per year | *None to 0.33 lb. <u>fertilizer</u> per year | *None to 0.25 lb. <u>fertilizer</u> per year |
|  | Young Tree  | 1 – 2 years after planting  | 0.25 lb.   | 5.0 lbs.                                      | 2.5 lbs.                                      | 1.75 lbs.                                   | 1.25 lbs.                                   | 1.0 lb.                                     | 0.75 lb.                                     | 0.5 lb.                                      |
|  | Small Tree  | 2 – 3 years after planting  | 0.50 lb.   | 10.0 lbs.                                     | 5.0 lbs.                                      | 3.33 lbs.                                   | 2.5 lbs.                                    | 2.0 lbs.                                    | 1.5 lbs.                                     | 1.0 lb.                                      |
|  | Mid-Sized Small Tree  | 3 – 4 years after planting  | 0.75 lb.   | 15.0 lbs.                                     | 7.5 lbs.                                      | 5.0 lbs.                                    | 3.75 lbs.                                   | 3.0 lbs.                                    | 2.25 lbs.                                    | 1.5 lb.                                      |
|  | Small Adult or Adult Dwarf  | 4 - 5 years after planting  | 1.0 lb.  | 20.0 lbs.                                     | 10.0 lbs                                      | 6.75 lbs.                                   | 5.0 lbs.                                    | 4.0 lbs.                                    | 3.0 lbs.                                     | 2.0 lbs.                                     |
|  | Mid – Sized Adult Or Trimmed Grown Adult  | 5 – 6 years after planting  | 1.25 lbs.  | 25.0 lbs                                      | 12.5 lbs.                                     | 8.33 lbs.                                   | 6.25 lbs.                                   | 5.0 lbs.                                    | 3.75 lbs.                                    | 2.5 lbs.                                     |
|  | Large Fully-Grown Adult, Untrimmed  | More than 6 yrs. after planting                                       | 1.5 lbs.   | 30.0 lbs.                                     | 15.0 lbs.                                     | 10.0 lbs.                                   | 7.5 lbs.                                    | 6.0 lbs.                                    | 4.5 lbs.                                     | 3.0 lbs.                                     |

➔ **Grapefruit Trees 5 or more years after planting: use ½ of amounts shown.**

\* Lbs. of fertilizer are rounded to the nearest quarter or third pound for ease of calculation.

Applying too large a dose could damage your plant. Always water fertilizers in well. Note that urea is especially concentrated. Information compiled from Bulletin MC91 – Fertilizing Citrus Chart, University of Arizona, Maricopa County Cooperative Extension.

**Resources for commonly asked questions**

Citrus Irrigation - <http://cals.arizona.edu/pubs/crops/az1151.pdf> Month-by-

Month Citrus Care - <http://www.ci.gilbert.az.us/water/citrus.html>, Citrus Ripening Dates (and Varieties) -

<http://cals.arizona.edu/pubs/garden/az1001.pdf>

## Fertilizing Citrus

Recent research from the University of Arizona demonstrates that fertilizing newly planted citrus is unnecessary. Wait until your tree has been in the ground for two years before applying fertilizer.

Nitrogen is the element that established citrus trees need the most and it is responsible for assuring a good fruit crop and a healthy tree. Feeder roots are located just below the surface of the soil, so it is important not to over fertilize, which could burn these tender roots.

The amount of fertilizer you use will vary according to the age and size of the tree, and in some cases the variety of tree. Established grapefruit trees only need one-half the amount of fertilizer normally given to other varieties of citrus.

Typically, citrus is fertilized three times a year with the amount of nitrogen they need divided into three equal quantities. An easy way to remember when to fertilize is to use the holidays of Valentine's Day, Memorial Day and Labor Day as reminders. Water the tree the day before, broadcast the fertilizer over the root zone and water in well.

Don't expect much fruit production for the first two to four years after planting. Some trees on slower-growing rootstocks may take five or six years to produce a bountiful crop.

### Using the Fertilizer Table

On the left edge of the table, find a description of the tree you wish to fertilize. The total pounds of actual nitrogen recommended for this tree **for one year** is indicated in the column directly to the right. (No fertilizer is 100% nitrogen).

Look at the top edge of the table for the percent nitrogen which your fertilizer contains. Every container or bag has three numbers written on it. The first number reflects the percent of Nitrogen, the second the percent of phosphorus, and the third the percent potassium. Example: 16-20-0 has 16% nitrogen, 20% phosphorus and no potassium.

Where the rows describing your tree intersect with the column describing the percent of nitrogen in your fertilizer intersect, the number in the box totals the number of pounds of product needed by your tree for **one year**.

Apply 1/3 of the yearly total of fertilizer in February, 1/3 in May and 1/3 in September.