

FACT SHEET: Citrus Trees for Your Landscape

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I thoroughly enjoy having citrus trees in my landscape and am even more thrilled my neighbors have some too! Site selection, tree variety and cold hardiness are important factors. As a subtropical tree, citrus survives where freezing temps are not a regular occurrence. Before you purchase a citrus tree, buy and consume different varieties of a specific fruit, then decide which to grow based on your taste preferences.

Sweet oranges: Early varieties include Hamlin and Navel, harvested October to January. Midseason varieties, Pineapple and Midsweet, harvested December through February-March and late season, Valencia, harvested March to June. If you choose one of each season variety, you'll have fresh oranges from early October to July.

Lemons and limes: Meyer lemon produces large fruit, is cold hardy, harvested November to March. West Indian/Key or Mexican lime can be container grown, bear small fruit, juice used in pies, can be picked any time of the year. My Meyer lemon and Key lime survived the past two winters in the backyard.

After attending the Kumquat Festival in Dade City, I purchased a Meiwa kumquat which has a spicy-sweet taste, is used in pies and as preserves, harvested November to April. My neighbors and I had a great time at this Festival and will attend again next year!

For information about tree and site selection, planting, watering, fertilization, weed and pest management, and pruning, access these websites on which my article is based: Citrus Culture in the Home Landscape: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/HS/HS13200.pdf> and Your Dooryard Citrus Guide: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_guide_your_florida_dooryard_citrus_guide.

For horticultural assistance, contact the Hillsborough County Extension Office, 744-5519, or visit us at 5339 County Road 579, Seffner, FL 33584. Master Gardeners are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. We can help!