



KEEPING THE HOLIDAY CHEER IN YOUR CITRUS TREES THROUGHOUT THE WINTER SEASON

As winter approaches and temperatures begin to fall over the next couple of months, owners of citrus trees should follow these four tips to ensure their citrus trees remain a beautiful sight into spring.

Citrus trees are semi-tropical and tropical crops, meaning they are healthiest and happiest in warm temperatures. Exposure to temperatures below 36 degrees can damage and even kill your citrus trees. If you own citrus trees, it's important to take the following steps to ensure your plants last through the winter season.

COLD WEATHER TIPS FOR CITRUS:

1) Ensure your tree is set up for success

- Healthy citrus trees will be less susceptible to damage in cold weather. To ensure your citrus tree is healthy going into wintertime be sure to regularly water your tree, check for aphids and other pests, and pick ripe fruit.
- Lemon, lime and citron citrus trees are the most sensitive to cold among the citrus family, whereas oranges, kumquats, tangerines and grapefruit are hardier.
- Other factors like age may also play a role, so be mindful that older trees may require more care.
- To determine when to prepare your citrus for winter, there are two government sources that can be used. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) [2012 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map](#) is the standard by which gardeners and growers can determine which plants are most likely to thrive at a location based on average annual temperatures. Additionally, weather predictions from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) can be used as a guide, and this year, predicted that California would have a [warmer](#) than average winter, with the southern half of the state experiencing low precipitation. This news may reduce the potential and severity of cold-weather harm to citrus trees depending on your location.

2) Bring potted citrus trees indoors

- If you have a shed, greenhouse, garage or enclosed porch that will protect the citrus from low temperatures, this is a great place to store your potted citrus trees throughout wintertime.
- If temperatures drop below 36 degrees, it means it's time to bring your citrus indoors. Once temperatures return to 40 degrees or higher overnight, you can put your citrus back outside.



3) Cover outdoor citrus trees when temperatures dip

- Use plastic or cloth to wrap your citrus trees that will remain outside during the winter.
- Secure the covering to the base of the tree by using weights – rocks or other – to ensure the tree remains covered in substantial weather.
- Tips from FourWinds Growers: Hang a string of lights around your citrus tree. Turn on to enjoy the glow and allow the lights to warm the foliage.

4) Check for citrus pests

- Stay vigilant in both cold and warm temperatures when it comes to pest management.
- For California citrus owners, it's important to be aware of the various pests that can harm your tree, including the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP). ACP is smaller than a grain of rice, appears brown and feeds on citrus leaves with their body at a 45-degree angle. ACP acts as a vector for the deadly citrus disease, Huanglongbing (HLB), of which there is no cure. If you suspect signs of the ACP or HLB on your citrus tree, please call CDFA's free pest hotline at 1-800-491-1899 to prevent future spread of the pest and disease.
- ACP can be found throughout the year, but populations are typically low in the winter or during dry periods.
- To prevent the spread of pests, keep your citrus on your property, or be sure to remove stems and leaves, and rinse the fruit thoroughly before moving it off your property.

For more information on ACP and HLB management and prevention, visit <https://californiacitrusthreat.org/>.

Para más información en Español, visite <https://peligrancitricosencalifornia.org/>.

Sources:

Gardening Know How: [Cold Hardy Citrus Trees: Citrus Trees That Are Cold Tolerant](#)

FourWinds Growers: [Overwintering your Citrus Trees](#)

SF Gate: <https://homeguides.sfgate.com/minimum-temperatures-citrus-tree-59616.html>

USDA: <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/> (2012)

The University of Arizona, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (March 2001): <https://extension.arizona.edu/sites/extension.arizona.edu/files/pubs/az1222.pdf>

KTla: <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/noaa-releases-california-winter-weather-predictions/>

California Department of Food and Agriculture: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/citrus/pests_diseases/acp/PestProfile.html