

CITRUS ORCHARD MANAGEMENT FOR ORANGE COUNTY GROWERS

CULTURAL PRACTICES

MINIMUM CARE FOR SHORT TERM MANAGEMENT
PRIOR TO SUB-DIVISION (1 to 3 years)

SUGGESTIONS FOR UP-GRADING ORCHARDS FOR
MAXIMUM PRODUCTION (10 years before sub-
division)

REPLANTING

No replanting should be considered on less than a five year basis.

Continue replanting as long as a future of five years or more is obvious. Replace individual tree spaces on a two for one basis. Where losses are heavy replant by blocks. Because of the quick-decline trends an orchard with wide space plantings may require intersetting now to maintain production.

IRRIGATION

Continue with present pipeline system. Use a soil tube or a shovel to improve timing. A great deal can be done for fruit sizes by proper irrigation.

Analyze present distribution system and consider ways for improving to increase efficiency. Often times savings in labor will pay for additional pipeline or relocation of an existing one. Where necessary revise the soil management system or practices and use instruments to improve irrigation timing. Consider the possible need for leaching irrigations as water quality continues to be lowered.

FROST PROTECTION

Where necessary maintain existing facilities.

Where frost hazard is great enough to require protection consider the combination of wind machine and heaters giving the most for the least cost. Up-grade heaters to avoid possible air pollution regulations that may come in the future.

SOIL MANAGEMENT

Maintain present practices with minimum amount of orchard traffic. If still using a system of tillage see if the number of discings and furrowings can be reduced. If oil costs have been excessive with the present non-cultivation set-up consider selective chemicals or a semi-tilled practice.

Adopt the practices which lead to the minimum amount of orchard traffic and especially eliminate the driving on parts of the soil that must absorb water such as furrow bottoms. With the aid of moisture measuring instruments there may be revisions necessary in the type of furrow layout in the grove.

PEST CONTROL

Try to time oil sprays during the season when one spray does the most adequate job. Consider gopher control as an essential practice right up until sale.

Use oil sprays at the time they give maximum results. Encourage maximum beneficial insect activity. Consider the necessity of ant control. Don't let gophers get away from you.

FERTILIZATION

A minimum amount of nitrogen is usually all that is necessary. Many orchards will have up to several years supply in the soil. Micro-nutrients can be incorporated in oil spray to save cost.

Use leaf analysis to determine nitrogen fertilizer program. Use amounts to give highest quality along with highest yields. Apply micronutrients in separate water spray.

PRUNING

For minimum costs prune only to provide simplified orchard care or to maintain neat appearance of orchard.

Under crowded conditions have orchard hedged. With younger plantings that begin to crowd maintain smaller size by selective cutting. Older trees will respond to cutting of any type.

WINDBREAK CARE

No special practices.

Top and/or trim to keep the windbreak in good condition. Plant fillers where necessary. Consider possibility of windbreaks serving as fence posts to reduce trespassing.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

None

Maintain appearance of the sight, landscape where necessary. Develop necessary drainage ways and culverts. Run down or hazardous ditches may become expensive liabilities. Consider that it may be necessary to substitute capital for labor since inexpensive farm labor will become much more difficult to obtain in future years.

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4/60/250 copies

COMPARING PRODUCTION COSTS

	Sample Costs Normal Care	Sample Costs Minimum Care
Irrigation (labor and water)	\$ 50	\$ 50
Pest Control (application and materials)	49*	40*
Soil Management (labor and materials)	21	21
Frost Protection (electric wind machine)	40	40
Pruning and Tree Care	19	--
Replanting	26	--
Fertilization (N + micronutrients)	35*	13*
Windbreaks	8	--
Rodents	3	3
Cash Overhead (ins., repairs, trans.)	33	17
Taxes	60	60
	<hr/> \$344	<hr/> \$244

If the returns per box under minimum care come to \$1.75, it takes 139 boxes per acre to break even. If grove does not produce enough to meet the break even point, it may be less expensive to clear off land and rent or lease to other farmers until sale time.

*Under normal care, micronutrients as a separate spray with spider material added. With minimum care micronutrients are included with single oil spray, no spider material.

AGRICULTURAL VALUE AND EARNING ABILITY

Citrus

In order to be fully informed in these times of inflated values, citrus growers should know the value of their orchard based on its agricultural productivity. Since many growers will be faced with selling their orchards in the near future, they should also determine the expected returns from such a sale. This information is especially important for high yielding orchards.

The method of computing this information is illustrated in the following examples.

Orchard Value per Acre Based on Agricultural Productivity

Yield (field boxes)	600	800
Income @ \$1.75 per box	\$1050	\$1400
Total Cash and Depreciation Costs	<u>425</u>	<u>425</u>
Net Farm Income	625	975
Management Charge @ 10% of Income	<u>105</u>	<u>140</u>
Net Return to Capital	520	835
Value per Acre (at 6%)	\$8666	\$13916

Projected Returns from Sale of 600 box Grove of 10 Acres

	<u>Sale Price</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Gain</u>
Land	\$75,000	\$15,000	\$60,000
House	15,000	5,000	10,000
Trees (depreciated)	<u>0</u>	0	<u>0</u>
	\$90,000		\$70,000
Net Gain on Sale			\$60,000
Taxable Gain			30,000
Adjusted Gross Income (6250 + 30,000)			36,250
Less Deductions (personal and itemized)			<u>2,000</u>
Taxable Income			\$34,250
Tax on \$34,250 (Of this, 10,670 was for capital gains)			11,525
Sale Price on 10 acres at \$9,000 per acre			\$90,000
Less new house			20,000
Less tax on capital gains			<u>10,670</u>
Amount remaining to invest			\$59,330
Return if invested at 6%			3,560
Net farm income if not sold			6,250