

DWARF CITRUS CARE

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE PURCHASE OF YOUR NEW DWARF CITRUS FRUIT TREE!

To ensure this tree provides many long years of fruits for your family, we recommend following this guide to ensure your tree is as healthy as possible.

What is Flying Dragon?

Flying Dragon is the Rootstock used in the grafting process to create your dwarf citrus tree. It is said to originate from ancient China or Japan around 3000BC. It is said to be immune to many of the viruses & diseases killing citrus worldwide. It's survived this long for a good reason!

For all these excellent qualities and more, we selected it to grow citrus. We love it so much we named the farm after it.

~ Maui's Dwarf Tree & Bonsai Nursery ~

DWARF CITRUS CARE

#1 Growing healthy roots = healthy trees!

The nursery container you purchased your tree in is a scientifically engineered Root-Training Pot. This pot allows for plenty of root depth, and trains the roots to grow uniformly straight down, rather than spiraling in the pot. Since overwatering is a common killer of citrus, these narrow pots also protect your young citrus tree from overwatering and becoming waterlogged in a giant pot before its ready!

We recommend keeping your new tree in this root training pot for several months (6 months average) until the roots are fully developed and bursting from holes at the bottom of the pot.

Since the root training pot is tall and narrow, we do recommend a decorative sleeve that you can place your pot in until it's ready to replant, just make sure there's plenty of holes for drainage in the bottom of your decorative sleeve!

A good indicator your roots are ready for repotting is the tree will drink water quickly & dry out faster, the pot will get very light in less days, the trunk will be much thicker, and you'll start to see root bursting from the bottom holes.

To check readiness, wait until the pot is very dry, and remove the pot gently without disturbing the soil. If you see plenty of roots throughout, especially at the bottom - **it's ready!!!**

DWARF CITRUS CARE

#2 Re-potting or Planting

RE-POTTING

If you want to keep your Dwarf Tree in a container, that's totally cool!
You just need a big container!

At the farm, we move trees into a 25 gallon container which has plenty of room for them to develop into a mature tree. We recommend picking out a large decorative pot that can showcase the trees' beauty.

Ceramic, plastic, metal... It doesn't matter, as long as they have good drainage. You never want your trees sitting in water. Too much water or bad drainage is the number one killer of citrus! **Pro Tip - Add extra perlite to your potting soil!

PLANTING

If you decide to plant your tree in the ground, your location and soil conditions are a big factor. This tree needs full sun, protection from wind, regular watering, good drainage and plant food to thrive! It will also need your continued support for protection against pests.

Once you find a location, you want to dig a hole at least 3X the size of your pot.
(If you auger a hole and drop the sleeve in the hole, the tree will suffer)

The idea is to loosen up the surrounding soil so the roots grow freely into the new soil. Dig your hole deeper and mix in cinder if your soil does not drain well. It's also a good time to mix in some healthy organic compost, plant food and any other amendments you wish to add to your soil. Add mulch around your tree, be careful to keep a small ring of mulch free border between the mulch and your tree trunk.

Keep the area around the tree weed free for best growth!
Companion plants are highly recommended.

DWARF CITRUS CARE

#3 Water on a schedule!

Dwarf Citrus Trees can survive down to nearly freezing temperatures and up to temperatures above 99° F. They are a really durable plant that have been grown well in all parts of Hawaii.

Growers in the wettest climates will be the most challenged because citrus loves to dry out between watering. That said, Dwarf Citrus is the most tolerant of too much water. When it does receive water, it likes infrequent long deep watering, NOT a regular short shallow watering.

At our farm in Kula, we water our trees on Sundays and Thursdays to give it a nice break between watering. The elevation is about 2500 feet, the days are hot and the evenings are cool. In the heat of summer we water on Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays; choosing to give it two days of deep watering and maintaining a break to dry out in between.

Our recommendation is to familiarize yourself with the weight of your pot when it is freshly watered. Just like checked baggage we can all mind memory feel when things feel heavy. So when it no longer feels heavy, give it water! It's as simple as that! As you get better at this, try to apply a schedule and get watering on a regular routine.

Your Dwarf Tree is an investment in your family and future food source, so it's worth your time & energy!

DWARF CITRUS CARE

#4 Feed your tree

Just like any living thing, your tree needs food on a regular basis.
The quality of the food is important.

We recommend a citrus specific organic fertilizer every 2-3 months. There are products such as ground stakes, slow-release granular, compost, and the list goes on... Whatever you do, feed your tree on a regular basis!

The importance of using a citrus specific fertilizer is in the micro nutrients needed for citrus to develop fully! Trace amounts of basic elements contribute greatly to the healthy development of your new Dwarf Citrus Tree.

DWARF CITRUS CARE

#5 Pest Management

Pests can be an incredible thing to deal with, especially here in Hawaii. Our recommendation is to approach it from the most basic natural organic way possible, and then slowly work yourself into more aggressive methods if needed.

A) High Pressure Water Wash Weekly

Yes, just as it sounds. Use the high-pressure and spray nozzle on your hose to wash away those insects. Use your own discretion and be careful not to break any branches with your water pressure. Often, frequently spraying off the insects does not allow them to get a colony started, and is the most natural effective way possible.

B) Soap spray

You heard it right, soap mixed with water and sprayed on your plants is one of the most effective plant washes you can make at home. Insects breathe through their bodies; when you coat the leaves in soap they will fall off and stop feeding.

We have used all types of soap, we do recommend organic whenever possible, and DO NOT use detergents. It is important to realize that contact is needed, so think about spraying on the bottom half of the leaf where the insects tend to hide or in the creases where new growth happens. After 30 mins, rinse off with water.

DO NOT spray in the middle of the day when beneficial insects like ladybugs and bees are present because it will harm them too. We recommend spraying before sunrise, and after sunset to protect the beneficial insects.

C) Organic Neem based oils

When things get really bad or you're having a difficult time controlling your pests, things like organic Neem based oils can be very effective. Just because it says organic doesn't mean its 100% safe, make sure to read your labels to make sure you know what you're using. It is especially important to use these sprays before sunrise and after sunset to protect beneficial insects and prevent leaf burn.

DWARF CITRUS CARE

#6 Fruit

These Dwarf Citrus Trees are ready to fruit today!

But just because they're ready to fruit doesn't mean they should grow loads of fruit right away, but your Dwarf Tree might try!

Allow your tree to grow a sparse few fruit on strong branches when it's very young, and pick off the other tiny fruit that develops after flowering.

Keep in mind that your tree only has but so much energy, so if it's using all its energy to make fruit, it's not growing or developing roots as quickly as it would if you pick off the fruit.

If one branch is loaded with 2-10 fruits; that branch is likely to break. Don't let the branches get overloaded with fruit until they cannot support the weight.

Use your best judgement. If it looks like too much fruit, pluck off the excess!

DWARF CITRUS CARE

#7 Water suckers

You have purchased a Grafted Dwarf Citrus Tree.

Since it has been grafted, it is an exact clone of the variety you have selected.

Since it has been grafted, the roots are much more durable and resistant to diseases and viruses that can kill your tree.

It is important to familiarize yourself with the graft point. It's pretty easy to identify where the bark changes color & texture. Often you will find a small nub or cut-off point where the graft happened.

In order to redirect energy back up to the grafted (top half) of your tree, you need to remove all the water suckers/new growth below the graft point. These will look like little green growth coming out of the trunk of your tree that can be plucked or trimmed off easily.

By doing this on a weekly basis, you will be encouraging your tree to grow quick and healthy!

DWARF CITRUS CARE

Summary

Growing your own food is among the most rewarding experiences!

We started our family farm to solve a problem.

Being renters on Maui for over 15 years, we planted fruit trees at each rental property only to donate them to the landlord when we moved to our next home.

Often we moved before we saw the fruits of our labor.

We wanted a tree that we could take with us, that could live in a container, and produce full size, abundant fruit in a small space.

After a lot of research, time & development.....

This is it!

We wanted to grow Dwarf Fruit Trees so that everyone, regardless of your property size or ownership/rental status could have their own fruit trees, have space to grow them and have the ability to provide a variety of food to your family and island community!

From our Ohana to yours,

Mahalos Nui Loa

Flying Dragon Farm Family