

# Citrus

## Irrigation

Water management constitutes an important input in citrus orchard, which determines productivity and longevity. Citrus plants responds well to irrigation.

The critical period for irrigating citrus trees is during summer when frequent light irrigation helps to lower soil temperature and to raise humidity. In fact, irrigation should be so scheduled that the plants are watered few days before the onset of flowering and it is repeated again after the fruit-set. Application of irrigation is equally important at the time of fruit maturity so as to avoid shrinkage of fruits and drying of pulp. Shortage of water during these two stages may result in the shedding of flowers and newly-set fruits. Water stress during the later part of fruit development period reduces fruit size, but certain amount of stress during this period increases TSS, juice and vitamin C contents in the fruits.

Watering at 5 to 6 days interval during summer and every 10 to 12 days during winter is quite effective.

Drip irrigation is becoming popular in water scarce area of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Use of drip system improved the yield, uniformity in fruits and gave excellent quality of fruits with respect to shape, colour and edible quality.

Sprinkler irrigation avoids the harmful effects caused by excessive supply and also saves water. Sprinkling needs 30% to 50% less water than surface irrigation.