



SUSTAINABLE HOLLY

PLANT OF
THE MONTH

LEMON TREE

MAY 2021

LEMON TREE

Citrus limon

Lemon trees make an amazing addition to any edible garden. They produce in abundance and are one of the easiest fruit trees to grow. They can also be easily grown in pots so are a great choice for urban gardens or renters. Lemons are powerhouses of flavour and such a versatile fruit. Lemons can be used for desserts, salad dressings, condiments and even cleaning products.

How to grow

Lemon trees are best grown from a quality grafted variety. They can be grown in a pot or in the ground. Prepare free-draining, compost rich soil. Choose a sunny location.

Varieties

The most common lemon varieties grown in Australia are Eureka, Lisbon and Meyer. Meyer are best for growing in pots or you can also get dwarf varieties that are perfect for pots.

Climate

Lemons like most citrus prefer full sun and protection from strong winds. Once established Lemons are hardy and drought tolerant. They are sensitive to frosts and prefer warm climates.

Care / maintenance

Once lemon trees are established they are relatively hardy. Lack of water during fruiting will result in dry lemons. Keep well watered in summer. Lemons have shallow root systems so keep weeds and other plants away from the base of the tree.

Pests

Lemons have some common pests and are very good at showing you what is wrong. Curled leaf miner, aphids, scale and sooty mould. Usually when one appears the others will too as the tree will be vulnerable. Healthy trees will bounce back after the pests have been treated.

Reproduce

Lemons can be propagated by cuttings or air layering. To make cuttings choose semi-hardwood branches with 6-7 nodes. Each cutting should be about 15cm in length and 1cm in diameter. Plant at least 3 nodes into soil and keep well watered until they shoot roots.



Harvesting

Lemons will start to produce fruit in their 2nd or 3rd year. Each year after that their yields will significantly increase. It is important to remove fruit in the first few years to allow the tree to grow strong. Lemons are heavy fruit and if the tree is too small to bear the weight whole branches will snap and your tree will significantly suffer.

Depending on the variety of lemon you have chosen, you will have fruit ready for harvest during winter or throughout the year.

Cooking

Lemons can be used for sweet or savoury dishes. Lemon juice is high in vitamin C and will brighten and enhance other flavours. It also adds acidity to dishes and can help balance sweetness.

Lemon juice can be used for a quick and easy salad dressing. Mix lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper and tossed through salad.

Quartered lemons placed in with Roast vegetables also add a delicious caramelised dressing.

Lemon is a great staple base crop to support your cooking all year round.

Preserving your harvest

Lemons can be dehydrated for storage, frozen in slices, juice frozen in ice cubes, preserved in salt, lemon butter, lemon powder from dehydrated skins, lemon cleaning product from skins.

BEST OF LEMONS

- Quick producing and hardy.
- Produce an abundance of food from each plant.
- Good base crop for self-sufficiency
- Versatility - can be used in a wide range of ways and dishes.
- Easy to preserve harvests.
- Low maintenance care.
- Can be grown in pots or the garden.
- The whole fruit can be utilised multiple ways.
- Staple for flavour enhancing
- Great for gifting and trading