



Citrusvil

The Lemon Tree and the Four Seasons

The uniqueness of the lemon tree manifests throughout its life cycle. This tree stands out due to its capability to adapt to various weather conditions, which makes it possible for the lemon tree to survive in different environments throughout the year. In addition, its resistance and versatility turn it into a tree of great significance both for agriculture and landscape.

According to the report “Estudios fenológicos y manejo del cultivo del limón en Tucumán” ¹, the methodical observation of the production cycles of Tucumán lemon trees (sprouting, flowering, formation and ripening of the fruit) is intimately related to the weather conditions of each season and is determining when it comes to make decisions about carrying out some activities in plantation management, especially regarding phytosanitary care.

Like any other living being, lemon trees are sensitive to light, water, soil conditions and the characteristic temperature of each season. However, unlike those species which change completely, the foliage of these trees undergoes smooth and subtle transformations. The most intense contrast is found in the lemon peel itself, which is first green and, then, as time goes

by in the branches, it turns into shiny yellow, which means it has successfully completed the ripening process. When temperatures drop, it changes its colour.

At the end of winter, lemon blossom bunches open, and the workers at Citrusvil's 23 orchards start to get ready to see the fruits which will then be processed, resulting in the products that Citrusvil industrializes to the world.

It is a phenomenon which pervades the air with a sweetish perfume. It is a clear sign that the biological cycle is taking place as expected and that spring is coming. Since then, temperatures start to rise and tops are shiny and lush due to sprouting.

Autumn

Beginning of Harvesting

Lemon trees keep part of their vigor but they show signs of change when temperatures start to drop. Although their leaves are still green, they may lose some brightness and they start falling gradually. Naturally, their foliage is less dense in comparison with summer.

As from April, lemon trees usually show a more intense yellow colour, since they have completely reached ripeness. Their branches are still arched due to the weight of the fruits, but the trees show a more modest appearance. Harvesting begins in this season, and over 2,500 temporary workers are employed in our orchards for such purpose.

Winter

Barer branches

Although they are perennial trees which keep the majority of their leaves, during winter, harvesting finishes and lemon trees are completely freed from the weight which made their branches arched. Such branches are a little bit bare, and the log keeps its greyish or light brown colour. During this season, the resting state prevails: minimum activity makes it possible for lemon trees to have their energy focused on sprouting and flowering, which usually take place between the end of August and the beginning of September.

Spring

Rebirth

In spring, lemon trees awaken in search of brightness. Their green leaves are bright and their foliage is dense, full of vitality. The main characteristic of this season is the abundance of small white flowers full of perfume, known as lemon blossoms, which cover the tree and pervade the air with their sweet aroma.



These flowers prelude the future fruits. During this season, we can see some green lemons growing. Full of leaves and flowers, the branches attract pollinators such as bees, which produce the precious honey of Tucumán lemon blossom flower. The tree's surroundings are fresh and they create the feeling of rebirth and energy.



Summer Pleasant Shade

Lemon trees have a vibrant and full of life aspect. Their foliage is dense, with big and shiny dark green trees. During this season, lemon trees are full of lemons whose colours vary among different shades of green. Lemons are oval and different in size, and they are distributed among the branches. The branches begin to arch due to the growth of the fruits and they offer some pleasant shade which is really valuable during those days when temperature rises above 40 °C.

Area Grown in Tucumán in 2023/24

Based on a study conducted by the Remote Sensors and Geographic Information Systems Department of Obispo Colombres Agroindustrial Experimental Station (EEAOC),² Tucumán had about 41,990 net hectares of lemon trees of two years of age or older during the 2023/24 season (about 9% is deducted due to narrow passes, harvesting open spaces and other facilities).

Plants are equitably distributed in the northern area, in the districts of Burruyacu and Tafi Viejo, and in the centre and southern areas.



34%
plantations older
than 20 years of age

66%
plantations between
2 and 19 years of age

Burruyacu is the district which has the largest planted area.

Tafi Viejo, Yerba Buena and Lules are the ones having the greatest number of old plantations (older than 19 years of age) and the lowest renewal rate, since some lands are now of urban use.



References

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1) "Phenological Studies and Lemon Crop Management in Tucumán": Nelson D. Aranda, Dardo H. Figueroa, Nicolás Mitrovich, M. Inés Valdéz, M. Belén Roig, Hernán Salas. "Estudios fenológicos y manejo del cultivo del limón en Tucumán." Fruit Growing Section. 2023.

2) EEAOC. "Estimación del área implantada con cítricos en Tucumán en 2024".