

Workflow: Production – Basic Farming Practices

Toolkit 3.3

Planting and Young Tree Care

target audience

Farm owners, managers, and supervisors.

what it is

This toolkit addresses both the correct planting and care of young trees.

You have done all the preparatory work: assessed, researched and planned what should be planted; laid out the orchard based on best practice; tested and prepared the soil; laid main and sub-main irrigation lines; and confirmed that you have the required infrastructure to support and sustain the orchard. The moment to begin planting new trees has arrived!

why it is important

Correct planting and subsequent tree care are both important, and you must avoid:

- Stressed saplings and potentially losing newly planted trees at this early point.
- Permanent damage to the tree which may compromise the tree for life and negatively affect yield and quality.
- Negative results of poor planting practice such as collar rot.
- Shortening the lifespan on an orchard.
- Orchards that later require more work and input costs than those where the planting and young tree care had been done properly.

success factors

- **Preparation and Tools** – The correct tools such as theodolites, tape measures, plant lines and stakes, spades, forks, a planting board, a water car, pruning shears, supporting stakes, biodegradable twine, stem covers, etc. The soil would have been prepared (physically and chemically) 3-9 months prior to planting.
- **Quality of the Trees** – Ensure that you buy only the best trees from reputable and certified nurseries.

- **Receiving the Trees** – Trees should be transported to the farm in an “enclosed” vehicle to limit wind damage, and then stored in a protected place to avoid wind, sun, and heat damage. Keep the bagged trees moist.
- **Planting the Trees** – The more tree friendly the planting process is, the less stress the tree will experience, the quicker it will settle, and the better it will grow. Avoid planting in excessive heat or cold, or when the soil is waterlogged. Ideally, plant in the morning. Holes must be dug properly to provide adequate space, and the way the tree is taken out its plastic bag, how it is positioned (depth), if the soil is gently tapped down and settled, and how the young tree is watered are all equally important.
- **Staking and other Protective Measures** – Support the tree with a stake and biodegradable twine and place a stem protector around the stem.
- **Initial Pruning** – Prune the tree very carefully to remove broken branches and where necessary to give the tree a good initial shape.
- **Tree Care** – In the months after planting, the overall care, weeding, and watering is critical, as is ensuring that stakes and the trees remain secure and protected.

execution steps

Covered in the success factors above.

assessment questions

Please Note: There is no minimum / maximum amount of questions you can add

1.	Do you buy your trees from an accredited nursery?
2.	Are the trees transported safely to your farm?
3.	Do you have a place where you can keep the bagged saplings moist and safe?
4.	Do you have all the tools you require to plant successfully?
5.	Do you have clear SOPs, trained staff, and control measures to ensure that trees are planted properly?
6.	Are all your new trees staked properly and have stem protectors?
7.	Do you do initial pruning according to set standard (SOP)?
8.	Do you have a set standard on young tree care?

resources

1.	Citrus Academy AV module – Orchard Establishment
2.	Citrus Academy AV module – Orchard Recordkeeping
3.	Citrus Academy production learning material – Orchard Establishment