



### WHEN IS PEAR CITRUS SEASON?

Demand for citrus ensures that kitchen staples like organic lemons, limes and oranges are found in produce departments year-round. The California citrus season marks the peak time for this category. The season typically begins in November and starts to wind down in April, though some varieties will extend as late as September. December through March is considered the height of the season with the greatest number of varieties and volume harvested during these months.

### WHICH REGIONS IN CALIFORNIA PRODUCE CITRUS?

California grown represents an enormous portion of the citrus consumed in the US with several ranches certified organic. While not all ranches fall into what is called the “Three Districts,” the vast majority do, with each district known for its own climate and the benefits and challenges that that climate presents. Those districts are:

#### District 1: The Central Valley Region

This is the largest district and one of the primary regions where Navel oranges are grown, along with nearly every other variety that OGC sources. Summers in this district are hot and dry, with cooler wetter winters that create ideal conditions for growers.

#### District 2: The Coastal Region

As to be expected with marine influence, this district is generally more temperate and mild. It’s fantastic for lemons and tangerines. It does represent a large amount of land, so the further east you travel in this district the climate gets more arid than in the coastal west, so growing practices are dynamic and there is variation in what these ranches produce.

#### District 3: The Desert Region

The Coachella Valley makes up most of this district, which is known for extreme fluctuations in temperature and consistent low humidity. Its aridity presents some irrigation challenges but also makes for some incredibly flavorful fruit.



### WHAT VARIETIES CAN BE EXPECTED DURING THE THREE PHASES, EARLY, MID AND LATE, OF CITRUS SEASON?

The early phase, starting in November and into December, kicks off the season with organic specialty citrus like Buddha’s Hand citron and Yuzu lemon, along with well-loved staple varieties such as Navel orange and Satsuma mandarin. January and February bring the peak of varietal diversity with incredible Blood oranges, a wide array of mandarins and tangelos, grapefruit, pummelo and more. In late February through April, Minneola, Murcott and TDE mandarins join the lineup along with fantastic kumquats. The later months yield phenomenal juicing varieties and citrus with floral attributes that end the season with incredible flavor!

## WHICH VARIETIES DOES OGC CARRY?

We are proud to carry over 60 varieties of organic citrus, positioning OGC as the best citrus source in the Pacific Northwest. It's a category we're not only proud to offer with such depth, but a program that is only possible thanks to long-standing relationships with our California grower partners.

Be sure to check OGC's *Citrus Availability Chart* for a complete list of varieties and when to expect them. And our *Citrus Primer* for more in-depth information about each variety. From the tiniest kumquat to the heftiest pummelo and everything in between, there's something for every eater!

## WHO ARE OGC'S SUPPLIERS?

To source so many varieties, OGC works with a number of California growers that range from boutique to mid-sized and larger grower collectives. Each ranch is essential to keeping the Pacific Northwest well-stocked during peak citrus season.

Head to [organicgrown.com/citrus](https://www.organicgrown.com/citrus) to learn more.

## WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO KEEP EXCITEMENT FOR CITRUS ALIVE IN THE PRODUCE DEPARTMENT DURING THIS MONTHS-LONG SEASON?

The first glimpse of organic citrus in late fall certainly sparks joy. That zeal is carried into the early weeks of winter when sunshiny citrus sets, fruit bowls, tables and palates aglow. From November and into February, a lush display of varieties is enough to do the trick. Around the same time, a dizzying number of mandarin varieties are harvested, and the first hints of spring begin to tease a seasonal transition. Finishing the citrus season strong for our grower partners is key to their success, so here's some tips to keep the thrill alive.

The best way to keep excitement for citrus going is to sample. Sample, sample, sample! Some late-season varieties are the sweetest, most flavorful and juicy. Shoppers curious about trying something new can be swayed if they can taste it. Others just need a sweet (or tangy, or downright tart) reminder their favorite varieties are still available.

If sampling isn't an option, rely on merchandising best practices. Large and lush displays with multiple locations throughout the store, plenty of color breaks and cross-merchandising all help citrus displays appear lively and enticing. POP placed in displays can help educate, especially during that delicious time of year when every "small round orange thing" is available in volume. Telling mandarins apart is a skill that takes some research, so help eaters be experts!

Running promotions or even specials on the whole category during the height of the season can help lure shoppers in. Newsletters, social media and in-store signage celebrating the bounty of the season help to get citrus in shoppers' scope.

And don't forget good, old-fashioned conversations with shoppers. Personal anecdotes about how to use a Calamondin for infusing liquor, the delight of cracking into an aromatic pummelo or how well a Buddha's Hand citron can fragrance a room can help to make more unique varieties accessible. The same goes for mandarins and oranges. Sharing enthusiasm for the category while on the floor can make a big difference!

## SHARE THIS INFO WITH EATERS

- Citrus season is on now and will continue for months to come!
- While some varieties, like Navel orange and many mandarins, have long availability windows, other more unique varieties come and go quickly. If shoppers see something special, encourage them to scoop it up before it's gone!
- Think beyond snacking! Bake, cook, infuse, candy, juice and scent rooms with citrus. There's a variety to meet every need.
- Explore! Citrus is an exciting category to experiment with new-to-you varieties.
- Your store's citrus program offers the greatest variety available in the region!



## MERCHANDISING TIPS

- Use forever favorites like Navel orange and Satsuma mandarin as a base to build around. Include specialty varieties alongside familiar options to entice new fans.
- Place citrus front and center. Especially important as the season moves into late spring to keep interest strong.
- Find additional opportunities to display citrus outside of the produce department.
- Sample if you can! You'll benefit from sales by offering a taste of both familiar varieties and more obscure citrus.
- Utilize color breaks to help shoppers' eyes easily move from one variety to the next in a display. Vital throughout the season, but essential during the height of "small round orange thing" months when there are mandarins aplenty, use items like grapefruit to break up the sea of orange.
- Cross-merchandise with other enticing items. Year-round staples like grapes and blueberries can help draw shoppers to citrus, and salad components can help inspire savory dishes that incorporate citrus.

