



# J&L Garden Center

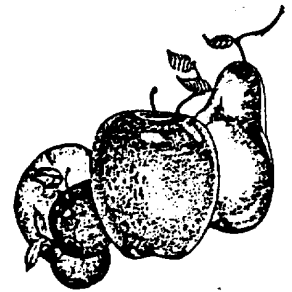
The All Season Gift  
and Garden Center

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[www.JLGardenCenter.com](http://www.JLGardenCenter.com)

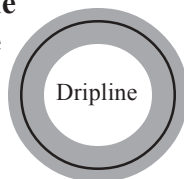
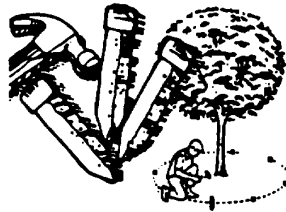
## Fruit Tree Fertilizer Guide

Fruit trees must be fertilized early each spring if they are to produce high quality fruit each year. Fruit trees need more fertilizer than other type of trees and shrubs because the fruit itself requires extra amounts of fertilizer to mature and ripen properly. Fertilize your fruit trees at least six weeks before they bloom, to allow the tree time to move the fertilizer to the fruit. If you fertilize later in the spring the tree will use the fertilizer to produce new shoots instead of using it to help the fruit. Don't fertilize late in the summer, or fall, or the tree may produce undesired growth in the fall. New growth late in the year may be injured during the winter weather. Always fertilize fruit trees in the early spring.



### Young Fruit Trees

Fertilize young trees (one to five years old) with **Ross Fruit Tree Fertilizer Spikes**. Ross Fruit Tree Spikes are easy to use and provide a good, slow-release fertilizer for the plant. Use three to five fertilizer spikes per tree depending upon the age and size of your tree. Space the fertilizer spikes evenly around the tree; under the dripline of the tree but at least 12" away from the main trunk. **The dripline of the tree is the area within one foot of the outside the edge of the branches to two feet inside the edge of the branches.** Do not hammer the stakes directly into the soil. Make a hole with a stick or shovel and then gently tap the stakes as deep into the soil as possible. Hammering the stakes may break them.



Don't let young fruit trees produce fruit until they are at least 3 years old. Premature fruit production may stunt the tree's growth.

### Middle Aged Fruit Trees

Fertilize older trees (three to eight years old) with **J&L 16-16-8 Multi-Purpose Fertilizer**. Use three to five pounds per tree (depending on the age of the tree). Apply the fertilizer evenly around the dripline of the tree and water it in. If the tree is

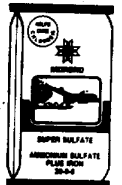


in the lawn, place the fertilizer below the lawn's root system by poking holes six to twelve inches deep and putting one or two tablespoons of fertilizer in each hole.



### Mature Fruit Trees

Fertilize mature trees (over eight to ten years old) with **Ammonium Sulfate (21-0-0)**. If your mature tree has been neglected, or is not looking healthy, then use **J&L 16-16-8 Multi-Purpose Fertilizer** instead of the Ammonia Sulfate. Check the fertilizer recommendation chart for the right amount of fertilizer to use for your tree.



Other nutrients, such as iron, zinc, sulphur and magnesium, may be needed in special cases. Please ask one of our fruit tree specialists for help if you have further questions.

#### Fertilizer Requirements

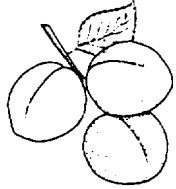
Pounds of fertilizer to be applied per fruit tree.

(pick only 1 fertilizer not all 3 types)	Ammonia Nitrate (34-0-0)	Ammonia Sulfate (21-0-0)	Multipurpose Fertilizer (16-16-8)
Age of Tree			
1 to 3 years	0.75 - 1.5lbs	1.25 - 2.5 lbs	1.5-3.0 lbs
3 to 5 years	1.0 - 1.66 lbs	2.5 - 5.0 lbs	3.0 - 6.0 lbs
Mature Trees	3.0 - 5.0 lbs	5.0 - 7.5 lbs	6.0 - 9.0 lbs
Large Apple or Cherry	4.5 - 9.0 lbs	7.5 - 15.0 lbs	9.0 - 18.0 lbs

*Check the rate of growth of your fruit tree to determine the actual amount of fertilizer needed.*

## Too Much Fertilizer?

Too much fertilizer can be just as bad for the fruit tree as not enough fertilizer. Too much fertilizer can cause excessive growth which can lead to diseases (fire blight in pears), or weak branches. Too much fertilizer can also cause poorly colored, late-maturing, poorly flavored fruit. Compare the growth rate of your trees against the recommended growth rates in the accompanying chart. You can use this chart to see if your tree needs more or less fertilizer than you have



used in the past. If your tree is growing more than the chart suggests reduce the fertilizer. If your tree is growing slower than recommended use a little more. **It is usually better to "under" fertilize fruit trees than to "over" fertilize them.**

### Average Rate of Growth

The average length of new shoot growth, in inches, of a healthy fruit tree.

Type of Tree	Young trees 1 to 6 years	Bearing Age Tree over 6 years
Apple, Dwarf & Semi Dwarf	10" - 20"	4" - 8"
Apple, Standard	10" - 20"	6" - 10"
Peach, Nectarine, Apricot	10" - 24"	8" - 15"
Cherry, Plum	10" - 20"	3" - 12"

*Adjust the amount of water and fertilizer applied to control the rate of growth. Pruning is not a good way to control the growth rate.*

## Fruit Trees in Lawn Area

Most home fruit trees are planted in the lawn area, which is not always an ideal location. Too much water and too much fertilizer are two problems that either stunt or kill trees planted in the lawn.



Fruit trees do not like to be watered as often as lawns need to be watered. Many orchardists do not start watering their orchards until June or July. Most home owners start watering their lawns April 15, as soon as the water is available. Too much water may cause root rot. This disease will kill trees, especially peaches, cherries, apricots, and nectarines. Too much water may stimulate the tree to grow too fast, creating weak branches. Too much water may also make the fruit taste bland or less flavorful. Try not to over water your trees. Do not water them much in the spring. Deep water them once a month beginning in June until mid October. Do not water fruit trees after October.



Fruit trees need plenty of fertilizer to grow properly and produce high quality fruit, however, too much fertilizer can reduce the quality of the fruit and damage the tree. Always check the rate of growth of your fruit tree to determine how much fertilizer to apply. A rule of thumb is to reduce the amount of fertilizer applied by 25% if the tree is planted in the lawn. Each time you fertilize your lawn you are also fertilizing your trees a little.

