

CALENDAR OF OPERATIONS FOR BACKYARD WALNUT TREES in Sonoma County

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General information: The most common varieties grown successfully in Lake County are Poe (very erratic fruit set), Hartley and Franquette. Earlier varieties are more prone to frost damage and walnut blight. Chandler is a new UC-patented variety that appears to do well in Lake County and produces nuts earlier than Hartley or Franquette.

Winter

1. Prune trees by thinning out crowded areas to let light into the whole tree. Remove broken and dead branches. Chandler needs heavier pruning than Franquette or Hartley to maintain good growth.
2. Dormant spraying may be necessary for scale insect control; if scale is present, use dormant oil at budswell. However, **AVOID OIL WHEN SOIL IS DRY OR TREES MAY BE HARMED.**

Spring

1. Walnut blight is rare in late varieties commonly grown in Lake County, e.g. Chandler, Hartley and Franquette. However, if there are late spring rains, blight should be sprayed for when female flowers appear (tiny nuts with feathery pistil) and at 7 day intervals until rainy weather stops. Use bordeaux, or other fixed copper materials and get thorough coverage of the whole tree. Walnut blight appears as blackened ends at the blossom end of hulls in June and later as black, hollow nuts.
2. Remove excess soil and all weeds from the base of the trees and keep this area dry in summer to reduce crown rot problems.
3. Control weeds and grass under non-irrigated trees to ensure enough water for the trees.
4. Fertilize non-irrigated, mature trees just before or during mid- to late-winter rain with about 5-7 lbs. of urea, 7-9 lbs. of ammonium nitrate or 11-13 lbs. ammonium sulfate. Manure should be applied in the fall.

Summer

1. If irrigated, water trees at the drip line, **but away from the trunks**. Provide at least 3 inches of water about every 3 to 4 weeks, beginning in June. Drip irrigation should be timed on a daily basis during the months of June thru October. Young, small trees will need about 4-12 gallons of water per day and large trees about 30-50.

Late Summer and Autumn

1. Hang yellow husk fly traps about July 15 and monitor daily. When the number of flies increase sharply, spray with malathion (1 Tbs./gal.) plus Nu-Lure bait, Karo syrup or molasses (1 Tbs./gal.). The syrup attracts the flies so full tree coverage is not necessary. Walnut husk fly causes a soft rotting black hull full of maggots that stains the shells. They do not enter or harm nut meats, so control is optional.

2. Harvest nuts by shaking or poling the tree when green hulls begin to break away from the shell. Nuts are fully mature at this stage. If left on the tree or allowed to fall on their own, the hulls will rot and stick to the shell.

3. Apply 90 (poultry) or 150 (steer) lbs. of manure (well-rotted, no weed seeds) if no spring fertilizer was applied.

UC Publications of Interest

Care of Walnut Trees in Landscaped Areas	2227	\$1.75
Training Young Walnut Trees	2471	1.50
Pruning Fruit and Nut Trees	21171	3.00
Saving Water in the Home Orchard	7098	free
Deep Bark Canker of Walnut Trees	7117	free
Walnut Huller for Home Use	7011	free