

Orchard management: July to September

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SUBTROP

NUTRITION

- Remember to take both leaf and soil samples during mid-September to mid-November.
- Only middle pair leaflets below fruit cluster should be sampled during this period.
- Collect soil samples diagonally through orchard under drip area.
- Leaf and soil norms are available to determine nutrient needs subject to analysis results.
- Nitrogen is the major nutrient and it occupies an important position in litchi fertiliser programme, therefore as soon as flowers appear, half the annual nitrogen and potassium and all phosphorus should be applied, to ensure healthy flower formation and to limit stress experienced by the plant.
- A balanced spray program should be applied during this period to ensure that adequate micro-elements are provided to the trees, but such micro-elements are required in a very small quantity.
- During Aug/Sept – apply Zn, B, (Cu and Mn) to the first male flowers and KNO_3 on female flowers (optional) according to leaf analysis.
- Also apply Kelpak products or other products with Cytokinins to the first male flower (optional).
- You will also need to come up with 2% CaNO_3 or Calcimax during fruit set period.

CULTURAL PRACTICES

- Flower growth and fruit set uses a lot of energy, so steadily increase your irrigation to limit all stress the tree might experience.
- During full flowering and fruit set, irrigation will always be crucial and should be applied more frequently to avoid any form of stress, which could hamper fruit set and development.
- Adequate irrigation during fruit set will help to prevent fruit cracking and help to increase fruit size.

GENERAL

- Bees are essential for maximum fruit set, therefore you will need four beehives/ha to ensure satisfactory pollination.
- Girdling of trees during this period will ensure optimal carbohydrates build-up in the shoots, which optimise fruit set and fruit retention.
- Girdling for fruit set should be done just before flower opening and only on strong, mature and healthy trees.
- Remember to keep weeds short and also construct fire belts in orchards to reduce the risk of fire, and also use registered herbicides to control weed growth in orchards.
- Monitoring for fruit fly, mostly BI, is of utmost importance to ensure healthy fruit during harvesting. 

