Annual Fruit Tree Care
Central Coast of CA

Winter

- prune trees once dormant
- plant new trees as early as you can
- apply an organic fertilizer if the tree needs it
- install drip or micro sprinkler system

Spring

- thin fruit once marble size
- train young trees
- begin watering program before soil dries out
- GOPHERS! start trapping before they take over
- apply a round of fertilizer to weak trees

Summer

- harvest early varieties
- remove damaged/infested fruit from trees
- summer prune in aug./sept
- keep up the watering

Fall

- harvest
- orchard floor clean up
- record the year’s orchard happenings
- sow cover crops
- apply compost/mulch
Winter Pruning Checklist

Before you cut...

**Observe the whole picture/tree:**

- Form?
- Objective? (What are you trying to achieve?)
- What kind of fruit?
- Where do the fruit buds develop?
- Where do I want my fruit to hang?

**Cut...what?**

**The 4 D’s:**

*Dead, Diseased, Damaged & Disoriented*

**Prune ONE scaffold at a time:**

- Find the leader and begin there.
- Decide if the scaffold needs to grow more or be shorter:
  - For *more* - head leader
  - For *shorter* - remove and cut to weaker leader

**Everything behind the leader is a lateral, so treat it like one.**

- How many fruit can really hang on that lateral?
  - Pomes: shorten into two-year or older wood or let be
  - Stones:
    - Peaches - stub one-inch every other lateral
    - shorten remaining laterals 4”-6”
    - Plums & Cots - stub one-inch every third lateral
    - shorten remaining laterals 8”-12”

*Prune with fearless patience*

When you think you are done... you are probably done!