

# **MANDARINS: Yosemite Gold**

**FRUIT DESCRIPTION:** Seedless ( 0-3 seeds/fruit ). Oblate shape. 2.50-3.25 inches in diameter equates to a Jumbo to Colossal size designation. Rind has a deep orange to reddish-orange color, smooth texture and medium thickness. Easy to peel. Internally the deep orange colored flesh has a medium-fine texture, is seedless in mixed plantings and has a medium to medium-large hollow core at maturity. The rich, sweet and distinctive flavor is similar to its Temple and Dancy parentage.

**TREE DESCRIPTION:** Round shape with moderately vigorous growth habit and thorny branches. Sets medium to medium-heavy crop and alternate bearing seems to be not as severe as with Shasta Gold. Large, spreading tree if not pruned regularly. Irregular pruning could be detrimental to production, as the alternate bearing would become more severe. Alternate bearing tendencies may be alleviated with management techniques, scheduled harvesting and annual pruning.

**HARVEST SEASON:** Mid-December to June

**PROS:** Large, attractive deep orange colored fruit is seedless, oblate in shape and has a rich, sweet flavor. Fruit holds exceptionally well on the tree into May with little loss of quality. Can be grown in all citrus regions of California. Seedless when grown in mixed plantings.

**CONS:** Alternate bearing is a characteristic of most mandarin selections, but Yosemite Gold seems to be less influenced by this condition, although it does occur. Should this become an issue, harvesting on schedule, fruit thinning, not holding the fruit too long and annual pruning may help manage this problem. Slight to moderate fruit puffing happens from February through May.

**COMPATABLE ROOTSTOCKS:** Carrizo, C-35 Citrange, Trifoliate

## **RECOMMENDED SPACINGS:**

Traditional : 15'-17'x 18', 15'-17'x 20', 16'x18', 18'x 18', 16'x 20'

Double Planting Standard Rootstock: 8'x 18', 9'x 18', 8'x 20'

C-35: 14'x 18', 16'x 18'

Double Planting C-35 Citrange: 7'x 18', 8'x 18'

**HISTORY:** Yosemite Gold is one of the results of an ambitious breeding program being conducted by the University of California at Riverside in an attempt to develop seedless mandarin fruit. Yosemite Gold is a triploid hybrid that combines the best qualities of Temple Tangor, Dancy Mandarin and Encore

Mandarin together to make a mid to late season seedless mandarin that is attractive, flavorful and has good size. It was planted at the U.C.R. Lindcove Field Station in 1992 for observation and evaluation and annual fruit data has been available since 1995. Yosemite Gold was not part of the original TDE trial grown in the desert, but is now included in another mandarin trial being conducted in the desert by the University to provide more information on how these mandarin varieties perform in this citrus region. All information indicates that Yosemite Gold should perform as well as the other TDE selections.

**OTHER OBSERVATIONS:** Yosemite Gold is similar to Shasta Gold, having late maturity, good rind color and large size, but Yosemite Gold holds exceptionally well and has better flavor. The overall qualities of Yosemite Gold are good but slightly less than Tahoe Gold. Yosemite Gold fruit is larger than Gold Nugget and most mandarin varieties. Fruit color breaks in December in inland valleys and coastal regions. Tree spacing is similar to what is being used with Clementine and Satsuma mandarins even though it has a spreading growth habit. Close spacing is recommended because of the pruning required to help alleviate the alternate bearing tendencies. Pruning should begin in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year before the tree becomes large and productive. It is best to begin the process early in its lifecycle and maintain it annually. Prune to create a compact tree with an open center while maintaining a protective crown. Pruning heavily going into a low-yield year can greatly improve production in that year. Lowering the height of the tree also reduces harvesting costs. Planting as close as Gold Nugget or W. Murcott (400 trees/acre) is not recommended. Fruit production does require bee pollination and may benefit from floral inductions. Many fruit are born per branch in a cluster creating an arrangement that could prove difficult in controlling Cottoncushion scale. Successful mandarin production requires management techniques, unique to the group, which must be accomplished throughout the season in order to insure the development of high quality fruit. These techniques include: spacing, culture, fruit set, pollination and pruning.