**Fruit Tree Pruning Instructions**

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**January** is the month for **fruit tree pruning** in Southern California. Keep in mind that this applies to **deciduous** fruit trees only (trees that go dormant in the winter), such as **apples**, **peaches**, **pears**, **plums**, etc. The goal here is to **shape** and **control** the **size** of the tree, while not cutting off so much that it will inhibit **fruit** **production**. Generally, we recommend to:

-Prune back **branches** one quarter to one third of the way. Make all cuts at a **45** **degree angle,** above a **bud** (the **buds** are small bumps on the branch).

-Thin out **crossing branches**, some **center branches**, and any **dead twigs** or **branches**. You do this to allow light into the center of the tree, and to allow wind to pass through the canopy.

-Apply **pruning sealer** to any cuts made on branches bigger around than your thumb (about half an inch or so). This is especially important for any branches you cut off the **trunk** of the tree.

-Apply **tree trunk paint** to the trunk of the tree and any higher branches that will be exposed to the sun in **summer**.-Clear **fallen leaves**, **branches**, and **debris** from around the base of the tree and dispose of them, to help stop the spread of **disease.**