

West Central Citrus Letter

DeSoto Extension Service

2150 NE Roan Street • Arcadia FL 34266
863/993-4846

Hardee Extension Service

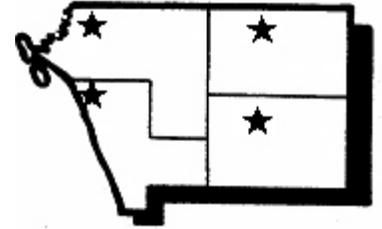
507 Civic Center Drive • Wauchula FL 33873
863/773-2164

Manatee Extension Service

1303 17th Street West • Palmetto FL 34221
941/722-4524

Sarasota Extension Service

6700 Clark Road • Sarasota FL 34241
941/861-9900



October 28, 2009

Citrus Marketing Order Ballots

Within the next few weeks, all citrus growers in Florida should receive a ballot for you to cast your vote regarding the Florida Citrus Production Research Order. This marketing order was initially approved by growers in the early 1990s and must be voted upon every six years. This referendum allows growers to tax themselves to fund competitive grants to study and research citrus issues.

The proposal would allow the research order cap up to 3¢ and channel the funds to the newly formed Citrus Research and Development Foundation. This foundation is a non-profit corporation affiliated with the University of Florida and governed by a Board of 13 directors, including 10 growers. This marketing order has been funding essential citrus research in Florida for a number of years.

To gain more information on the referendum, you can join a statewide conference call hosted by Florida Citrus Mutual on November 12, 2009 at 10 A.M. The toll-free number is 1-866-544-4631. All citrus growers' associations are also actively involved in promoting and providing information about the referendum.

If you do not receive a ballot by mid-November, one can be obtained by calling Mr. Marshall Wiseheart at Florida Department of Agriculture at 850-488-4366. Ballots can also be picked up after November 16th at the Hardee and DeSoto County Extension Service offices as well as at selected Extension Offices around the state. Ballots must be postmarked and mailed to the Florida Department of Agriculture by December 4, 2009. Ballots postmarked after December 4th will not be counted.

Training for Citrus Harvesters (Pickers), Nov. 4th, Arcadia

On November 4th, a personal hygiene program for fruit pickers will be conducted at the Turner Agri Civic Center Exhibition Hall in Arcadia. The training will be conducted in Spanish and is for fruit pickers that will be harvesting fresh fruit. This training is being required by several packinghouses to meet customer requirements. The training will begin at 8 A.M. and conclude at around 9:00 A.M. A registration fee of \$2.00 per participant is requested and checks should be made payable to 'Citrus Advisory Committee'. Certificates of attendance will be mailed to all participants to the company address within 5 days after the meeting. To register for the training, please contact the DeSoto County Extension Service office at 863-993-4846. Additional trainings can be scheduled as needed upon request.

Low Volume Program Presentations

All presentations from the recently completed Low Volume Spray Program series are now posted to the citrus agent's website for your viewing or printing. The four presentations can be seen by going to: http://citrusagents.ifas.ufl.edu/events/PDF/LowVolumeApplication/LVA_program.htm. Another way to view the presentations is to Google "Citrus Agents" and the website will appear. Once at the 'citrus agents' website, then look for the presentation section on the home page.

Information presented at the meetings highlighted currently labeled products for low volume application (2-5 gallons per acre), worker safety, application considerations and factors effecting application success.

Restricted Use Pesticide License Review and Testing, Dec. 8, 2009

A three-hour pesticide license review and testing class will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2009 at the Hardee County Extension Service Office at 507 Civic Center Drive in Wauchula. The class will review the materials contained in the tests to obtain a private applicator pesticide license. The class will begin at 9:00 A.M. and conclude at noon with the test being given at 1:00 P.M. Three CEUs (2 Core and 1 Private) will be offered to individuals that have a current pesticide license and will be renewing using CEUs. A registration fee of \$25.00 per person is charged to cover the study manuals and refreshments. To attend the class for only CEUs, the registration fee is \$5.00. If you wish to attend the class to obtain CEUs or to take the test, please call the Hardee County Extension Service Office at 863-773-2164 to register. Pre-registration is requested prior to Dec. 2, 2009.

Winter Cold Protection

Now is the time to begin to think about all those operations and steps that are necessary to properly protect your grove from winter freezing temperatures. The first step in this process is to make sure your irrigation system has been inspected to ensure all jets are in proper working order. Irrigation pumps and engines should also be properly serviced and inspected. A system that is in proper operational order is essential to effective cold protection. To review information on microsprinkler irrigation for cold protection of Florida citrus, it can be found on the web at:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/CH/CH18200.pdf>.

Other considerations are to: 1) make sure the weed cover has been reduced as locations with excessive vegetation will be significantly colder than a grove with properly managed vegetation growth; 2) check your grove thermometers and thermometer shelters; and, 3) determine your best weather sources, i.e. local weather stations and/or FAWN.

Most everyone is familiar with FAWN (Florida Automated Weather Network) and where their towers are located around the state. Local FAWN towers are in Ona and Arcadia. FAWN can be reached either on the web or by phone.

For those who call the service, the toll free number is 1-866-754-5732. For the latest hourly information, the code of Arcadia is 490 and Ona is 380. FAWN can be viewed on the web at: <http://fawn.ifas.ufl.edu/>.

FAWN also has a program to assist in determining when to shut off your irrigation system after a freeze event. This tool is located at –

http://fawn.ifas.ufl.edu/tools/irrigation_cutoff/. You can also find the cutoff temperature by going to FAWN on the web, then to ‘Tools’, then to ‘Cold Protection Tools’, and finally to ‘Wet-bulb based irrigation cutoff temperatures.’ FAWN also has a number of other helpful programs that are very useful in determining in calculating minimum temperatures, irrigation scheduling and more.

Winter Weather Watch

Chris Oswald and Ryan Atwood currently operate a winter weather recorded forecast service. The services are provided by a subscription service out of either Polk or Lake County Extension Service offices. Their program begins in mid-November and continues the entire winter until mid-March.

To obtain more information on either winter weather program, please visit the citrus agent’s website at <http://www.citrusagents.ifas.ufl.edu>.

Citrus Acreage

Citrus acreage continues to decline on a state-wide basis with all orange acreage declining to 492,529 acres and is approaching the acreage after the major freezes of the early 1980s. Acreage in DeSoto is now at 62,304, Hardee at 47,130, Manatee at 18,609 and Sarasota at 1,411 acres. Both Hardee and DeSoto had slight increases in acreage between 2008 and 2009 years.

Source: USDA – Citrus inventory report, September 18, 2009.

Dates to remember:

Nov. 4 Citrus Picker Training, Arcadia
Dec. 8 Pesticide License Review and Testing, Wauchula

Sincerely,

Stephen H. Futch

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