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Under the Citrus Tree

Highlands County Extension Service

4509 George Boulevard, Sebring, Florida 33875

February 2017 Newsletter

Greetings from the Extension Office!

Greetings from the Highlands County Extension Office. I hope this newsletter finds you well. We finished up the Highlands County Fair on Saturday and things went really well for the UF/IFAS Extension Highlands County 4-H youth. Look for the article in this edition regarding the citrus tree project. As you can imagine, our entire office was very busy with livestock shows, livestock sales, booths and more booths. The fair is fantastic opportunity for our entire office to shine and meet new folks from the community.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of the newsletter! If I can be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

Regards

Laurie



Laurie Hurner

Highlands County Extension

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Table of Contents

- **DEADLINE TODAY! Highlands Soil & Water Offering Class**
- March Grower Forum Reminder & RSVP
- **FCM Area Meetings & Elections**
- **Passing of Grower John Merritt**
- **Highlands 4-H Youth Citrus Project Winners**
- **New Flower Bud Advisory**
- **Highlands County Sheriff Adds Ag Deputies**
- **Citrus Institute Coming Soon**

DEADLINE TO SIGN UP IS TODAY!!!!
Highlands Soil & Water Offering Class



**AGRICULTURE SOIL TESTING,
INTERPRETING & MAKING
USE OF THE RESULTS**

**WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 22, 2017**

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Do you know if you are collecting soil samples properly?
Are you having trouble interpreting your results?

We can help!

Calling All Ag Producers...

Join us to learn:

- Basics of Soil Science
- Techniques for collecting soil, tissue and water for testing and analysis
- Interpretation of Test Results
- Benefits of Soil Sensors
- How soil sampling can benefit your production and aid in BMP compliance

**Bert J. Harris Ag Center
Polston Auditorium
4509 George Blvd Sebring,
Florida 33875**

**RSVP to:
sbishop@highlandsswcd.org
863-402-7020**

**By:
February 17, 2017 to
assure we have lunch
for all attendees.**

**Workshop and
Lunch Provided By:**



March Grower Forum Reminder

I hope to see you at our next grower forum. These forums are a good way to talk about issues among our group, ask questions of each other and talk about what may be working and what may not. We will be circulating a "TOPIC OF THE DAY" that will kick off the discussion. Our February OJ Break was a huge success. Dr. Jude Grosser came and talk about his genetics work and the nutrition work that he has been doing. This will be one of the topics of discussion. Mark your calendar today and I hope to see you there.

Thursday, March 9, 2017

Noon - [Please click here to RSVP for lunch](#)
Ag Center Auditorium

SAVE THE DATE! Florida Citrus Mutual Area Meetings & Elections

Attention Florida Citrus Mutual Members and Potential Members: Area meetings and elections are right around the corner! Call FCM at 863.682.1111 to register for your area meeting and contact Rusty Wiygul at 352.266.2426 to make sure all of your grove is signed up so that you can cast the right number of votes. If you have been on the fence or not previously been a member I would encourage you to consider membership, "Together we make a difference". New members contact Rusty at the number above as well.

April 7th (Friday) - Districts 8, 9 & 10 Jay Clark's Ranch "The Linda Lou", Zolfo Springs Current Directors: District 8 - Fran Becker, Steve Sorrells District 9 - John Barben, Michael Prescott, Andrew Russell District 10 - Charlie Lucas, Paul Meador, Mark Wheeler

April 19th (Wednesday) - Districts 5 & 6 W H Stuart AG Center, Bartow Current Directors: District 5 - Daniel Skousen District 6 - Dennis Broadaway, Larry Black, Kenny DeVane, Kyle Story

April 27th (Thursday) - District 7 USDA Lab, Fort Pierce Current Directors: Kevin Koppelman, Mike Monroe, Tom Mitchell

April 28th (Friday) - Districts 1, 2, 3 & 4 Lake County AG Center, Tavares Current Directors: District 1 - David Evans, Sr. District 2 - Tim Philmon District 3 - Glenn Beck District 4 - Bob Battaglia, Ric Freeman

Passing of John Merritt

John Merritt, passed away on Monday, February 13th after a battle with leukemia. Not only was John a small Highlands County grower in his own right, but has been an iconic production manager for some of the largest citrus operations in the state of Florida over the past several decades.

John is a graduate of Florida Southern, Class of 1979. He has been with Consolidated Citrus, LP, a division of King Ranch, for the past 30 years and was known as an innovative grower and active industry leader. Amongst his industry leadership service was a stint on the HCCGA Board of Directors, where his counsel was always valued.

John, who was 60, is survived by his wife, Marty Boyd Merritt, Venus, FL; Daughters, Tina Janelle Clarke husband Donald and 2 boys Corbin & Caden of Lake Placid.; Kandice Lynn Browning husband Christopher with one son Boyd Lee of Arcadia, FL; Sons – Richard Dwight Merritt, II of Lake Placid and Thomas "Lee" Killmon wife Ashley have two boys Waymon & Myles of Arcadia, Mother: Mary Ann

Merritt – Okahumpka, FL, Brother –Jerl Merritt with wife Sarah from Center Hill, Fl. and many nieces and nephews.

Our deepest condolences go out to John's family and friends.

Highlands 4-H Youth Citrus Project Winners

Another Citrus Youth Project has come to a close. We had 58 youth complete the project this year. They grew Valencia trees this year and grew they did. It was difficult for the judges to pick the Grand and Reserve Champion Trees. We still have record books that will be judged in June to announce our Overall Grand and Reserve Champions but to date the winners are as follows:

Top Illustrated Talk Winners:

Junior Division: Rhett Smith, Paisley Karlson & Reah Smith

Intermediate Division: Trace Lackey, Walker Dressel & Kyara Chambers

Senior Division: Kitty Lackey, Amy Schlosser & Justin Bickman

Top Tree Winners:

Grand Champion Tree: Joshua Brown

Reserve Grand Champion Tree: Peyton Prevatte

Top Senior Tree: Samantha Goodwin

Top Intermediate Tree: Emma Rapp

Top Junior Tree: Peyton Prevatte

New Flower Bud Advisory

FLOWER BUD INDUCTION ADVISORY #7 for 2016-2017-2/15/17

Flower Bud Induction Overview and Advisory

NOTICE FOR CITRUS EXTENSION AGENTS & SPECIALISTS AND GROWER NEWSLETTERS

The following information has been developed as part of the Decision Information System for Citrus

L. Gene Albrigo, Horticulturist Emeritus

Citrus Research & Education Center, Lake Alfred, FL

FLOWER BUD INDUCTION ADVISORY #7 for 2016-2017-2/15/17

This is a service to our citrus growers posted on the CREC website. The indicated Expert System on intensity and time of bloom can be accessed at the designated Web Site: <http://disc.ifas.ufl.edu/bloom>

If you are not familiar with the website and flower bud induction in citrus you should read the

overview section in the first advisory this year.

Induction and flowering status – The Citrus Flowering Monitor System indicates that all Florida citrus areas can have up to three waves of flowers during the normal bloom period. With the winter off-season bloom that could be as many as 4 waves of flowers this year. The model projected a February 8-22 first wave full bloom with about 630 to 800 inductive hours, followed by a second wave around 3 to 16 March with 830 to 1000 inductive hours, and a final wave from March 16 to April 3rd with 1000 to 1200 inductive hours. Generally the earlier dates for each wave are in the southern areas and the higher inductive values are in the northern areas for each flowering wave.

I have only looked at two blocks, one Valencia and one Hamlin, to see how they related to the model. In each block young fruitlets (winter bloom), large popcorn to petal fall (mid-February bloom), small popcorn to large pinhead (predicted early March bloom), and small pinhead (late March projected bloom) were observed. The current February wave was clearly the largest with some fruitlets (winter bloom) and the second regular wave easy to find but in much fewer numbers than the current flowering wave. Some small pinhead flowers were visible in very small numbers. There will be block-to-block variability but the relative number of flowers per tree should follow this trend.

Potential for PFD – We will have flowering overlap until well into or all of March. Natalia Peres (a PFD expert at Balm) says that any white petal surface is susceptible, past pinhead until petal fall. Ovary stigma may be susceptible also. Warmer temperatures with a long leaf wetness period makes for most likely infection. Using current products, a spray following potential infection probably needs to be applied within one day after unfavorable conditions. A local production manager I talked with today hasn't seen much if any PFD symptoms on flower petals in their groves up to now. He was concerned about potential rain today and Friday but the weather channel suggests that rain is more likely to occur in the north central region with less chance of rain Friday.

If you have any suggestions or questions, please contact me (albrigo@ufl.edu)

Ag Deputies Added

Highlands County Sheriff Paul Blackman has dramatically increased the size, scope and responsibility of the agricultural and natural resources patrol unit for Highlands County effective mid January. The County has gone from having one dedicated deputy, Fred Tagtmeier, to a team of four deputies and a supervising Sergeant and Captain. Three of the deputies will have primary zones of responsibility as indicated on patrol zone map below, but will work the entire County at times. Agricultural property owners should report any and all suspicious activity or crime to the Ag deputy team, starting with the deputy that is assigned to the zone in which your property is located. The deputy's cell phone and e-mail contact information is listed below. If you cannot reach the initial deputy that you try to contact, please try another deputy or supervisor immediately.

Captain Darin Hood 863-381-2082
dhood@highlandssheriff.org

Sergeant Kyle Albritton 863-446-2211
kalbritton@highlandssheriff.org

North Zone

Deputy Wayne Gunn
cgunn@highlandssheriff.org

863-253-1175

Central Zone

Deputy Mike Parker
mparker@highlandssheriff.org

863-991-0674

South Zone

Deputy Jeff Turner
turner@highlandssheriff.org

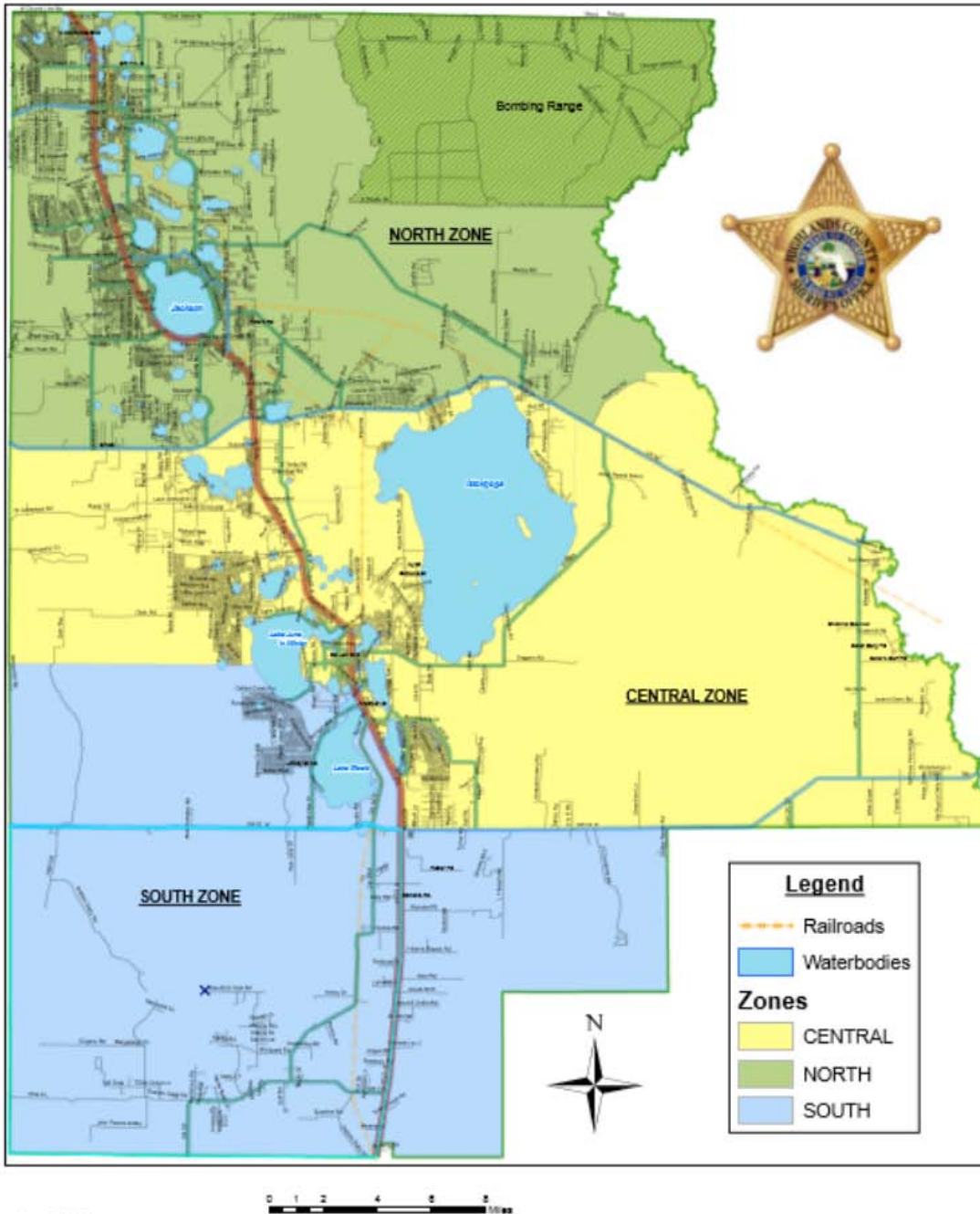
863-991-0971

Deputy Fred Tagtmeier
ftagtmeier@highlandssheriff.org

863-381-2344

Thanks Ray Royce for sharing this information.

Agriculture Zones



Citrus Institute Coming Soon

SAVE THE DATE!
Citrus Institute
South Florida State College
April 4, 2017