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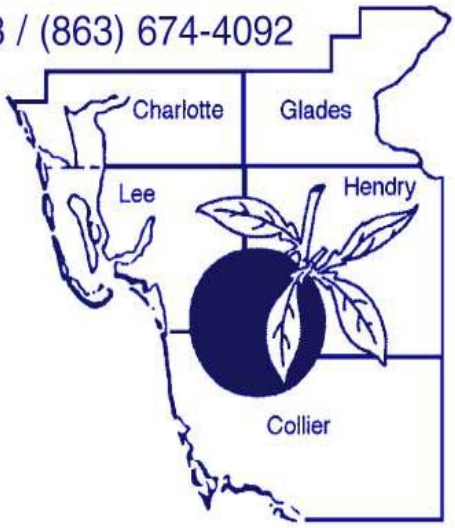
Flatwoods Citrus



Vol. 8, No. 7 **July 2005**

Dr. Mongi Zekri
Multi-County Citrus Agent, SW Florida

U P C O M I N G E V E N T S

A RULE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

Gulf Coast Citrus Best Management Practices

Time and date: 10:00 AM, Tuesday August 2, 2005

Place: Hendry County Extension Office (Dallas Townsend Ag Center), LaBelle

CITRUS EXPO

Wednesday, August 24 & Thursday, August 25, 2005

Lee Civic Center, Fort Myers

If you want to print a color copy of the Flatwoods Citrus Newsletter, get to the Florida Citrus Resources Site at http://flcitrus.ifas.ufl.edu/
You can also find all you need and all links to the University of Florida Citrus Extension and the Florida Citrus Industry

Annual Conference of Extension Professionals (FAEP)

Date: September 12-15, 2005
Location: HYATT Sarasota on Sarasota Bay, FL
http://faep.ifas.ufl.edu/

7th International Congress of Citrus Nurserymen (ICCN)

Date: **September 17-21, 2005**
Location: **Cairo, EGYPT** **http://www.iccncongress.gov.eg/**

Contact E-mail: **iocd_far@yahoo.com**

51st Annual Meeting of the InterAmerican Society for Tropical Horticulture (ISTH)

Date: October 10-14, 2005
Location: Hotel Hamaca Coral Hilton, at Boca Chica ten minutes from Santa Domingo International Airport, The Dominican Republic,
http://www.cedaf.org.do/eventos/ISTH2005/index.htm
For more information, contact Dr. Richard Campbell at
rcampbell@fairchildgarden.org

WEATHER SCHOOL, 2005

9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Mark your calendar for the location near you

Dates and Locations:

Oct. 25 – Sebring
Nov. 3 – Bartow
Nov. 8 – Tavares
Nov. 15 – Immokalee
Nov. 16 – Arcadia

Topics:

- Climate Outlook (prediction for the winter)
- Principals of cold protection (include cultural practices)
- The FAWN Cold Protection Tool Kit
- Critical temperatures for citrus and other crops
- Agricultural forecasts
- Heat of fusion and Evaporative cooling
- Starting and stopping your system (Wet bulb shut off tool)
- Other FAWN information for cold nights

Following the program, we are planning a free lunch for all attendees.

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The KeyPlex People

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Special Thanks **to the sponsors of the Flatwoods Citrus newsletter for their generous contribution and support. If you would like to be among them, please contact me at 863 674 4092.**

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CITRUS VARIEGATED CHLOROSIS (CVC)

CVC was first detected in Brazil in 1987. There are reports of presence of CVC in Paraguay, Argentina and Costa Rica as well. The symptoms of CVC usually begin with a zinc deficiency-like chlorosis appearing on one sector of the tree.

The leaves develop a gummy lesion on their lower side with a corresponding yellow chlorosis appearing on the upper surface.

As the disease progresses, the new leaves are small and tend to point upward, twig dieback occurs, the fruit size is greatly reduced, and the fruit has a hard rind.

Once infected with CVC, tree growth is drastically reduced and trees become non-productive in three years. Younger trees are more susceptible to CVC than trees which are ten years of age or older. Symptom expression and incidence of CVC appear to be greater in warmer climates. All sweet orange varieties are susceptible to CVC. Lemons, limes, mandarins, mandarin hybrids such as Murcott and Sunburst, kumquats, and grapefruit usually do not show symptoms of CVC but allow some multiplication of the bacterium.

The CVC bacterium, which blocks the vessels of the xylem of the tree, is transmitted by several species of sharpshooters. The efficiency varies among species. The sharpshooter loses the ability to transmit *Xylella fastidiosa* whenever a molt occurs. Once an adult acquires *X. fastidiosa,* they retain the ability to transmit for life. The glassy winged sharpshooter, *Homoladisca coagulate*, present in the Florida and California has been shown to be capable of transmitting CVC.

Diagnosis of CVC in the field can be confused with other decline diseases of citrus. CVC infected trees will take up water by the syringe injection test while blight infected trees do not. Diagnostic field symptoms are the small fruit, the gummy lesion on the underside of the leaves, and the small, pointy leaves at the top of the tree.

For areas without CVC, exclusion is the best control. Use of citrus budwood certification programs is helpful. Management of CVC in Brazil is by propagation of disease-free planting material from protected nurseries (**screenhouses**), use of insecticides to control sharpshooters, and pruning of branches at an early stage of the disease or eradication of trees with advanced symptoms. Genetic engineering approaches are being used to develop resistance to CVC in sweet orange.

CITRUS GREENING

Citrus greening was first detected in Brazil in March 2004. It is caused by systemic phloem-inhabiting bacterium, *Candidatus* liberobacter. There are two forms of citrus greening. Each form has a similar host range but they differ in the temperature under which they express strongest symptoms. The African form, *Cadidatus* L. africanus causes symptoms under cool conditions while the Asian form, *Candidatus* L. asiaticus causes symptoms under warm conditions. The bacterium infects nearly all citrus species, cultivars and hybrids and some citrus relatives. Sweet orange, mandarin and mandarin hybrids are most susceptible. Lemons, grapefruit and pummelos are moderately affected. Mexican lime, trifoliate orange, citranges and citrumelos are more tolerant, often expressing foliar symptoms but little twig dieback.

Symptoms of Asian form are leaf chlorosis. The early symptoms usually appear on one sector or branch of the tree. The chlorosis spreads, often resembling a zinc deficiency symptom.

Twig dieback occurs, and the affected trees decline to a non-productive state. Fruit is small, lopsided, with the basal end often remaining green, and the seeds are usually aborted. The fruit has a bitter taste.

Citrus greening is graft transmissible. The distribution of the bacterium within an infected tree can be irregular so not all buds contain the bacterium or transmit the disease. Citrus greening bacteria are transmitted by the citrus psyllid. The Asian citrus psyllids, *Diaphorina citri*, is adapted to warm humid climates and occurs in many areas including Florida. The bacterium is transmitted in a persistent manner with a latent period occurring after the psyllid acquires the bacterium. The bacterium multiplies in the psyllid. Because of the latent period, most psyllids capable of transmitting citrus greening are either late-stage nymphs or adults. The psyllids remain capable of transmitting the disease for the duration of their life once the bacterium has been acquired. Citrus species is the primary host for feeding of the psyllids. The psyllids prefer to feed on young flush tissue. Hosts, which are vigorous and always flushing, such as lemon and lime, are ideal hosts for the psyllid. The best control for citrus greening is exclusion. Because of the similarity of the symptoms of citrus greening and other decline disorders and diseases such as citrus blight and citrus tristeza, it may take awhile before citrus greening infections are noticed, thus making establishment of this exotic disease more likely. In areas where citrus greening has been established, management to reduce losses includes propagation of citrus greening-free trees for planting, reduction of the psyllid populations, and by pruning symptomatic sectors from the trees. The use of parasites to control the psyllids population has been successful in many areas.

Citrus greening is one of the most destructive diseases of citrus. Once established, the management of the disease to achieve continued production of citrus is difficult and expensive. Citrus greening can rapidly destroy productive citrus plantings. If trees are infected while young, they often have no fruit production.

Combination of tolerant varieties, eradication of diseased trees, replanting with healthy plants, introducing parasites and spraying against psylla showed that citrus production is still feasible in areas with citrus greening.

LEAF AND SOIL SAMPLING AND ANALYSES TO ADJUST FERTILIZER PROGRAMS

Optimum growth and yield of high quality fruit cannot be obtained without adequate nutrition. The most successful fertilizer program should be based on tissue analysis, knowledge of soil nutrient status through soil analysis combined with university recommendations. The deficiency or excess of an element will cause disturbance in plant metabolism and lead to poor performance.

Plant analysis

Used in conjunction with other data and observations, tissue analysis aids in evaluating the nutrient elements of the soil-plant system. It has proven useful in confirming nutritional deficiencies, toxicities or imbalances, identifying "hidden" toxicities and deficiencies where visible symptoms are not manifested, and evaluating the effectiveness of fertilizer programs.

Leaf Sampling

For reliable results and useful interpretation of lab analysis reports, citrus growers, production managers, and consultants must follow the proper procedures for leaf sampling and sample handling because improperly collected leaf samples will provide misleading information about the nutritional status of the trees and the fertilizer programs.

Considerable care is needed in taking samples. Chemical analysis values can only be useful if the samples obtained are representative of the blocks they were taken from. The proper sampling, preparation and handling would affect the reliability of the chemical analysis, data interpretation, nutritional recommendations, and adjustment of fertilizer programs.

Leaf samples must also be taken at the proper time because nutrient levels within leaves are continually changing. However, leaf mineral concentrations of most nutrients are relatively stable within 4 to 6 months after emergence of the spring flush. Therefore, for mature tree blocks, the best time would be in July and August to collect four- to six-month-old spring flush leaves. If taken later in the season, the summer flush would probably be confused with the spring flush.

Each leaf sample should consist of about 100 leaves taken from non-fruiting twigs of 15- 20 uniform trees of the same variety and rootstock, and under the same fertilizer program. Clean brown paper bag should be used. Information sheets from the testing lab should be completed for each sample as this information helps when interpreting the results. The sample bag and the corresponding information sheet should each be carefully labeled with the same identity so that samples and sheets can be matched in the laboratory.

Sampling techniques for leaves

♦ Immature leaves should be avoided because of their rapidly changing composition.

♦ Abnormal-appearing trees, trees at the edge of the block and trees at the end of rows should not be sampled because they

may be coated with soil particles and dust or have other problems.

♦ Do not include diseased, insect damaged, or dead leaves in a sample. Use good judgment.

♦ Select only one leaf from a shoot and remove it with its petiole (leaf stem).

Diagnosing growth disorders

♦ Collect samples from both affected trees as well as normal trees.

♦ Trees selected for sampling should be at similar stage of development and age.

♦ Whenever possible, confine the sampling area to trees in close proximity to each other.

Handling of leaf samples

♦ Samples should be collected in clean paper bags and clearly identified.

♦ They should be protected from heat and kept dry and cool (stored in portable ice chests), and placed in a refrigerator for overnight storage if they cannot be washed and oven dried the same day of collection.

♦ For macronutrient analysis, leaves usually do not need to be washed.

♦ Leaves should be dried in a ventilated oven at 60-70^{o}C.

Preparation for analysis

♦ Leaves that have been recently sprayed with micronutrients for fungicidal (Cu) or nutritional (Mn, Zn) purposes should not be analyzed for those micronutrients because it is unlikely to remove all surface contamination from sprayed leaves.

♦ For accurate Fe and B or other micronutrient determination, samples would require hand washing, which is best done when leaves are still in a fresh condition.

Soil analysis

Soil analysis is an important method for gaining basic information regarding the chemical status of the soil. Soil analysis is particularly useful when conducted over several years so that trends can be seen.

Unlike leaf analysis, there are various methods and analytical procedures of soil analysis used by laboratories. In Florida, soil tests for the relatively mobile and readily leached elements such as N and K are of no value. Soil tests are mainly important for pH, P, Mg, Ca, and Cu. For Florida sandy soils, using the Mehlich-1 or double acid (hydrochloric acid + sulfuric acid) extraction procedure adopted by the University of Florida analytical lab, 40-60 lbs/acre (20-30 ppm) of P, 70-120 lbs/acre (35-60 ppm) of Mg, 500-800 lbs/acre (250-400 ppm) of Ca, and 5-10 lbs/acre (2.5-5 ppm) of Cu are considered adequate for citrus. A Ca:Mg ratio of 7:1 seems desirable and ratios of higher than 10 may induce Mg deficiency problems. Copper levels higher than 50 lbs/acre may be toxic to citrus trees if the soil pH is below 6.

Soil sampling

The accuracy of a fertilizer recommendation depends or how well the soil sample on which the recommendation was based represents the area of the grove. In Florida, if soil samples were to be collected once a year, the best time would be at the end of the summer rainy season and prior to fall fertilization, usually during September and October. However, soil sampling may be conducted at the same time as leaf sampling to save time and reduce cost.

Standard procedures for proper sampling, preparation and analysis have to be followed for meaningful interpretations of the test results and accurate recommendations. Each soil sample should consist of 15-20 soil cores taken at the dripline of 15-20 trees within the area wetted by the irrigation system to a depth of 6 inches. The area sampled should be uniform in terms of soil and tree characteristics and correspond to the area from which the leaf sample was taken. Individual cores should be mixed

thoroughly in a plastic bucket to form a composite sample. Subsample of appropriate size should be taken from the composite mixture and put into labeled paper bags supplied by the lab. Soil samples should be air-dried but not oven-dried before shipping to the testing laboratory for analysis.

Conclusion

Tissue and soil analyses are a powerful tool for confirming nutrient deficiencies, toxicities and imbalances, identifying "hidden hunger," evaluating fertilizer programs, studying nutrient interactions. However, if initial plant and soil sampling, handling, and analysis of the sample were faulty, the results would be misleading.

If properly done, tissue and soil analyses can point the way toward more economical and efficient use of fertilizer materials, avoiding excessive or inadequate application rates.

Standard Table for Assessing Nutritional Status and Adjusting Fertilizer Programs for Citrus

Leaf analysis standard for assessing current nutrient status of citrus trees based on concentration of mineral elements in 4- to 6-month-old-spring-cycle leaves from non-fruiting terminals.

Element	Deficient less than	Low	Satisfactory	High	Excess more than
Nitrogen (N) (%)	2.2	2.2-2.4	2.5-2.8	2.9-3.2	3.3
Phosphorus (P) (%)	0.09	0.09-0.11	0.12-0.17	0.18-0.29	0.30
Potassium (K) (%)	0.7	0.7-1.1	1.2-1.7	1.8-2.3	2.4
Calcium (Ca) (%)	1.5	1.5-2.9	3.0-5.0	5.1-6.9	7.0
Magnesium (Mg) (%)	0.20	0.20-0.29	0.30-0.50	0.51-0.70	0.80
Sulfur (S) (%)	0.14	0.14-0.19	0.20-0.40	0.41-0.60	0.60
Chlorine (Cl) (%)	------	------	less than 0.5	0.5-0.7	0.7
Sodium (Na) (%)	------	------	less than 0.2	0.2-0.5	0.5
Iron (Fe) (ppm)	35	35-59	60-120	121-200	250
Boron (B) (ppm)	20	20-35	36-100	101-200	250
Manganese (Mn) (ppm)	18	18-24	25-100	101-300	500
Zinc (Zn) (ppm)	18	18-24	25-100	101-300	300
Copper (Cu) (ppm)	4	4-5	6-16	17-20	20
Molybdenum (Mo) (ppm)	0.06	0.06-0.09	0.1-1.0	2-50	50

DRAINAGE

In certain areas, several factors make drainage a necessity for agricultural production. These factors include slow soil permeability, flat or depressional topography, restrictive geologic layers underlying the soil profile, and periods of excess precipitation. Texture affects permeability or the ability of soils to drain water. Slowly permeable soils contain relatively high percentages of clay- and silt-sized particles, which hold water well but do not drain well. The permeability of the soil is also affected by soil structure. A granular soil structure promotes the movement of water through the soil while a massive structure with little or no granular components decreases the movement of water.

In the coastal Flatwoods areas of Florida during the rainy season, drainage of excess water is important since citrus root damage may occur under prolonged conditions of high water table.

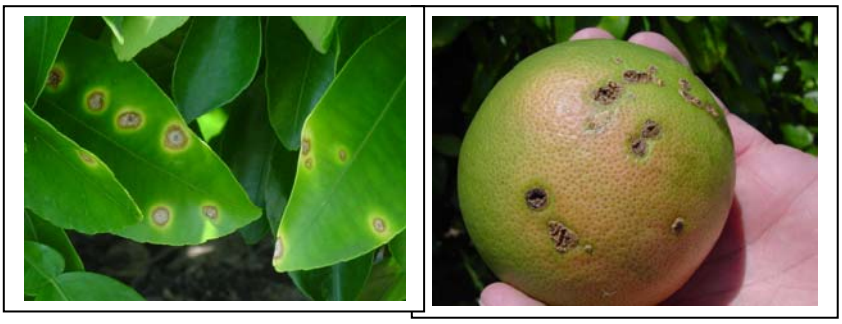
Both surface and subsurface drainage are generally required for citrus grown in Flatwoods areas. Drainage systems in Flatwoods groves consist of systems of canals, retention/detention areas, open ditches, subsurface drains, beds, water furrows, swales, and pumps. These systems require continued good maintenance in order to minimize the chances of root damage from prolonged exposure to waterlogged soils following high precipitations.

Observation wells are good tools for observing soil-water dynamics. They are very reliable for evaluating water-saturated zones in sites subject to chronic flooding injury. These wells can also be used to measure the rate of water table drawdown, which is the key to how long roots can tolerate flooding. Observation wells constructed with float indicators allow water tables to be visually observed while driving by the well site.

Benefits of Drainage

1. Better soil aeration results from good drainage. This permits deeper and more extensive root development and a more favorable environment for beneficial soil microorganisms.
2. An increased supply of nitrogen can be obtained from the soil where water tables are lowered by a drainage system. This can reduce nitrogen fertilizer application.
3. Certain toxic substances and disease organisms are removed from the soil due to better drainage and better aeration.
4. Soil erosion can be reduced on a well-drained soil by increasing its capacity to hold rainwater, resulting in less runoff.
5. High water tables in the summer due to poor drainage and high precipitations cause shallow root development and a smaller soil volume from which trees can obtain water and nutrients.
6. Increased crop yields and improved crop quality result from favorable soil water conditions with good drainage.

SAVE YOUR GROVE AND NURSERY FROM CITRUS CANKER



1. Whenever possible lock the gates of the property and restrict access at all times.

2. Before entering and leaving groves or nurseries, equipment should be first cleaned of all plant material, debris and soil and then disinfected with approved decontamination products.

3. Prior to entering and leaving groves, blocks and nurseries, all workers should disinfect hands and shoes with antimicrobial soap or other approved disinfectants.

4. All workers including fruit picking personnel should wear freshly laundered clothes each day.

5. All grove and nursery traffic including personal vehicles, equipment and visitors should be limited as much as possible.

6. Exchange of personnel, vehicles and equipment between groves, blocks and nurseries should be limited as much as possible.

7. It is very important to require grove service contractors to practice stringent decontamination and sanitation procedures.

8. Restrict access of all personnel, vehicles, and equipment and movement in groves or nurseries when foliage is wet with rain or dew. Do not harvest fruit before the trees dry.

9. Restrict irrigation to nighttime hours to reduce worker exposure to wet foliage.

10. Before entering and leaving a grove, all harvesting equipment including trucks, trailers, tractors, “goats”, ladders, tubs, boxes, picking bags and gloves must be decontaminated.

11. Do not collect canker specimens. Flag adjacent trees, map the location and immediately contact the DPI at 1 800 282 5153 or 1 800 850 3781.

CITRUS CANKER ERADICATION PROGRAM

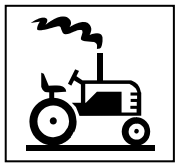
Survey Procedures

Detection of the citrus canker bacterial disease in both commercial citrus groves and residential properties is the foundational step in the eradication process. Visual inspection of citrus trees by trained technicians has proven to be the only proficient method for detection of the disease. Technicians visually inspect by walking tree rows in a prescribed pattern depending on the survey status of the property.

As part of the detection program, all commercial groves are inspected for citrus canker on an annual basis. If suspect canker lesions are detected, plant samples are collected and sent to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Division of Plant Industry Laboratories for confirmation. If suspect samples are deemed to be positive for citrus canker, an ensuing delimiting survey of all groves within a five-mile radius is performed. All exposed citrus trees within a 1900-foot radius of the infected trees are eradicated. Once the control action has been completed, the area within a minimal distance of 3800 feet from any positive tree is placed under quarantine, which will remain in effect for two years following the completion date. All citrus within 3800 feet of the positive trees are surveyed every 30 days for nine months. After the nine months, the survey reverts to a 90-day survey period. Citrus groves outside 3800 feet but within the quarantine are inspected every 90 days. In addition, all citrus groves within five miles of the initial infection are surveyed every 180 days until the quarantine is released. Citrus groves associated through ownership, and grove maintenance or harvesting equipment movement are surveyed three times for one year and two times the second year while the quarantine is in effect. A post-quarantine survey is performed two times per year in the former quarantine area.

Survey of residential properties is performed through the USDA Sentinel Survey program. As a means to early detection in a residential setting, a 12 x 12 grid is used to divide each square mile into 144 sub-sections and one susceptible cultivar in each grid is identified as a sentinel tree. A maximum of 144 trees per square mile are surveyed every 60 days. As with commercial citrus when an infected tree is detected, all exposed citrus trees within 1900 feet of the infected trees are destroyed. A delimiting survey of the infected section as well as all sections bordering the positive section is performed. The resulting two-year quarantine is established a minimum of 3800 feet from the detections. All citrus-bearing properties within the quarantine are inspected every 60 days for nine surveys and non-citrus properties every 90 days while the quarantine is in effect. Citrus bearing properties revert to a 90-day survey schedule after the initial nine surveys. Commercial nurseries will now be inspected every 30 days.

Despite the weather, the Fifteenth Annual Farm Safety Day held on Saturday 11 June 2005 was a big success.



Over the past few years, The Farm Safety Day has been proven to be a very effective way in providing an educational opportunity for farm equipment operators and workers.

Certificates of appreciation were sent to the
2005 Farm Safety Day Committee Members, Helpers, Speakers & Sponsors

Gold Sponsor: $200	*Silver Sponsors: $100*
Six L's Packing Co., Inc., ***Farm-OP, Inc.***	Alton Green, ***T & M Portable Restrooms, Inc.*** ***Bob Paul, Inc.*** ***Farm Credit of Southwest Florida*** Rachel Walters, ***Bayer CropScience***

Congratulations to the winners of the 2005 equipment operators contest
and to their respective companies!

First: Jose Torres, Six L's Farm-OP. #2

Second: Curtis Hicks, Farm-OP. #7

Third: Pedro Miguel-Ruiz, Immokalee Tomato Growers

Trophies were given to the winners.
Engraved plaques were given to their respective companies.
The big trophy will stay for one year at the company that has the 1st place winner.

Fifteenth Annual Farm Safety Day

Saturday, June 11, 2005

Committee Assignment

Mongi Zekri, Overall Coordinator (Treasurer, sponsorship, program evaluation, food service, CEUs)

Julie Carson, Coordinator Assistant (Hats, badges, trophies, plaques)

Gene McAvoy Morning Program Coordinator
*Assisting **Buddy Walker** (Audio & visual aid equipment)
Cesar Asuaje (Program assistance)
Ralph Mitchell (Program assistance)
Kent Cushman (Program assistance)

Fritz Roka Afternoon Program Coordinator
1. **Steve Taylor** Rodeo Course Design/Set-up, Outdoors facilities, Parking
2. **Fritz Roka** Rodeo Rules, Judges & Judging
*Assisting **Mickey Pena**
Rose Edwards

3. **Cesar Asuaje & Gene McAvoy** Rodeo Master of Ceremonies (Awards & sponsor recognition)

Bob Rouse/Barbara Hyman/Mickey Pena Registration Coordinators (Registration & program materials, duplication, distribution & mail out)

*Assisting **Debbie Spencer** Registration the day of the meeting
Ralph Mitchell
Lorenzo Daetz
Rose Edwards
Doug Caldwell

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Multi-County Citrus Agent
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P.O. Box 68
LaBelle, FL 33975

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Racial-Ethnic Background

__American Indian or native Alaskan
__Asian American
__Hispanic
__White, non-Hispanic
__Black, non-Hispanic

Gender

__Female __Male