

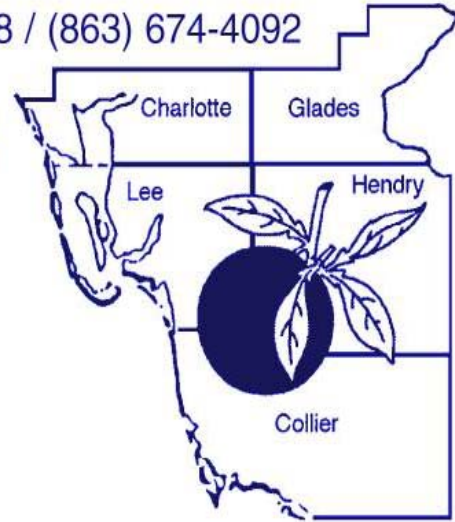


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Flatwoods Citrus



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



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

CITRUS EXPO
IN FORT MYERS

Wednesday, August 23 &
Thursday, August 24, 2006



Extension Professional Associations of Florida (EPAF) Conference

September 11-14, 2006

Marco Island Marriott Resort, Golf Club and Spa

For more details, go to:

<http://epaf.ifas.ufl.edu/2005%20EPAF/Conf%20Home%20exp.htm>

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

HURRICANE SEASON RUNS JUNE THROUGH NOVEMBER IN FLORIDA

NOAA PREDICTS VERY ACTIVE 2006 NORTH ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON



Residents in Hurricane Prone Areas Urged to Make Preparations

NOAA announced to America and its neighbors throughout the north Atlantic region that a [very active hurricane season](#) is looming, and encouraged individuals to make preparations to better protect their lives and livelihoods.

"For the 2006 north Atlantic hurricane season, [NOAA](#) is predicting 13 to 16 named storms, with eight to 10 becoming hurricanes, of which four to six could become 'major' hurricanes of Category 3 strength or higher," added retired Navy Vice Adm. [Conrad C. Lautenbacher](#), Ph.D., undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator.

In 2005, the Atlantic hurricane season contained a record 28 storms, including 15 hurricanes. Seven of these hurricanes were

considered "major," of which a record four hit the United States. "Although NOAA is not forecasting a repeat of last year's season, the potential for hurricanes striking the U.S. is high," added Lautenbacher.

Warmer ocean water combined with lower wind shear, weaker easterly trade winds, and a more favorable wind pattern in the mid-levels of the atmosphere are the factors that collectively will favor the development of storms in greater numbers and to greater intensity. Warm water is the energy source for storms while favorable wind patterns limit the wind shear that can tear apart a storm's building cloud structure.

This confluence of conditions in the ocean and atmosphere is strongly related to a climate pattern known as the multi-decadal signal, which has been in place since 1995. Since then, nine of the last 11 hurricane seasons have been above normal, with only two below-normal seasons during the El Niño years of 1997 and 2002.

With neutral El Niño/Southern Oscillation ([ENSO](#)) conditions expected across the equatorial Pacific during the next three to six months, the [NOAA Climate Prediction Center](#) scientists say that neither El Niño nor La Niña likely will be a factor in this year's hurricane season.

"Whether we face an active hurricane season, like this year, or a below-normal season, the crucial message for every person is the same: prepare, prepare, prepare," said Max Mayfield, director of the [NOAA National Hurricane Center](#). "One hurricane hitting where you live is enough to make it a bad season."

The north Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1 through November 30. NOAA will issue a mid-season update in early August just prior to the normal August through October peak in activity.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE FOR ITS RECENT APPROVAL OF A BILL TO CREATE A NEW CITRUS CANCKER CONTROL PROGRAM

Kudos as well to the United State Department of Agriculture for appropriating about \$400 million to reimburse citrus growers for cancker-infested citrus trees destroyed during the former cancker eradication program. While it is estimated that more will be needed, this is a great start. Growers receive \$6,000 to \$9,000 for each destroyed acre of trees.



The new program entitled Citrus Health Response Plan abbreviated CHRP will provide \$26.9 million to wage the latest war on cancker. Our state lawmakers also did not forget individual homeowners who had backyard citrus trees destroyed during eradication. There will be \$3.6 million for those folks.

Homeowners and citrus growers alike have until Dec. 31, 2007 to file their claim. If you are a homeowner yet to be reimbursed you can count on a \$100 voucher to be spent at Wal-Mart for the first destroyed tree and \$50 cash for each additional tree.

One item on the list for what the next battle plan should look like was the idea to group all commercial citrus nurseries in

the northern part of the state -- including some very tough restrictions that would have applied. That approach was difficult to understand since cancker can travel on the winds of a hurricane and a direct hit on the panhandle, which has happened many times, could potentially wipe out a large majority of the nurseries.

The new CHRP, although not in its final form, allows nurseries in business before April 1 to remain in their current location. Any future nurseries must be located a mile from a commercial grove. That makes a lot more sense to us.

For long-suffering citrus growers the prospect of someday holding a reimbursement check in hand has to at least make the whole world of cancker a little more palatable. But the memories of bulldozers and fires burning their lifeblood will be remembered for a long time.

Some have decided to take another check as well -- the big one being offered by developers who are buying citrus acreage at the new inflated prices for land in Florida. Who can blame them? After decades of good years and bad, tough times, freezes, and of course cancker, some are reaping the rewards.

Others will continue as citrus growers and will have the new CHRP, once finalized, as their partner in the battle against cancker. But with new outbreaks of cancker recently in Southwest Florida they know they are not yet out of the woods.

We commend our officials at the state and federal levels for working to help one of Florida's most important industries survive and move forward.

HOMEOWNERS TO BEGIN RECEIVING PAYMENTS FOR LOST CITRUS TREES



More than 20,000 homeowners will begin receiving payments from the state in July to replace trees lost in a failed 10-year effort to eradicate citrus canker, state officials said.



Earlier this month, the Legislature approved \$3.6 million to cover the reimbursements, which should be complete by September, Florida Department of Agriculture spokeswoman Liz Compton said Monday. The appropriation is part of the state budget, which awaits Gov. Jeb Bush's signature.

The reimbursements will include a \$100 Wal-Mart voucher to replace the first tree removed and \$55 in cash for each additional tree.

"One of my citrus trees was a big mature orange tree, which I could never replace for that kind of money," said Joe Pilcher, of Lake Worth.

He said he might replace his lost citrus with banana trees.

A total of 860,899 citrus trees in residential areas were destroyed in the \$500 million effort to eradicate canker, which first appeared in Miami-Dade County in 1995.

By 2005, after back-to-back hurricanes spread the wind-blown bacterial disease across counties, the federal government abandoned the program and acknowledged eradication wasn't feasible.

The Legislature also approved \$26.7 million to pay for a less intensive canker program aimed at grove and nursery inspections.

HURRICANE AID SIGNUP BEGINS MAY 17

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced on Monday that signups would begin May 17 for four crop and livestock assistance programs providing aid to producers affected by the destructive 2005 hurricane season.



These programs are funded by \$250 million in Section 32 funds authorized immediately following these storms. USDA authorized the use of these funds in October 2005 for crop disaster, livestock, tree and aquaculture assistance. The four programs are the Livestock Indemnity Program, Feed Indemnity Program, Hurricane Indemnity Program and Tree Indemnity Program.

"Florida Citrus Mutual commends the USDA and Secretary Johanns for their continued efforts to provide assistance to those growers impacted by the 2005 hurricane season," said Jay Clark, Florida Citrus Mutual's interim executive vice president/CEO.

To be eligible for this assistance, a producer's loss must have occurred in one of 261 counties receiving a primary presidential or secretarial disaster designation due to 2005 Hurricanes Dennis, Katrina, Ophelia, Rita or

Wilma. Assistance is unavailable with respect to losses in contiguous counties. A list of eligible counties can be found at

www.usda.gov/HurricaneInfo.xml

The Hurricane Indemnity Program will provide payments to eligible producers who suffered crop losses and received either a Federal Crop Insurance Corporation crop insurance indemnity or a FSA Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payment.

Producer's HIP benefits will equal 30 percent of the crop insurance indemnity or 30 percent of the NAP payment.

More information on HIP is available in the online fact sheet at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/facts/html/hip06.htm>.

The Tree Indemnity Program will provide payments to eligible owners of commercially grown fruit trees, nut trees, bushes and vines that produce an annual crop and were lost or damaged due to the hurricanes.



FSA will base TIP payments on the crop's proximity to the hurricanes based on established tiers, which reflect the severity of damage from least to most severe. More information on TIP is available in the online fact sheet at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/facts/html/tip06.htm>

In addition to the \$250 million in Section 32 funds, on December 30, 2005, President Bush signed the 2006

Defense Appropriations Act, which provides \$900 million to address natural disaster damages from 2005 hurricanes. Of these funds, approximately \$200 million is designated for the Emergency Conservation Program. USDA has already made \$63 million in ECP funds available to assist agricultural producers struck by hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico region during the calendar year 2005.

Eligible producers may receive up to 100 percent cost-share to remove debris and restore fences and conservation structures. Additional funds for nursery, oyster and poultry producers and forest landowners will be made available when new rules authorizing assistance are published in the Federal Register.

USDA's Farm Service Agency is developing these rules and plans to publish proposed rules for public comment in the near future.

Florida Citrus Mutual, founded in 1948, is the state's largest citrus grower organization with more than 10,000 members. The Florida citrus industry provides a \$9.1 billion annual economic impact to the state, employs nearly 90,000 people and provides 650,000 acres of greenspace.

For more information, please visit www.flcitrusmutual.com.

You can reach Florida Citrus Mutual at (863) 682-1111.

Provided by Jay Clark
Florida Citrus Mutual

Hurricanes and tropical storms can be very devastating to agriculture including the Florida citrus industry. For the last couple of years, growers and farmers have seen their groves, barns, equipment and homes destroyed. If another hurricane hit our state, damage to trees would be of varying degrees. Some trees would be uprooted. Others would have major limbs split off or would have major defoliation. Fruit would litter the ground and grapefruit trees would suffer the most loss because of the larger size and heavier weight fruit.

PLAN AND PREPARE

Hurricanes can strike at any time during June to October. It is best to devise a hurricane plan and use it to make preparations far before the hurricane season. The hurricane plan should provide protection from a storm and recovery after the storm. For more details, go to “Hurricane Preparedness For Citrus Groves” by **Dr. Bob Rouse** at

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/CH178>

HURRICANE Damage Tips for Tree Recovery

By **Dr. Jonathan H. Crane**

University of Florida, IFAS

I. Take pictures of all the damage you can. This will be used for USDA-FSA crop and tree damage payment programs.

II. Large trees - that have fallen over

#1. Cover the trunks and major limbs to shade them either by

- a) Use detached limbs, tarps
- b) Spray sun exposed surfaces with 50/50 mixture of white latex paint
- c) Make a mixture of water and mixture of slaked lime [also called calcium hydroxide and hydrated lime = $\text{Ca}(\text{OH})_2$]. Formula, 50 lbs slaked lime + 10 lbs/zinc oxide in 100 gallons of water. The idea is to shade the trunk and major limbs so they do not overheat and die.

#2. For large trees that have fallen over but still have some root system in the ground and have leaves - prune back 1/3 to 2/3 of the canopy to reduce the water loss from the tree.

#3. To stand up toppled trees that have part of the root system in the ground you want to reset the trees back to the same level they were before:

- a) Pull back soil from the area where the roots came out of the ground
- b) You may need to cut off some badly broken roots (but try to leave as much as possible)
- c) Cut back the top of the tree (the larger the tree the more you may need to cut in order to reduce the weight and pull the tree up) - also if it has leaves you need to remove some canopy to reduce water loss
- d) Pull tree up using a cloth or rope sling (no wire or chains as these may break and be VERY dangerous) and a tractor or backhoe
- e) Once the tree is set up place one or more Y-shaped limbs onto the trunk to steady the tree
- f) Back fill with soil to cover the roots and
- g) Water-in. This should work for most large fruit trees.

Large trees that have leaves and maybe fruit and are still standing – Even though they may have a broken limb here and there and look relatively ok (rainy cloudy weather is good) – the root system has been stressed (broken – especially fibrous roots), you may begin to see drought stress (leaf wilt, drop, stem and limb dieback). Highly recommend that

- a) Fruit be removed (we have noted trees with fruit stressed out and many died compared to trees with no fruit, physiologically makes sense)

- b) Growers strongly consider removing 1/3 to 1/2 of the canopy to reduce the water demand on a damaged/reduced root system.

III. Small trees - that have fallen over

- #1. If you cannot get to standing them up immediately:
 - a) If they have leaves, remove 1/3 to 2/3 of the canopy
 - b) Use the removed branches and foliage to cover the trunk and major limbs
 - c) If no leaves, try not to remove limbs
- #2. Use the same procedure to stand them up as above.

Small trees with leaves and/or fruit and are still standing – what I said for the big trees applies. I'd remove the fruit first, watch carefully then if you have to reduce the canopy.

IV. Watering:

- a) Whether trees are standing or have fallen over and only have a few leaves - leave the canopy alone; if the trees has a lot of leaves remove 1/3 to 1/2 to reduce tree water loss.
- b) For trees with NO leaves - once the tree has been reset (stood up), water the tree in well. However, after doing this, limit watering the trees with no leaves because over watering may cause rotting of the roots.
- c) Trees with a lot of leaves - water normally, with some leaves, reduce the amount of water but water frequently.

V. Fertilizer:

- a. Trees still standing with few to no leaves or with some of the leaves cut off by pruning - reduce the amount of fertilizer by the percent canopy not present (e.g., if half the leaves are gone, reduce the rate by 50%). However, as the new leaves begin to come out, use small amounts of fertilizer frequently.
- b. Trees still standing with leaves - fertilize normally.
- c. Trees that fell over and are now stood up (reset) - if no leaves, wait a few weeks until you see new leaves beginning then fertilize with small amounts frequently.



INCREASING EFFICIENCY AND REDUCING COST OF NUTRITIONAL PROGRAMS

Economics, nutrition, and Florida soils

- To maintain a viable citrus industry, it is necessary to produce large, high quality crops of fruit economically.
- Good production of high quality fruit will not be possible if there is a lack of understanding of soils and nutrient requirement of the grown trees.
- Most Florida citrus is grown on soils with inherently low fertility and low CEC and thus unable to retain enough amount of soluble plant nutrient against the leaching action of rainfall and irrigation.

Importance of N & K

- N & K are the most important nutrients for Florida soils and citrus.
- An adequate level of N is required for vegetative growth, flowering, and fruit yield.
- K also plays an important role in determining yield, fruit size, and quality.
- Fertilizer ratios of N to K_2O are usually 1:1. However, a ratio of 1:1.25 is recommended for high pH or calcareous soils.

Management practices to improve fertilizer efficiency

They include:

- ◆ Evaluation of leaf analysis data
- ◆ Adjustment of N rates to the level based on expected production and IFAS recommendations
- ◆ Selection of fertilizer formulation to match existing conditions
- ◆ Careful placement of fertilizer within the root zone
- ◆ Timing to avoid the rainy season
- ◆ Split application
- ◆ Irrigation management to maximize production and minimize leaching



Tissue and soil analysis

- Leaf sampling and analysis is a useful management tool for fertilizer decisions.
- The best indication of successful fertilizer management practices for citrus trees is having leaf nutritional standards within the optimum ranges.
- Trends in leaf N and K over several years provide the best criteria for adjusting rates within the recommended ranges.
- Soil analysis is useful for determining the pH and concentrations of P, Ca, and Mg.

N requirements for mature trees

- In a mature grove where there is little net increase in tree size, N used for leaf growth is largely recycled as leaves drop, decompose, and mineralize. Replacement of the N removed by fruit harvest becomes the main requirement, and nutrient requirements should vary as the crop load changes.

Fertilizer Sources

- Inorganic and synthetic organic nitrogen fertilizers are high-analysis materials and are generally most economical to use in citrus groves. They are rapidly available, unless they have been formulated in a controlled-release form.
- The use of high analysis fertilizers eliminates much of the filler. A great deal of the mixing, transportation, and application cost is reduced.
- The use of controlled-release fertilizers for resets in established groves is a feasible option.

Timing and frequency of application

- 2/3 of the tree's nutritional requirements should be made available between January and early June, with most of it in place during flowering and fruit-setting period. The remaining 1/3 can be applied in September or October.
- Split fertilizer application or fertigation combined with sound irrigation management increase fertilizer efficiency by maintaining a more constant supply of nutrients and by reducing leaching if unexpected rain occurs. Less fertilizer will be required.
- Less fertilizer may also be required if fertilizer is confined to the root zone and if timing is adjusted to avoid rainy periods.

Foliar feeding

- Foliar feeding is useful under calcareous soil or any other condition that decreases the tree's ability to take up nutrients when there is a demand.
- Foliar applications of low-biuret urea (25-28 lbs N/acre) or phosphorous acid (2.6 quarts/acre of 26-28% P₂O₅) in late Dec.-early Jan. are known to increase flowering, fruit set, and fruit yield.
- Postbloom foliar applications of potassium nitrate or mono-potassium phosphate (8 lbs/acre K₂O) in late April have been found to increase fruit size and yield.

Phosphorus

- P applied to established groves had not leached but had accumulated in the soil at high levels and is available slowly so that P application may be reduced or omitted in established groves.
- P does not leach readily where the soil pH is 6 or higher and the fruit crop removes very little.
- Therefore, regular P applications are not necessary.
- However, some soils used for new citrus plantings may have low native P and P fertilizers should be applied for several years.

Micronutrients

- The use of most micronutrients is recommended only when deficiency symptoms persist.
- Copper should not be included in fertilizers if Cu sprays are used and if the grove soil test show adequate Cu (5-10 lbs/acre).
- Molybdenum (Mo) deficiency occurs on soils that have been allowed to become very acid. Liming those soils should fix the problem.
- Foliar spray applications of micronutrients (Mn, Zn, Cu, B, and Mo) are more effective and economically practical than soil applications when included with postbloom or summer foliar sprays after full expansion of the new flush.

Soil pH & liming

- Soils should have a pH ranging from 5.5 to 6.5 with the higher values used for soils containing high Cu levels.
- Under normal conditions, a clear advantage of pH 6 over pH 5 has been demonstrated in several studies. A pH of 7 was no better than a pH of 6.
- Soil pH can be increased by application of either calcite or dolomite. Dolomite supplies both Ca and Mg. Therefore, the choice of dolomite would be more appropriate to supply Mg and have a good balance between Ca and Mg.

Overliming

- Liming soils having a pH at or above 6 will be costly and not useful. In groves, where soils have adequate pH but low Ca levels, gypsum (CaSO_4) can be used as a source of Ca without affecting the soil pH.
- Applying dolomite as a source of Mg is not recommended if the soil pH is in the desired range. Under these conditions, soil application of either MgSO_4 or MgO and foliar application of $\text{Mg}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ are effective for correcting Mg deficiency.

Nutritional balance

- Correct ratios of nutrients are critical to fertilizer management and sustainability.
- If an element is below the critical level, yield production will fall even though the other elements are kept in good supply.
- Too much N with too little K can reduce fruiting and result in lost crop yield and quality.
- High K with low N and P supply will induce luxury consumption of K, delay fruit development and reduce juice content.

GULF CITRUS COST SHARE PROCEDURES

Cost share rate and maintenance periods for BMP practices

Practice title	Maximum cost-share rate	Maintenance period
Aquatic Weed Barrier	75%	3 years
Chemigation Infrastructure	70%	5years
Conversion/ Repair of Flash Board Riser Water Control Structure	75%	5years
Conversion to Low Volume Irrigation System	75%	10years
Grade Stabilization	75%	5 years
On-Site Water Detention/Retention	70%	10years
Permanent Agrichemical Mixing Facility	60%	10years
Portable Agrichemical Mixing Station	60%	5years
Precision Application Equipment	60%	5years
Water Table Observation Well	75%	1year
Soil Moisture Monitoring Devices	60%	3years

Application Procedure

1. The applicant should schedule a pre-application meeting with staff of the local delivery organization (Southwest Florida RC&D).
2. Complete an Application for Cost Share and submit the application to the Southwest Florida RC&D (application forms available on line at: <http://citrusbmp.ifas.ufl.edu> (Gulf Citrus Section)).
3. If the applicant is eligible, the applicant should consult with the local NRCS office (or contractor of their choice) to develop a project plan that includes the design, cost estimate, and an operation and maintenance (O&M) schedule. The plan should then be submitted to the Southwest Florida RC&D.
4. A cost share agreement (to be provided by Southwest Florida RC&D) will be signed by the applicant and executed by the Southwest Florida RC&D. Execution of the contract shall serve as authorization to proceed with practice implementation in accordance with the agreement.
5. Participants must notify Southwest Florida RC&D program staff of project completion and schedule an inspection to verify that the practice has been installed or constructed in accordance with the plan.
6. Participants should submit a Request for Payment, (with copies of applicable receipts for work completed) to the Southwest Florida RC&D.
7. The applicant must follow the O&M schedule provided for each practice. Southwest Florida RC&D program staff will periodically conduct site visits to verify that the O&M schedule is being followed. Program participants will be required to reimburse the state on a pro-rated basis for cost-share funding received for any practice that is improperly maintained, removed, or destroyed before the end of the maintenance period.

Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible for funds under this program, grove owners must have all applicable permits and have filed a Notice of Intent to Implement BMPs on the property. The Parties recognize that the implementation of some BMPs may require regulation by the District through a Water Use Permit (WUP), a well construction permit (WCP), or trigger the requirement for an Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) pursuant to Parts II, III, or IV of Chapter 373 F.S., respectively. The parties also recognize that implementation of some BMPs may qualify for agricultural statutory exemptions from ERP requirements pursuant to Section 373.403, F.S. Grove caretakers (who do not own the land where BMPs are to be implemented) are also eligible for cost share if they meet the eligibility criteria of the local delivery organization and file a Notice of Intent with the landowner's signature. Participation in this program is open to all eligible applicants without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, and mental or physical handicap. **For more information, go to <http://citrusbmp.ifas.ufl.edu/gulfcoast/index.html>**

FLATWOODS CITRUS NEWSLETTER

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__ Hispanic

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__ Black, non-Hispanic

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__ Male