

# Citrus Notes



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for  
Polk &  
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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### COVID-19

**AT THIS TIME ALL IN-PERSON EDUCATIONAL EVENTS CONDUCTED BY THE UF/IFAS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE ARE CANCELED UNTIL MID-MAY.**

**THIS HAS RESULTED IN THE NECESSITY OF HAVING TO CLOSE THE PHYSICAL OFFICE, BUT PLEASE BE REASSURED THAT WE ARE STILL HERE WORKING ON YOUR BEHALF.**

**I AM STILL AVAILABLE BY USING THE CONTACTS LISTED BELOW.**

## CONTACT INFO

### POLK COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICE

(863) 519-1052

Email: [wcoswalt@ufl.edu](mailto:wcoswalt@ufl.edu)

### HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICE

(813) 744-5519  
Ext. 541231

## Governor DeSantis Issues a Statewide

# “Safer At Home” Executive Order

On April 1, 2020, Governor Ron DeSantis issued a statewide “Safer at Home” executive order. The order begins at 12:01 a.m. on April 3, 2020, and will expire April 30, 2020, unless extended.

The “Safer at Home” means all people in Florida are to limit their movements and personal interactions to only obtaining or providing essential services or conducting essential activities.

The following link is to the “Safer at Home” [Executive Order Number 20-91](#). Included in the order are a listing of what are considered essential services and/or activities.

If you are considered essential, then it is highly suggested that you provide your employees with a letter on company letterhead that states as such. I have attached to this email the two templates for your use. One template is an essential worker movement letter from the Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services, and the other is a Florida Agri-chemical employee exemption letter. Like I mentioned above, fill in the specific employee information printed on the company letterhead, and don't forget to carry a form of ID.



## 2020 Florida Citrus Growers' Institute

As mentioned in the sidebar, all UF/IFAS in-person educational events

have been canceled until mid-May. This has resulted in the necessity to cancel this year's Florida Citrus Growers' Institute. We plan on continuing with this annual event next April 2021. So until then, we will provide as much educational information in a variety of formats in the near future.

## Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

Last week, the US

Department of Labor released a required poster that employers need to provide employees. The poster or notice

should be posted in a conspicuous location on the premises. Also, the poster can be mailed or emailed to the employee or posted electronically to an employee internal or external website. This posting requirement is in effect from April 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020. I have attached the English and Spanish versions of the required posters.



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*The Foundation for the Gator Nation*

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# COVID-19

## And Food Safety (T. Chapin, M. Danyluk, R. Schneider, and K. Schneider)

The CDC, FDA and USDA all agree “Currently, there is *no evidence of food or food packaging being associated with transmission of COVID-19*”, including imported foods and materials. FDA has issued guidance that if an employee tests positive for COVID-19 they “*do not anticipate that food products would need to be recalled or be withdrawn from the market*”. Citrus growers, harvesters, packers, and processors should continue to follow the good hygiene practices they already have in place (e.g., washing hands and cleaning and sanitizing surfaces that may contact food or hands often) as part of their food safety programs when handling or preparing citrus or citrus products. Coronaviruses need a living host (human or animal) to grow in and cannot multiply on citrus, common touch or food contact surfaces.

The media has widely circulated stories of extended survival of novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) on a variety of common surfaces. Reports of active viruses found on cruise ships after 17 days are false; what has been found is the RNA contained in the virus, which **does not** cause infection ([https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6912e3.htm?s\\_cid=mm6912e3\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6912e3.htm?s_cid=mm6912e3_w)). While the tests used were not described, they likely rely on the detection of viral RNA sequences and are not necessarily indicative of infectious virus particles. The longest median half-life of SARS-CoV-2 virus particles documented is on stainless steel (5.6 h) and plastic (6.8 h) (van Doremalen et al., 2020; <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2004973>); total survival time is dependent on many factors including amount in initial contamination, temperature, and relative humidity.

The primary way to control Coronavirus infection is to prevent spread between people, including workers. Citrus growers, harvesters, packers, and processors should continue their vigilance around general hygiene and food safety practices. It is critical to ensure that workers who are not feeling well stay home, to reduce the risk of infecting other workers. During operation employee separation and distancing should be maintained as much as possible. Review of cleaning and sanitation programs should determine if additional focus is needed to clean and sanitize common areas and touch points (e.g. door handles, restrooms, break rooms, transportation, etc.).

The United Fresh Produce Association (<https://www.unitedfresh.org/>), and other food industry groups, have developed comprehensive guidance around dealing with an employee or contract worker who tests positive for COVID-19 ([https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e7d1107dac60a6b3e3f098d/t/5e7e017914477f68e7f8763d/1585316219871/FBIA+COVID19%2BCase+Recommended+Protocols\\_27Mar2020.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e7d1107dac60a6b3e3f098d/t/5e7e017914477f68e7f8763d/1585316219871/FBIA+COVID19%2BCase+Recommended+Protocols_27Mar2020.pdf)), that may be helpful in developing your own policy. A recall is not necessary if an employee tests positive for COVID-19 (see March 17, 2020 Q&A <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>).

In light of pressing concerns around the rapid and continued spread of the coronavirus, there have been several changes to current policies related to the implementation of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule. FDA has suspended all *routine* inspections, including inspections conducted under contract at the state level (<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-focuses-safety-regulated-products-while-scaling-back-domestic>). *For cause* inspections and investigations will continue as needed. **UF/IFAS and FDACS have postponed all food safety workshops and On-Farm Readiness Reviews at this time.**

Additional resources include:

- FDA Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) FAQ <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/mcm-issues/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions>
- WHO Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
- UF IFAS resources devoted to considerations for COVID-19 listed here under publications [https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic\\_covid19](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_covid19), information is frequently added to this page, and is being translated into Spanish [https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic\\_spa\\_covid19](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_spa_covid19)

(Continued from page 2)

The UF/IFAS EDIS link above includes factsheets directly related to produce production <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/FS/FS35100.pdf>.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

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## New Website with Rootstock Trial Results

A new website with a wealth of information about citrus rootstocks has just gone live (<https://citrusrootstocks.org/>). Rootstock breeder Kim Bowman (USDA, ARS, Ft. Pierce) has assembled results from 37 replicated multiyear rootstock field trials in Florida, and posted them on the site for easy access from computer, tablet, or smartphone. The trials include many of the most popular rootstocks in Florida and the rootstocks released by USDA

over the past 20 years, as well as 300+ of the SuperSour rootstocks currently being evaluated for potential release in the next few years. This is the best source to find specific trial results comparing the rootstocks US-942, US-897, US-802, US-812, US-852, US-896, US-1516, US-1279, US-1281, US-1282, US-1283, US-1284, SuperSour 1, SuperSour 2, SuperSour 3, Swingle, sour orange, and many other new and common rootstocks. The trials with results posted on these sites will be the basis for future releases of USDA rootstocks. Information that you can examine for yourself includes numerical data on tree survival, tree size, canopy health, fruit yield, fruit size, brix, acid, percent juice, color, and other measures that vary according to scion and trial. In addition to extensive field performance information for hundreds of rootstocks, the site contains official rootstock descriptions for many in commercial use, specific information about nursery propagation for all the USDA rootstocks, the latest statistics for industry usage of different rootstocks, links to an assortment of other invaluable rootstock-related sites, and much more. New updates will be added to the site regularly, but there is already a tremendous wealth of information there and ready to be used. Take advantage of the site when you are looking for the latest most complete information on new rootstocks. Remember that your choice of rootstock can make the difference between a profitable grove, and a planting that fails.

For additional information contact:  
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USDA, ARS, USHRL, 2001 S. Rock Road, Ft. Pierce, FL  
[Kim.Bowman@usda.gov](mailto:Kim.Bowman@usda.gov)  
<https://citrusrootstocks.org/>

## Extension for Restricted Use Pesticide Licenses

Agriculture Commissioner Nicole "Nikki" Fried issued an Emergency

Order # 2020-002, declaring that the imposition of late fees for several statutes, including the one relating to the Restricted Use Pesticide (RUP) License. Late fees will be suspended for 30 days following the issuance of this order, which was March 20, 2020. This duration, unless extended, would end on April 19, 2020.

This 30-day extension does not extend the actual expiration date of your RUP license. It would merely waive any late fees that would come due during that period. If your license expires during this period, you can not legally purchase or apply (unless under the supervision of valid RUP holder) restricted-use pesticides. As I interpret the order, the only late fees associated with a RUP license would be renewing your license after the 60 day grace period ended (sixty days after the RUP expiration date). If the 60 day grace period were to end during the March 20 to April 19, 2020 time period, there would be a waiver of the late fee.

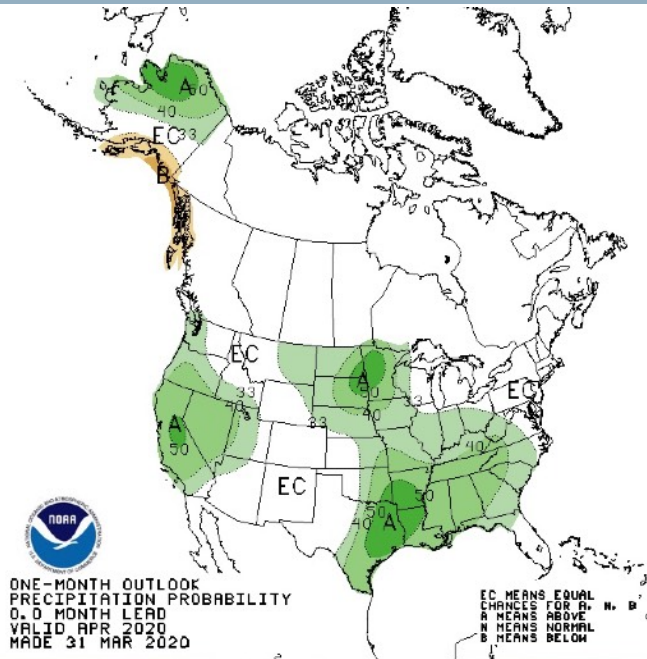
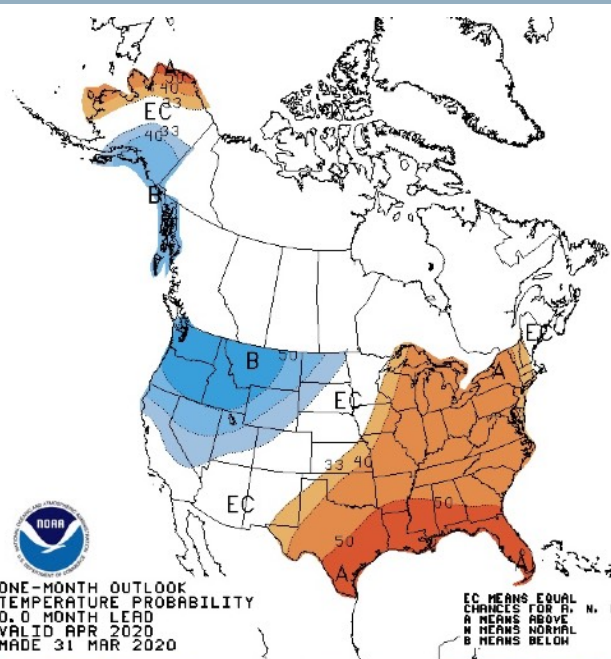
Unfortunately, if your RUP license expires during this period, and you can not renew by submitting CEU's, we are unable at this time to provide pesticide testing. I can offer the following website for Core CEU's from Citrus Industry Magazine (<http://citrusindustry.net/ceu/>). The UF/IFAS Pesticide Information Office has additional CEU opportunities (<https://ifas-pest.catalog.instructure.com>). In the future, there may be some accommodation for pesticide testing, and when or if this happens, I'll have information in the Citrus Notes Newsletter.

The following is the link to the actual and complete emergency order by Commissioner Fried (Order # 2020-002). If you have further questions or need clarification, please see the following link: <https://www.fdacs.gov/Divisions-Offices/Agricultural-Environmental-Services>.



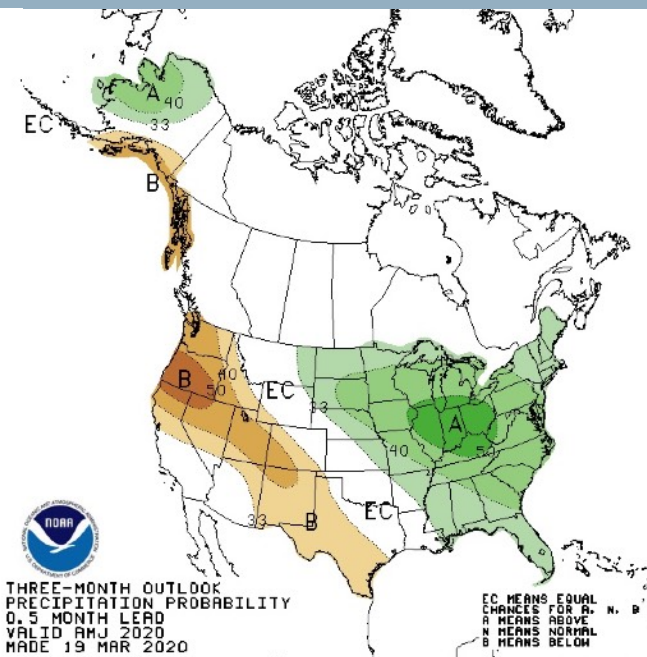
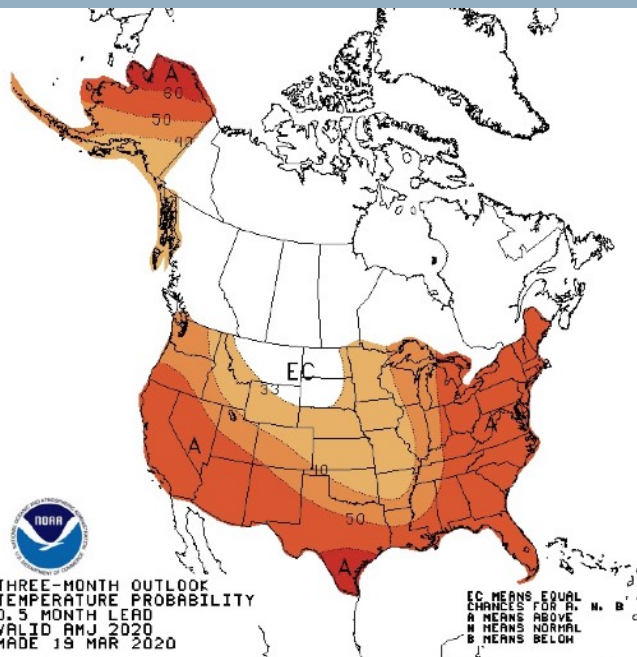
# WEATHER OUTLOOK

## MONTHLY OUTLOOK FOR APRIL 2020 - TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION



# WEATHER OUTLOOK

## MONTHLY OUTLOOK FOR APR/MAY/JUNE 2020 - TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION



2020

### Summer Outlook

As I am finishing up this issue of Citrus Notes, it is hard to believe that summer is on the way. It has undoubtedly been dry lately, and temperatures short of this week's cold front have been on the rise.

To get a better handle on what to expect this spring, one of the first sources would be the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center (CPC) and the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO). According to the CPC, there is a 65% chance of neutral ENSO conditions

continuing this spring, with a 55% chance through the summer. The 65% is an increase of 5% chance for neutral spring conditions (from last month) and a 5% increase from the previous month of neutral continuing into summer.

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

## PAID SICK LEAVE AND EXPANDED FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE UNDER THE FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT

The **Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA or Act)** requires certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. These provisions will apply from April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

### ▶ PAID LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

Generally, employers covered under the Act must provide employees:

Up to two weeks (80 hours, or a part-time employee's two-week equivalent) of paid sick leave based on the higher of their regular rate of pay, or the applicable state or Federal minimum wage, paid at:

- 100% for qualifying reasons #1-3 below, up to \$511 daily and \$5,110 total;
- $\frac{2}{3}$  for qualifying reasons #4 and 6 below, up to \$200 daily and \$2,000 total; and
- Up to 12 weeks of paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave paid at  $\frac{2}{3}$  for qualifying reason #5 below for up to \$200 daily and \$12,000 total.

A part-time employee is eligible for leave for the number of hours that the employee is normally scheduled to work over that period.

### ▶ ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES

In general, employees of private sector employers with fewer than 500 employees, and certain public sector employers, are eligible for up to two weeks of fully or partially paid sick leave for COVID-19 related reasons (see below). *Employees who have been employed for at least 30 days* prior to their leave request may be eligible for up to an additional 10 weeks of partially paid expanded family and medical leave for reason #5 below.

### ▶ QUALIFYING REASONS FOR LEAVE RELATED TO COVID-19

An employee is entitled to take leave related to COVID-19 if the employee is unable to work, including unable to **telework**, because the employee:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;</li><li>2. has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;</li><li>3. is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;</li><li>4. is caring for an individual subject to an order described in (1) or self-quarantine as described in (2);</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. is caring for his or her child whose school or place of care is closed (or child care provider is unavailable) due to COVID-19 related reasons; or</li><li>6. is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.</li></ol> |
|---|---|

### ▶ ENFORCEMENT

The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) has the authority to investigate and enforce compliance with the FFCRA. Employers may not discharge, discipline, or otherwise discriminate against any employee who lawfully takes paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave under the FFCRA, files a complaint, or institutes a proceeding under or related to this Act. Employers in violation of the provisions of the FFCRA will be subject to penalties and enforcement by WHD.



**WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION**  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

For additional information  
or to file a complaint:  
**1-866-487-9243**  
TTY: 1-877-889-5627  
[dol.gov/agencies/whd](https://dol.gov/agencies/whd)



# DERECHOS DEL EMPLEADO

## LICENCIA POR ENFERMEDAD PAGADA Y EXPANSION DE LICENCIA FAMILIAR Y POR ENFERMEDAD BAJO LEY FAMILIAS PRIMERO DE RESPUESTA AL CORONAVIRUS

La **Ley Familias Primero de Respuesta al Coronavirus (FFCRA o Ley)** requiere que ciertos empleadores den a empleados licencias laboral pagadas o expansión de licencia familiar y por enfermedad por razones relativas al COVID-19. Estas provisiones aplicarán desde abril 1 hasta diciembre 31 del 2020.

### ► DERECHOS A LICENCIA LABORAL PAGADA

En general, los empleadores cubiertos bajo la Ley deben proveer a empleados:

Hasta 2 semanas (80 horas, o el equivalente de dos semanas de un empleado a tiempo parcial) de licencia por enfermedad pagada en base a su mayor tasa regular de pago, o el salario mínimo estatal o federal aplicable, de la siguiente manera:

- 100% para razones calificables #1-3 (ver abajo), hasta \$511 por día y \$5,110 total;
- $\frac{2}{3}$  para razones calificables #4 and 6, hasta \$200 por día y \$2,000 total; y
- Hasta 12 semanas de licencia por enfermedad pagada y expansión de licencia familiar y por enfermedad pagada a  $\frac{2}{3}$  para razones calificables #5 de hasta \$200 por día y \$12,000 total.

Un empleado a tiempo parcial es elegible a licencia por las horas que trabajaría durante ese periodo.

### ► EMPLEADOS ELEGIBLES

En general, empleados de empleadores del sector privado con menos de 500 trabajadores, y de ciertos empleadores del sector público, son elegibles a hasta dos semanas de licencia pagada total o parcialmente por enfermedad por razones de COVID-19 (ver abajo). *Empleados que hayan estado en nómina al menos 30 días anteriores a su solicitud de licencia podrán ser elegibles a hasta 10 semanas adicionales de expansión pagada parcialmente de licencia familiar y por enfermedad por razón #5.*

### ► RAZONES CALIFICABLES A LICENCIA RELACIONADA A COVID-19

Un empleado tiene derecho a tomar licencia laboral relacionada a COVID-19 si no le es posible trabajar, incluyendo imposibilidad de hacer **teletrabajo**, porque el empleado:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. está sujeto a orden de cuarentena o aislamiento Federal, Estatal, o local relacionada al COVID-19;</li><li>2. ha sido instruido por un proveedor de salud que se ponga en auto-cuarentena por COVID-19;</li><li>3. está experimentando síntomas de COVID-19 y está solicitando diagnóstico médico;</li><li>4. está cuidando a una persona sujeta a una orden descrita en (1) o en auto-cuarentena descrita en (2);</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. está cuidando a un hijo cuya escuela o lugar de cuidados está cerrado (o cuidados infantiles no están disponibles) por razones de COVID-19; o</li><li>6. está experimentando otras condiciones sustancialmente similares a las especificadas por el Secretario de Salud y Servicios Humanos.</li></ol> |
|---|---|

### ► CUMPLIMIENTO

La División de Horas y Salarios (WHD) del Departamento de Trabajo de EE.UU. tiene la autoridad de investigar y hacer que se cumpla la FFCRA. Los empleadores no podrán expulsar, disciplinar, o discriminar de ningún modo a un empleado que legalmente hace uso de su derecho a licencia laboral pagada o a extensión de licencia familiar y por enfermedad bajo FFCRA, presenta una queja, o inicia un procedimiento bajo o relativo a esta Ley. Los empleadores que violen las provisiones de la FFCRA serán objeto de multas y medidas de cumplimiento por la WHD.



**DIVISION DE HORAS Y SALARIOS**  
DEPARTAMENTO DE TRABAJO DE ESTADOS UNIDOS

Para información adicional  
o para presentar una queja:  
**1-866-487-9243**  
TTY: 1-877-889-5627  
[dol.gov/agencies/whd](https://dol.gov/agencies/whd)

