

Citrus Notes



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Dear Growers,

*The following are grower events planned for
the near future:*

January 6th Citrus BMP Meeting

January 28-29th Florida Citrus Show

February 5th Certified Pile Burners Course

*February 9-13th International Research Conference
on HLB*

Enjoy the issue,

Chris Oswalt
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Statewide Citrus Best Management Prac- tices (BMP) Meeting

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will host a Citrus Best Management Practices workshop on Tuesday, January 6, 2015 at the W.H. Stuart Conference Center, 1710 US Hwy 17 S, Bartow from 9:00 AM until about noon. The purpose of the meeting is to assist growers previously enrolled in the Ridge Citrus BMP to re-enroll into the newer, consolidated Citrus BMP program prior to the end of the grace period specified in rule.

The workshop will feature a brief presentation on the origin and progress of the Citrus BMP program to date, followed by a discussion of the benefits the program provides and of the current regulatory situation. FDACS will have staff on hand to assist growers with the enrollment process, which was designed to be simple.

One of the most popular benefits of enrollment is grower access to the FDACS cost-share program, which will also be discussed at the meeting. For more information, please call either Bo Griffin or Susie Bishop at 863-402-7020.

Florida Citrus Show



Celebrate the rewards and overcome the challenges associated with citrus production as you join growers from across the state for the 2015 Florida Citrus Show in Fort Pierce, January 28-29. Sample new varieties, enjoy indoor and outdoor exhibits featuring cutting-edge products and technologies, and get the latest



information from leading growers and agriculture experts on production trends, grove management practices, produce marketing, and insect and disease management strategies.

For additional information and registration use the following link: <http://www.citrusshow.com>



International Conference on HLB

The Fourth International Research Conference on HLB will be held February 9th to 13th in Orlando. The following link (<http://www.irchlb.org/>) has additional information of interest on the conference, along with information on the scheduled grower day in March 2015.

Certified Pile Burner Course

The Florida Forest Service and University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service will be conducting a Certified Pile Burners Course on Thursday, February 5, 2015. This course will show you how to burn piles legally, safely and efficiently. Most importantly, it could save a life. If you burn piles regularly, don't put off registering for this training. When the weather is dry, certified pile burners will receive priority for authorization to burn. Also, certified pile burners are allowed to burn up to two hours longer per day and get multiple day authorizations. Don't wait. The number of trainings offered and attendance at each training is LIMITED. This training will be held from 8:30 am till 4:30 pm at the Southwest Florida Research and Education Center in Immokalee, Florida. Included are a registration form and program agenda.



Weak El Nino Predicted This Winter, Part II Seasonal Rainfall Patterns

As mentioned last month, the National Weather Service's, Climate Prediction Center is forecasting El Nino conditions this winter. Further estimates are of a

slow development that will likely result in weak El Nino conditions this winter.

Figure 1 illustrates the average monthly rainfall during the winter months at three Florida locations (seems that the Sarasota-Brandenton graph is no longer available). Looking at the Tampa location and comparing the weak El Nino bars to the monthly average rainfall, indicates that rainfall totals for the months of December, February and April during a weak El Nino are similar to the monthly average. However, in the months of January and March average monthly rainfall during a weak El Nino winter are above average during

those months.

In Lakeland there is less than average rainfall during a weak El Nino for the month of December and about average for the month of February. Average rainfall amounts during a weak El Nino winter are greater than the average for the months of January, March and April.

In Fort Myers average monthly rainfall during a weak El Nino winter for the months of February and April are similar to the monthly average. Greater than average amounts of rainfall can be expected during a weak El Nino event for the months of December, January and March.

In conclusion, based on the three locations for the balance of the winter under weak El Nino conditions, one would expect that average rainfall for the months of January and March to be above average. February at the three locations, under weak El Nino conditions, have had normal or average amounts of rainfall. In April, Lakeland is the one location with above average rainfall compared to the average. Just remember that every year is a little different and these figures represent average rainfall amounts.

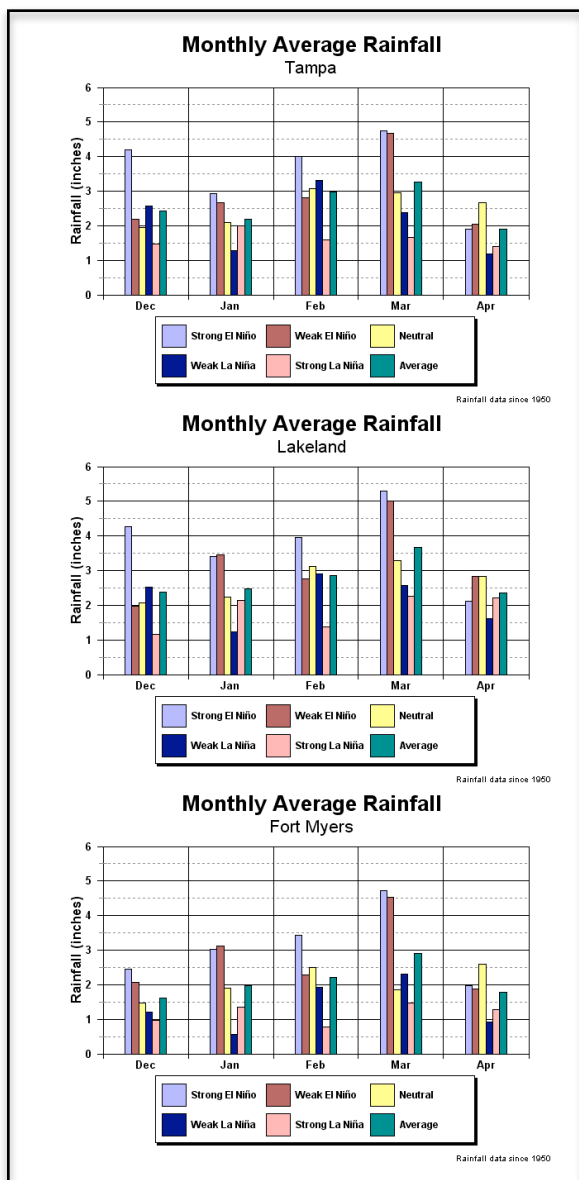


Figure 1. Average monthly rainfall by location.

2014-15 Citrus Flower Bud Advisories

The 2014-15 version of the citrus flower bud advisories are now available at the following website: http://www.crec.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/flowerbud/2015/12_17_14.shtml. The information below is from the third advisory issued (12/17/14) this winter.

The following information has been developed as part of the Decision Information System for Citrus by L. Gene Albrigo, Horticulturist Emeritus Citrus Research & Education Center, Lake Alfred, FL.

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

Current Status: Within 4 days cool temperature induction will have reached 820 to 950 hours below 68° F for southern to central citrus producing regions in Florida.

With the higher induction levels that are now present, the buds will begin to grow if daytime high temperatures reach 80°F for just a few continuous days. Such conditions are predicted for South Florida citrus areas. The Indian River and Central Florida will be borderline for growth initiation temperatures.

Since cool temperatures have reached these levels, flower enhancing sprays may not be needed, but one of the chemical sales companies correctly pointed out that enhancing flowering intensity will reduce the possibility of multiple blooms. The advantage of this is to shorten the time when harsher psyllid sprays can't be applied, and reduce the chance of another PFD event this season and the number of sprays that are needed if PFD does occur.

See the last advisory for flower enhancement spray information. If you choose to apply either urea and/or PO₃, you should do so immediately. The recommendations are for one or the other. We do not have data on combining the two products at some reduced rate.

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

Agricultural Tax Planning - The 2014 Tax Extenders Bill becomes Law

(Author: Thomas J. Bryant, CPA is Senior Tax Partner, Beasley, Bryant & Company, CPA's, P.A., Lakeland, Florida (863) 646-1373).

The 2014 “tax extenders” bill cleared Congress in mid December and was signed into law by the President. The bill, H. R. 5771 “Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014” (TIPA), basically extends certain expiring tax provisions relating to individuals, businesses, and the energy sector. The law extends these tax provisions **only through 2014**. The bill includes several other provisions and technical corrections. It consists of 2 Divisions, the Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014, Division A, and Division B, the Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014 (ABLE). **This article focuses on only Division A, the individual, business and energy provisions (extenders).**

Individual Tax Extenders

- Tax deduction of mortgage insurance premiums.

- Tax deduction of state and local general sales taxes.
- \$250 tax deduction of education expenses of teachers and educators.
- Tax deduction of qualified tuition and related expenses.
- Mortgage debt cancellation for a principal residence excluded from income.
- Exclusion from income of employer-provided commuter transit and parking benefits.
- Tax deduction of contributions of capital gain real property for conservation purposes including the special rules for farmers and ranchers donating property for conservation purposes.
- IRA tax-free distributions to charitable organizations.

Business Tax Extenders

There are over 30 business tax extenders included in the bill; this article highlights some of these extenders.

- Bonus Depreciation – **50% first-year bonus depreciation** on the cost of **new** equipment is extended for 2014.
- Section 179 expensing of business property for 2014 is increased to the **2013 levels**. The maximum allowed for qualifying property is **\$500,000** and the phase-out begins at **\$2 million**. Under previous law the maximum deduction was limited to \$25,000 and the phase-out began at \$200,000.
- The Indian employment credit is extended to employers for certain wages and health insurance benefits provided to employees who are members of an Indian tribe or spouses of members.

- 15-year straight-line depreciation for qualified leasehold improvements, restaurant property, or retail improvements is extended.
- Accelerated depreciation for business property on an Indian reservation is extended.
- The S corporation recognition period to avoid taxing of built-in gains of 5 years is extended.
- Basis adjustment re: S corporations making charitable contributions.
- Enhanced deduction for charitable donations of food inventory.
- The Research Credit, Low-Income Housing Credit, New Markets Tax Credit, Railroad Track Maintenance Credit, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, and American Samoa Economic Development Credit are extended.

Energy Tax Extenders

Some of the energy tax extenders are:

- Credit for non-business energy efficient property.
- Indian coal production credit.
- Energy-efficient new homes credit.
- Biodiesel and renewable diesel credits.
- Excise tax credits for alternative fuels.
- Credit for alternative fuel vehicle refueling property.

Other Provisions in the Bill

The bill contains extenders for multiemployer defined benefit pension plans, technical corrections, and other provisions. The ABLE Act, Division B, basically would provide aid to eligible blind or disabled persons. The states must establish the ABLE programs.

Summary

This is a brief description of the new “tax extenders” law and is based on information available to us as of mid December. Although farmers, ranchers, and other business are glad to see a “one year fix” (2014 only), it is frustrating that again, there is no long-term solution. Farmers and ranchers as well as all businesses need a long-term fix and Congress should be actively encouraged to make these extenders permanent.

For more information on this topic and other tax planning for farming, please contact me at (863) 640-2008 or Tom@beasleybryantcpa.com and/or Ryan Beasley at (863) 646-1373 or Ryan@beasleybryantcpa.com.

For information on other relevant topics visit our website at www.beasleybryantcpa.com. We at Beasley, Bryant & Company, CPA’s, P. A. are experienced in agricultural business problems, tax issues or concerns, and are here to help you.

Citrus Pest Management Course Offered this Spring

Citrus Pest Management, (PMA 5205, section 115A) will be offered for the Spring 2015 term at the University of Florida/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center (CREC) in Lake Alfred and via distance education at the Department of Entomology and Nematology in Gainesville (section 115C). Additional distance education sites and sections will be established at UF-IFAS Research and Education Centers on request.

Citrus Pest Management is a graduate-level course (3.0 units) for students and citrus industry personnel working in the area of pest management. The course reviews the latest tactics and strategies available to manage diseases and arthropod, nematode and weed pests of citrus. Emphasis is given to techniques by which pest and disease organisms are monitored and how this information is used to effectively manage pests with the least risk to the environment.

Course topics include:

- Identification and biology of citrus pests and diseases

- Pest and disease monitoring
- Ecological and economic principles as a basis for pest management
- Economic thresholds and pest management models
- Integrated pest management in citrus
- **AND - Citrus IPM in the era of citrus greening**

The course is taught by experts in each area and is coordinated by Dr. Larry Duncan, University of Florida/IFAS, Professor of Nematology. University credit (3.0) or audit credit. CEU's will be offered.

Dates/Time:

Wednesdays Jan. 7 – Apr. 29; 3 - 6 p.m. (8-10 period).

Locations:

University of Florida/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center, Ben Hill Griffin, Jr. Citrus Hall Teaching Laboratory, 700 Experiment Station Road, Lake Alfred, Florida. Tel. (863) 956-1151.

University of Florida/IFAS Department of Entomology and Nematology, Bldg 970, Room 127, Natural Area Drive, Gainesville, Florida. Tel (352) 273-3912.

Additional sites will be established at UF-IFAS Research and Education Centers on request.

Textbook:

None. Required readings will be provided by instructors.

Registration:

Regular and non-degree registration is until 5:00 PM on Jan. 5th and students are strongly encouraged to register early.

Regular students must complete the registration procedures outline at www.isis.ufl.edu.

The section number for students at the CREC, Lake Alfred site is 115A. For students at all other sites the section number is 115C.

Non-degree students must register by contacting Ms Ruth Brumbaugh, 352-273-3912, brumbaugh@ufl.edu. For additional information about the class contact Dr. Larry Duncan (863-956-8822; lwduncan@ufl.edu).



Pesticide News & Information

Drift Reduction Program Announced

The Environmental Protection Agency announced a voluntary Drift Reduction Technology (DRT) program intended to encourage the use of pesticide spray products that are most likely to reduce pesticide drift and save farmers money. "Our new star-rating system of products and technologies protect neighbors and reduce costs by keeping more of the pesticide on the crop," says Jim Jones, assistant administrator for the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. As with other rating systems, more stars in the program equals greater potential for reducing spray drift.

DRT is a voluntary program that encourages manufacturers to test their technologies (such as nozzles, spray shields and drift reduction chemicals) for drift reduction potential. The EPA encourages pesticide manufacturers to label their products for use with DRT technologies. The four DRT ratings represented by one, two, three or four stars are awarded for technologies that demonstrate at least 25% reduction in potential spray drift compared to the standard. One percent to 10% of agricultural pesticide sprays drift, losing about 70 million pounds of pesticides valued up to \$640 million each year, EPA estimates. The new rating system is designed also to decrease the amount of time and money spent investigating drift complaints.

Spray technology manufacturers interested in participating in EPA's DRT program may now submit data verifying their technology reduces pesticide movement. The EPA will evaluate each data submission and, if appropriate, assign a drift-reduction star rating to the product based on its ability to reduce spray drift. The EPA will post these ratings on a special pesticide drift website. A pesticide manufacturer can choose to

label a product for use with a DRT of a particular rating after receiving approval from EPA. Over time, the program will move the agricultural sector toward the widespread use of low-drift technologies with ratings that could appear on pesticide labels as early as fall 2015. (Farm Futures, 10/23/14).

New Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) Report

All agree that the world needs a safe, plentiful supply of food, and most acknowledge that global demand will grow along with the expanding population. A new Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) report examined how pesticides fit into this equation. The authors concluded that a safe, thoughtful integration of pesticides is essential if we hope to attain an abundant food supply for a hungry world.

The paper gives a brief background about the use of pesticides and then a thorough look at why they have become popular and widely used. Intelligent use of pesticides has led to crop management that is more efficient, sustainable, and productive. For example, the authors produce evidence that fungicide use has helped stem the curse of soybean rust, aided with the prevention of fusarium head blight in wheat, and increased farmer income.

Along with better pest management, pesticides have helped with the development of improved agronomic practices such as no till, low till, higher plant densities, increased yields, and efficient use of water and nutrients. The authors point out that in comparison to hand weeding, herbicide use is less expensive and more effective. "By substituting for cultivation, herbicide use leads to lower fuel use, less carbon emissions, less soil erosion, and less water use."

Of course there are controversies and challenges. The authors indicate that concerns exist regarding water, soil, and atmospheric resources, as well as the need for safety during application and food processing. Regulations, testing, worker training, and other safeguards are factors that mitigate unwanted effects.

More than 800 million people in the world are food insecure, and the amount of crop yield lost each year to pests could run upwards of 30%. But many experts are optimistic about developments involving safe, efficient production methods occurring around the globe. When pesticides are effectively applied and integrated into a comprehensive approach, the world is better able to

provide food for the 9 billion humans on earth in 2050. (CAST, 11/17/14).

GM Crop Study

An international study funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and the European Union's Seventh Framework Program FOODSECURE concluded that GM crops are good for the economy and reduce the amount of pesticides used in agriculture. The German study is the largest review ever conducted on the effect of GM crops on farming. It is a meta-analysis, meaning a rigorous study of the numbers inside past studies on the topic. The review included studies of GM crops conducted from 1995 to March 2014 that were published in English. According to the authors, GM crops have reduced chemical pesticide use by 37 percent, increased crop yields by 22 percent and increased farmer profits by 68 percent. Yield gains and pesticide reductions are larger for insect-resistant crops than for herbicide-tolerant crops, they reported. The authors also found that yield and profit gains are higher in developing countries than in developed countries, with yields 14 percentage points more in the developing world than in the developed world. Pests and weeds are a bigger problem in developing nations, another reason GM technology brings bigger benefits there. The study found that herbicide-tolerant crops have lower production costs, while insect-resistant ones do not. In that case, the need for less insecticide is offset by the higher seed prices. (Food Safety News, 11/11/14).



Information for the next Certified Pile Burners Course:

The Florida Forest Service and University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service will be conducting a Certified Pile Burners Course on Thursday, February 5, 2015. This course will show you how to burn piles *legally, safely and efficiently*. Most importantly, it could save a life. If you burn piles regularly, don't put off registering for this training. When the weather is dry, certified pile burners will receive priority for authorization to burn. Also, certified pile burners are allowed to burn up to two hours longer per day and get multiple day authorizations. Don't wait. The number of trainings offered and attendance at each training is LIMITED. This training will be held from 8:30 am till 4:30 pm at the Southwest Florida Research and Education Center in Immokalee, Florida. Included are a registration form and program agenda.

Registration is required to attend and class size is limited. To attend please send the following information (see form on next page):

1. Your full name (as wanted on your pile burning certificate).
2. Your mailing address (where you want the certificate mailed).
3. Your Florida Forest Service Customer Number (It is the number that you are required to give the FFS when you call in for your burn permits. If you do not know it please call the local FFS office and ask them to create one for you).
4. Your email address (if you have one) and/or contact phone number.
5. A check made out to: Hendry County 4-H for \$50.00.

The first fifty individuals to provide these five requirements will be registered; there will be a 7-day non refundable fee limit. If you do not make the training and did not contact our office at least one week before the class, you will not receive a refund. There will be a test at the end of the session. You must receive a grade of 70% or higher on the exam and demonstrate a proper pile burn with your local FFS office to become certified. Once you are certified it will be noted with your customer number, thus it is important for us to have the proper number. If you do not have a customer number the FFS office will set one up for you. Fill out the registration form on the next page and return as directed.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mongi Zekri

For Questions Contact: Dr. Mongi Zekri at maz@ufl.edu or 239 595 5494

Registration Form

Florida's Certified Pile Burner Program
Thursday, February 5, 2015

Hendry County Extension Office
P.O. Box 68, LaBelle, FL 33975
(239) 595 5494

Please send this form and a check for \$50.00 made payable to:
Hendry County 4-H

Mail to: Hendry County Extension Office
Attn: Dr. Mongi Zekri
P. O. Box 68
LaBelle, FL 32975

Name

Mailing address

Email address

Phone Number

FFS Customer Number



Florida's Certified Pile Burner Training
Thursday, February 5, 2015
UF-IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center
2685 SR 29, Immokalee, FL 34142
See: <http://www.imok.ufl.edu/> for directions
(239) 595 5494

All Times Are Local

1. Opening Comments and Introduction	08:30 – 09:10
2. Fire Weather	09:10 – 09:50
3. BREAK	09:50 – 10:00
4. Smoke Management	10:00 – 11:20
5. Open Burning Regulations	11:20 – 12:15
6. LUNCH (provided)	12:15 – 01:15
7. Planning and Implementation	01:15 – 02:30
8. Safety	02:30 – 03:10
9. BREAK	03:10 – 03:20
10. Public Relations	03:20 – 04:00
11. Wrap Up & Test	04:00 – 04:30

Please bring a Pencil for the Exam!

