

Citrus connection



HIGHLANDS COUNTY CITRUS GROWERS President's Column by Aaron Nelson

As we turn the page from April to May, one of the things my mind goes to in the groves is snails. That's right; snails. Several years ago, I, like many of you, started noticing a new critter in the groves. A funny looking spiral shaped snail. No pest or disease course that I took in school ever mentioned anything about snails being a pest of any consequence in citrus, so I didn't pay them much attention. In hindsight maybe I should have. Since then, I've come to learn the name of this new pest is *Bulimulus sporadicus*.

The past several years during the month of May, populations of these snails have exploded. This May is no different. While *Bulimulus sporadicus* generally doesn't cause much damage to a citrus tree directly, (although I have seen them completely defoliate a tree inside of an IPC) they do congregate in heavy populations on top of microjets, in turn blocking critical irrigation and fertigation that our HLB compromised trees require.

The timing of these population spikes exacerbates the problem. With longer days, little rain in the forecast and high temperatures that have no problem finding the 90's, grove irrigation is at its height this time of year. Not a good time at all for clogged up jets! The problem is getting worse each year, going from just a few "hot spots" a few years ago to now being in almost every grove I ride.

Currently there are no recommended controls for this pest. Broad spectrum insecticides that work on most insect pests we fight do not kill the mollusk *Bulimulus sporadicus*. There are some commercially available baits, but they are costly, and some can be difficult to apply. The list of pests, diseases and natural disasters that plague our industry is far too long for my liking. Now add snails to that list.

I can't help but liken farming to raising a family. My wife and I have two young children and sometimes I'll foolishly think I have this parenting thing figured out. Then, I am suddenly confronted with a situation that I was totally unprepared for, and it reminds me that I have so much to learn about being a dad. It can be quite humbling and frustrating at the same time.

Farming can sometimes be the same way. Just when we think we know something about growing oranges, a situation, or in this case a snail shows up and reminds us all that we still have a lot to learn. As parents, we don't give up on our kids when things get tough. No, we double down and do whatever the situation demands of us because we love our children. Farming isn't much different. We do what we do because we love it. Whatever problems our industry faces we will tackle because it's just what we do. If hurricanes, freezes or HLB aren't going to run us off, you can bet that a snail won't!

Aaron Nelson

**APR
2023**

- Citrus Roundtable
- CRDF Plant Workshop
- Hurricane Season Projections
- Psyllid Control
- Pile Burning Course
- ERP II for Citrus
- Citrus Cover Crops
- USDA Forecast
- Citrus Expo
- Weed Control Planning
- HCCGA Golf Day
- Wedgworth Leadership Inst.
- HCCGA Member Directory



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2023 Calendar of Events

June 13

Landowner Assistance Expo @ Bert J. Harris Ag Center

June 14-16

Annual Citrus Conference @ Bonita Springs

July 20

Certified Pile Burner Course @ Bert J. Harris Ag Center

August 16-17

Citrus Expo @ Florida State Fairground, Tampa

September 6-8

49th Annual Agricultural Labor Relations Forum @ Wyndham Grand Orlando Resort Bonnet Creek

November 14-16

Ag-Venture @ Highlands County Fairgrounds

December 9

2023 HCCGA Citrus Fun Shoot @ TBA

For additional information about any of these meetings or events, contact Ray or Jan at the HCCGA office



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Executive Director's Report

BY RAY ROYCE

Hopefully in the coming months there will be several new revenue generation and/or cost savings mechanisms put into place by our Federal and State governments for growers to potentially take advantage of. Some of the proposed legislation will be more immediately impactful than others – but all of it could add potential financial tools for operations to utilize.



Federal legislation championed by Florida's Senators Scott and Rubio and Congressman Scott Franklin would authorize the creation a USDA Block Grant Program to get cost share reimbursement money flowing to growers that are investing in production practices to recover from the impacts associated with Hurricane Ian. Another piece of legislation would amend the Conservation Reserve Program to make fallow citrus property eligible for "conservation payments" if growers are looking to hold it uncultivated for a period of time until they felt that returning the property to active citrus production was feasible.

On the State side, there are several pieces of legislation that passed and should be signed into law that will:

- Create a Farm TEAM Card to provide a more streamlined process for producers to receive the agricultural sales tax exemptions provided by the State.
- Prohibit a county from levying certain special assessments (*including clarifying fire service assessment methodologies*) on agricultural lands.
- Prohibit local governments from adopting land use or zoning restrictions, conditions, or regulations that require termination or surrender of agricultural classifications for certain property.

So thank you to not only our legislative leadership: Senators Scott & Rubio, Congressman Franklin, Steube and others in the Florida Delegation, Florida Ag Commissioner Wilton Simpson, Florida Senators Ben Albritton and Erin Grall, our county's Representative Kaylee Tuck and other agricultural advocates, but to Citrus Mutual, Florida Farm Bureau, FFVA, FNGLA, etc. for their tireless work on our behalf. While our organization is doing our job on the local level - these folks are getting us the assistance we need on the State and Federal level.

We had a great day for golf on April 27th for our annual HCCGA Golf Day. You can see who won in their respective flights and the contests in this issue of the newsletter. Thank you to all that participated and those many companies that sponsored parts of this event, especially our friends at **Heartland National Bank**.

National OJ Day on May 4th provided a great reminder of the power of social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and various blogs) in today's world. In the days leading up to the 4th, and especially on National OJ Day, there were countless posts celebrating Florida citrus and the responses from folks not involved in the industry were very encouraging to see. We all need to be continually active in these venues, sharing the nutritional and health benefits of our products with the general public, while proactively taking a role in helping to promote our wonderful products!

We will start the preliminary production work associated with the 2023 HCCGA Annual Member Directory in a couple of weeks. Members should send in their contact and bio info update sheets just as soon as possible after you receive them later this month, so the proper information can be published in this widely utilized year round resource tool. Associate members may also want to enhance your presence in this year's directory through advertising. If you have any questions, or need additional information, contact Ray or Jan at the HCCGA office.

Our goal is to keep our members as informed as possible on a wide range of issues, so please never hesitate in contacting me day or night (cell: 863-381-8551) for additional information if you need it; or if I can be of assistance in any matter, large or small.

Thanks, Ray



Info Notes



2023 Ag Labor Relations Forum

Save the dates of September 6th-8th for the 49th Annual Agricultural Labor Relations Forum at the Wyndham Grand Orlando Resort Bonnet Creek. Presented by the Florida Specialty Crop Foundation, the forum educates agricultural employers, including growers, shippers, farm labor contractors, and other employers, on compliance with agricultural labor laws and sound relations practices. Registration information and the agenda should be available, and shared, soon.

2022-2023 Florida Citrus Production Guides

The 2022-2023 Florida Citrus Production Guides are available to pick up at the UF/IFAS Highlands County Extension office or the handbooks are available online (with printable sections) at: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cg101>.

2023 Florida Citrus Growers' Institute Presentations Online

The 2023 Florida Citrus Growers' Institute was held on April 4th at the South Florida State College Avon Park campus. The educational presentations were recorded and are available online at the citrus agent's website: Here you will also find PDF versions of the slides. <https://citrusagents.ifas.ufl.edu/archived-presentations/2023/>

UF/IFAS Podcasts for Growers

UF/IFAS and Southeast AgNet have partnered to provide the latest news on citrus-related research in a monthly "All in for Citrus" podcast. The podcasts feature short interviews with scientists working to find solutions to citrus greening and other devastating citrus diseases. The podcast complements the new research update website and citrus newsletter at: <http://citrusresearch.ifas.ufl.edu/newsletter-sign-up/>. Podcasts may be downloaded to your mobile phone, tablet or computer to be listened to at your convenience.

"Florida OJ Break" License Tags

The HCCGA office has a very good supply of the "Take A Florida Orange Juice Break" license plates to share. Please feel free to stop by the HCCGA office and get one for your vehicles. We also have a limited supply of a few other types of OJ related tags.

Sales Tax Exemption Forms for Ag Uses

Florida Farm Bureau has a very informative page on their website that lists a number of potential agriculturally related items that may be exempt from sales tax. It also contains a recommended exemption form to be utilized. It can be found at: <https://www.floridafarmbureau.org/agricultural-sales-tax-exemptions-in-florida/>

UF/IFAS Research Website

The updated Citrus Research and Education Center (CREC) website at <https://crec.ifas.ufl.edu/citrus-research/> is now live. The revamped site has the latest research information on HLB management, detailed information on rootstock trials, access to on-line presentations from UF/IFAS research scientists, EDIS documents sorted by topic for easy access, and more.

UF/IFAS OJ Break Programs

The central Florida UF/IFAS citrus extension agents are providing an OJ Break Grower meeting series in a twice monthly virtual program format. Upon registration you will be sent a Zoom link for each meeting. To see the upcoming meeting topics and register for the Zoom notice – go to: <https://citrusagents.ifas.ufl.edu/oj-break/>.

Restricted Use Pesticide Exams

Restricted Use Pesticide exams are done using laptops at most UF/IFAS county Extension offices. Whether you are taking the test for the first time, renewing your license, or adding a new category, you can take your exam at most county Extension offices. In Highlands County, the Extension office is scheduling exams for Wednesdays and Fridays. You can schedule your exam online at <https://pesticideexam.ifas.ufl.edu/public/countyList.faces>.

FDOC Webinars

The Florida Department of Citrus hosts monthly webinars in order to provide key information on various topics important to the Florida Citrus industry. To receive notifications on webinars and other topics, please e-mail news@citrus.myflorida.com and ask to be added to FDOC's email distribution list.

Citrus Roundtable

Senator Scott & Representative Franklin

On April 11th Senator Rick Scott and Congressman Scott Franklin proactively hosted a citrus roundtable with about a dozen invitees in Lake Placid. The primary topic discussed was how they could help the industry by getting some action going on pending federal legislation that would authorize the creation of a Block Grant Program by the USDA to make the disaster assistance funding appropriated last December by Congress available to growers. They assured the industry representatives present they would do everything within their power to get things moving just as quickly as the Washington process allows.



There was also discussion about the Farm Service Agency, its continuing staffing issues and the need to make its ongoing programs more citrus friendly or usable. The importance of continued investment in citrus related research was confirmed. Conversation also was had about the federally subsidized crop and tree insurance programs and the need to continue to fine tune them through RMA.

Both Sen. Scott and Rep. Franklin were very attentive to ideas being shared, asked a number of pertinent questions and pledged action by themselves, and other members of the Florida delegation, across the wide range of industry concerns.

We appreciate Senator Scott requesting that this meeting be set up and for the participation of Congressman Franklin as well. They both have a very good perspective of the issues that face our industry and have vowed to help in any manner that they can.

The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and Southeast AgNet have partnered to provide the latest news on citrus-related research in monthly podcasts at: <http://citrusindustry.net/allinforcitrus/>
The podcast, "All in for Citrus," features short interviews with scientists working to find solutions to citrus greening and other devastating citrus diseases. The podcast complements the UF/IFAS Citrus Research website at: citrusresearch.ifas.ufl.edu, and their monthly newsletter.



CRDF Plant Improvement Workshop

The Citrus Research and Development Foundation (CRDF) Board of Directors and its Research Management and Plant Improvement Committees met in Sebring on April 25th. While the 5 hour meeting covered multiple topics, the conversations basically fell into three buckets:

- 1) Approving the invitation of six full research proposals for consideration of future CRDF funding to look at combining other antimicrobials with oxytetracycline hydrochloride (OTC-HCl) and one proposal exploring if there might be a virus that could be inserted into citrus trees that would make them more tolerate of HLB.
- 2) A review of where the UF/IFAS and USDA citrus breeding programs are or are not presently, how they should be directed moving forward and to what extent should genetically engineered (GMO) and/or CRISPR trees be part of an effort to rapidly generate new scion parent material, budwood and/or trees and get material into large scale field trials.
- 3) How existing plant material in inventory (*that has perhaps not been fully vetted*) and new potential plant material should be evaluated through genotyping and/or phenotyping.

The take away from the meeting was:

- Since a plant breeding solution is the most likely long-term answer to getting ahead of HLB that nothing should be left off the table for consideration including GMO trees - especially since plants being developed from that technology are ahead of CRISPR plants at this time.
- That the industry needs to determine exactly what the breeders have in the pipeline now, and what would be required to get them approved by regulatory authorities.
- Also, that the industry and the breeders need to be very aggressive in rapidly producing trees, getting the best candidates into large scale field trials while utilizing multiple methodologies to evaluate how trees react to HLB pressure.



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Hurricane Season Projections

The Weather Company and Atmospheric G2 on April 13 forecast 15 named storms for the Atlantic hurricane season. That's two more than the 13 that Colorado State University (CSU) projected on the same date.

The Weather Company and Atmospheric G2 also projected seven of the storms will become hurricanes and that three will become major hurricanes. By contrast, CSU forecast only six hurricanes and two major hurricanes during the 2023 season.

The Weather Company and Atmospheric G2 forecast matches the 30-year average tally for hurricanes and is close to the average number of named storms in a hurricane season. The CSU forecast was slightly below the 30-year average.

The 2023 hurricane season outlook is more challenging than usual, stated the outlook from the Weather Company and Atmospheric G2. That's because there are a couple of conflicting signals. First, an El Niño is increasingly likely, which tends to tamp down the number of storms. However, Atlantic Ocean water is very warm in most areas, which could enhance storms.

The first signal forecasters are watching isn't in the Atlantic Ocean, but rather the waters near the equator in the Pacific Ocean. "During the past three hurricane seasons, these Pacific equatorial waters were cooler than average — a condition known as La Niña," the outlook stated. "But that long-lasting La Niña finally disappeared, and this patch of water is now warming toward its counterpart, El Niño." The reason this strip of water far from the Atlantic Basin matters is that it's one of the strongest influences on hurricane-season activity.

As of mid-April, a large majority of forecast models suggested an El Niño is likely to develop, possibly as soon as this summer. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Climate Prediction Center assigned a 61% chance that an El Niño will be in place by August through October, the heart of the Atlantic hurricane season.

Source: The Weather Channel



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New Twist Added to Psyllid Control

Lukasz Stelinski for years has promoted saving money on HLB control by spraying for Asian citrus psyllids (ACP) only when their populations reach a certain threshold. The UF/IFAS professor still promotes that concept, but with a slightly new twist.

Trunk Injection Showing Promise

In a virtual seminar on April 25, Stelinski advised growers to use the money saved from unneeded spraying for trunk injection of oxytetracycline hydrochloride (OTC-HCl). Two OTC-HCl products were approved for HLB control in recent months.

In tests, when tree trunks were injected with OTC-HCl, virtually none of the ACP found on the trees acquired HLB, Stelinski reported. That's in stark contrast to foliar sprays of OTC-HCl, which didn't reduce the ACP's acquisition of HLB.

"Trunk-injected OTC treatment seems to be showing promising results, and we should have more data from the field as the season progresses," he said.

Tap Threshold Method

Managing ACP definitely helps tree health, Stelinski said, "but we don't have to treat every month." Rather than spraying routinely by the calendar, growers can save hundreds of dollars per acre and not reduce yield by using Stelinski's threshold method.

He suggested that growers spray only when a survey shows ACP levels are between 0.2 and one ACP per tap of the canopy. Spraying eight times a year would cost \$758.70 per acre, versus only \$403.09 per year for three sprays, when ACP levels are at 0.2 per tap.

The professor advised spraying for ACP at bud break and before there is new flush on which adult ACP can lay eggs. Then spray only when the suggested ACP threshold of 0.2 to one ACP per tap is reached. Stelinski emphasized that maintaining tree health is the goal, not stopping HLB spread.

Courtesy of AgNet Media / Citrus Industry magazine



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Magna-Bon supports regional trade shows, all regional citrus growers' associations, and various sponsorships throughout the year. Although it is not directly citrus related, Magna-Bon helped orchestrate selling blueberries from a local blueberry farm to the Central Florida area during the pandemic shutdown.

You can read the article in the May 2020 issue of Florida Grower.

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Certified Pile Burning Course

The Florida Forest Service and University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service will be conducting an In-Person Certified Pile Burners Course in Highlands County. The number of trainings offered and attendance at each training is very **LIMITED**, so act quickly if you want to participate. Registration is through Eventbrite.

- Date: July 20th, 2023
- Time: 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM
- Location: Bert J Harris Jr. Agricultural Center
- Pre-registration is **required** and the class is limited to 50 people
- The cost of the class is \$50
- Eventbrite Registration Link: <https://highlandspileburner23.eventbrite.com>

Note: To register you need to know your Florida Forest Service Customer Number (*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*).

The course will teach you how to burn piles legally, safely, and efficiently. If you burn piles regularly and are not already certified, you should consider registering for this training. When the weather is dry, certified pile burners will receive priority for authorization to burn, are allowed to burn up to two hours longer per day and get multiple day authorizations.

There will be a test at the end of the session. You must receive a grade of 70% or higher on the exam. This class is the first step to becoming a certified pile burner. After taking the class you will need to 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.

Questions about the course should be directed to:

Lourdes C. Pérez Cordero

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ERP II for Citrus

The information about the USDA Farm Service Agency's Emergency Relief Program below was provided by Kimberly Lott of Crop **Disaster Recovery** (www.cropdisasterrecovery.com).

ERP II is addressing natural disasters that occurred in 2020 and 2021. The program has a payment limitation of \$900,000.

This is a producer certified program. If the producer cannot substantiate the weather event, the FSA County Committee can disapprove the application. This is where the bulk of producers will run into issues.

Our team at CDR has been searching the weather data for 2020 and 2021 to see how we can get our local Florida clients paid from ERP II, and more specifically, our citrus folks who have suffered tremendously. The hurricane cleanup program (ECP) deadline was extended until May 22, 2023. Because of how FSA operates internally, ECP payments will still take quite some time to be released (several more months).

There have been multiple qualifying tropical storms that affected Florida producers during 2020 and 2021. There are multiple prongs that determine whether a producer is eligible for ERP II and the program is not simple. However, these tropical storms were the main eligibility criteria Florida producers (specifically citrus) needed to participate in ERP II.

This may be a fight with FSA, but we have the data and the defense. Many Florida producers, and specifically citrus producers, should qualify for ERP II. The payments from this program will be substantial.

All citrus producers need to apply. The deadline is 6/2/2023.

If producers receive a payment from ERP II now (which addresses 2020 and 2021), and this program (or a new federal program) is utilized to address 2022 natural disasters, they will still be eligible for 2022 ERP II (from the 2022 freeze and hurricanes, Ian and Nicole).

Ms. Lott recommends that citrus producers either need to reach out to their local FSA office (Okeechobee office for Highlands County producers) or contact CDR if they need professional assistance.

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Citrus Cover Crops

By Sarah Strauss

The recent rains are a good reminder that it's time to start thinking about planting summer cover crops. Despite the name, cover crops are not plants that are harvested for profit. Instead, they are planted as an investment in soil health. Annual or perennial plants can be used as cover crops in citrus groves. But, if you want to plant annual cover crops, now is a good time to start planning.

One of the critical steps to ensure successful annual cover crop growth in a citrus grove is to time planting with the beginning of the rainy season. Cover crops in citrus generally do not receive fertilizers or irrigation, so make sure there's rain to help germination right after you plant the seeds. In citrus groves, cover crops are often planted using seed drills or by broadcasting the seeds.

Planting mixes of annual legumes and non-legume cover crops can help increase the benefits to soil. Annual legume cover crops can provide nitrogen to the soil. Some of the annual legumes that have worked well in UF/IFAS trials include sunn hemp, cowpea and clovers. Mixing legumes with non-legume annual crops, such as millet, buckwheat and oats, provides more carbon for the soil, which also helps soil microbes and nutrient cycling.

Cover crops have many benefits, including reducing weed growth. But many of the benefits come from cover crop plant inputs to the soil. The compounds released from cover crop roots, along with the decomposition of the dead cover crops, provide resources for soil microbes. More resources for soil microbes can lead to more activity and different types of microbes, which can result in changes in soil nutrient availability.

UF/IFAS has several ongoing research projects to measure how cover crops are helping soil health in Florida citrus. Researchers have measured big changes in the number and type of microbes in soils with cover crops. While cover crops in citrus are generally only planted in the row middles, citrus roots are growing in the row middles, and changes to the microbes surrounding citrus roots in soils with cover crops have been measured.

For more details on cover crop research and other tips for planting cover crops, check out past articles on cover crops in Citrus Industry magazine and a new article coming in the June issue.

Sarah Strauss is an assistant professor at the UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center in Immokalee.



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USDA Citrus Crop Forecast Update

April 11, 2023

All Oranges 16.1 Million Boxes

The 2022-2023 Florida all orange forecast released on April 11th by the USDA Agricultural Statistics Board is unchanged at 16.1 million boxes. If realized, this will be 61 percent less than last season's revised production. The forecast consists of 6.10 million boxes of non-Valencia oranges (early, mid-season, and Navel varieties) and 10.0 million boxes of Valencia oranges.

Non-Valencia Oranges 6.10 Million Boxes

The forecast of non-Valencia orange production is unchanged at 6.10 million boxes. Non-Valencia harvest is over for the season. The Row Count survey conducted March 29-30, 2023, showed the relatively complete harvest of early & mid-season non-Valencia rows. The Navel forecast, included in the non-Valencia portion of the forecast, is 240,000 boxes.



Valencia Oranges 10.0 Million Boxes

The forecast of Valencia orange production is 10.0 million boxes, unchanged from the previous forecast. Final fruit size is below the minimum, requiring 294 pieces to fill a 90-pound box. Final droppage, measured at 70 percent, is above the maximum and the highest in a series dating back to the 1960-1961 season. The Row Count survey conducted March 29-30, 2023, showed 61 percent of the Valencia crop harvested.

All Grapefruit 1.70 Million Boxes

The forecast of all grapefruit production is increased 100,000 boxes to 1.70 million. The Row Count survey conducted March 29-30, 2023, indicated 95 percent of red and white grapefruit rows are harvested. Certified utilization is 1.60 million boxes.

Tangerines and Tangelos 500,000 Boxes

The forecast for tangerines and tangelos is unchanged at 500,000 boxes. Certified utilization is 448,000 boxes. This forecast number includes all certified tangerine and tangelo varieties.

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It is always great to see the tremendous support our Florida citrus industry receives in a multitude of ways across our community. We see it in social media, Florida OJ license plates on cars & trucks, in the actions of our governmental entities and especially in a wide range of businesses that operate in our region.

A great example of that is Hicks Oil, a HCCGA Associate Member, who has a neat grove scene painted on the side of their truck.

So, if you see a business supporting citrus – shoot me a picture so we can give them a shout out.

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Citrus Expo 2023

Citrus Expo 2023 will take place on **August 16th & 17th** at the **Florida State Fairgrounds in Tampa**, so please reserve these dates on your calendar and note the new venue.



Begun in 1992, Citrus Expo has grown to become the world's premier seminar and trade show program for citrus growers and industry professionals. The two-day Citrus Expo is organized and operated by AgNet Media/Citrus Industry Magazine, with solicited input from numerous growers, researchers and industry organizations. Its primary goal is to provide unequalled education and industry fellowship opportunities annually for growers, industry leaders, decision-makers and vendors.

Complimentary attendance and hot lunch is provided both days to bona-fide grove owners and managers, citrus production managers, professional crop advisors, association executives & board members, government and legislative officials and the citrus research community.

Grower input is strongly encouraged throughout the Expo educational seminar planning process. So please email your Citrus Expo topic and/or speaker suggestions to either royce@hccga.com or CitrusExpo@AgNetMedia.com.



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Weed Control Planning

Summer is “a field day for weeds,” Ramdas Kanissery said in a March 29 presentation about weed control for citrus. The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences assistant professor provided a progressive step-by-step approach to suppressing weeds during the summer.

Control Existing Weeds

Growers can get off to a good start by controlling existing weeds with post-emergent herbicides. Learn about suggested herbicides in the weeds section of the 2022-23 Florida Citrus Production Guide at: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/CG013>.

Kanissery suggested ways to get the most out of post-emergent herbicides, including:

- Achieve adequate coverage on weed foliage; optimum spray volume is the key.
- Use optimum rates; use high-labeled rates for heavy weed infestation and for weeds in a mature growth stage.
- Use an appropriate surfactant to improve herbicide retention, coverage and efficacy.
- Use suggested adjuvants.
- Rotate post-emergent herbicides with different modes of action to reduce selection pressure on weed populations and to help manage weed tolerance.
- Apply when there is ample sunlight. Midday applications generally provide higher levels of efficacy than early-morning and late-afternoon applications.
- Spray when there is low wind.
- Apply when weeds are non-stressed, actively growing and in an early growth stage.

Suppress Weed Germination

Growers can prevent weed germination from the soil seed bank with pre-emergent herbicide programs. Kanissery’s tips for getting the best out of pre-emergents include:

- Apply residual herbicides to bare soil for maximum soil incorporation.
- Turn on irrigation to activate residual herbicides in the soil.
- Include a compatible post-emergent tank-mix partner if there is already some weed growth.
- Tank-mix pre-emergent herbicides with different modes of action to increase the spectrum of weed control and to reduce tolerance/resistance issues.

Weather And Tree Safety

Growers should recognize that the efficacy of post-emergent systemic herbicides is reduced when temperatures are above 90 degrees. Kanissery recommended avoiding spraying 2,4-D products when temperatures are higher than 90 degrees because the potential for herbicide injury is high then.

To help ensure tree safety when using herbicides, Kanissery suggested that growers:

- Maintain proper spray boom height.
- Deliver herbicide to the target.
- Avoid tree stem and foliage contact.
- Install protective wraps around trunks of young trees.
- Don’t use high herbicide rates on new plantings.

Kanissery reported that avoiding glyphosate sprays close to harvest for Valencia oranges may improve yield safety. He also noted that cover crops in row middles suppress weed growth, in addition to providing other benefits.

Landowner Assistance Expo

The Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District has partnered with the Central Florida Regional Planning Council to put together the Landowner Assistance Expo which will be held at the Bert J. Harris Agricultural Center Auditorium in Sebring on June 13, 2023.

Landowners, regardless of acreage, in DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Okeechobee, Osceola and Polk Counties are invited to participate in conversations related to technical assistance, cost-share opportunities, conservation easements, and the financial implications of each program. Outreach representatives will be on hand to provide brief overviews of local, State, Federal and non-governmental programs and receive feedback from attendees.

Contact April DaSilva for additional information at 863-534-7130 ext. 129 or adasilva@cfrpc.org, or you can utilize this link to register: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/landowners-assistance-expo-2023-tickets-601449671157?aff=erelexpmlt&keep_tld=1.

Annual Florida Citrus Industry Conference

Just a reminder that the annual Florida Citrus Industry Annual Conference in Bonita Springs is coming up soon on June 14th-16th. Florida Citrus Mutual has planned another great conference that will include informative educational sessions with continuing education credits and a number of industry meetings for growers and associated partners to participate in.

There will also be a number of fellowship events, including the return of the Citrus Scramble Golf Tournament, to enjoy and this is an extremely family friendly event and venue if you have not attended the conference at the Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort and Spa before.

To learn more or register now for the 2023 Florida Citrus Industry Annual Conference, visit the Citrus Mutual website at: <https://flcitrusmutual.com/florida-citrus-industry-annual-conference/>.



CRAFT's mission is to move lab and research solutions into commercial groves for commercial-scale field trials, collect data on the results of those field trials and create an integrated data management system allowing growers, researchers and other interested parties to analyze the efficacy and efficiency of various strategies, treatments and therapies.

For additional information, contact Tamara Wood - 863.698.9276 or tamara@craftfdn.org

2023 HCCGA Golf Day

The Highlands County Citrus Growers Association's annual golf tournament took place on Thursday, April 27th, at the SUN 'N LAKE Golf Club in Sebring with 104 golfers taking to the links for a great afternoon of fellowship and outdoor recreation.

Thanks to our friends at **Heartland National Bank** for being the title sponsor of this event again this year. We also appreciate **Highlands County Commissioner Chris Campbell** for his sponsorship of the pre-play luncheon and post play hors d'oeuvres, and **Syngenta** for their sponsorship of the roving beverage cart again this year.

A burger bar luncheon preceded the 1:00 PM tee off, there was plenty of liquid refreshments on the course and participants enjoyed some great post play hors d'oeuvres as the hole contests and flight winners were announced and raffle drawing prizes were given away.

Our friends at **Duke Energy** and **Aglime Sales** sponsored the pre-play tune up driving range and putting green respectively. A best ball 4-player scramble format was used for tournament scoring, and the 26 foursomes were divided into three flights with each player assigned an A, B, C or D handicap level for the "Closest-to-the-Line", "Long Drive", and "Closest-to-the-Pin" competitions. Each contest winner received a \$50.00 **Cowpokes Watering Hole Restaurant** gift certificate.

Winning the closest-to-the-line contests, sponsored by **Life Soils** and **Somers Irrigation** in their respective groups were **Steve Norris** for A & B players and **Rusty Mouton** for C & D players.

The long drive contests, sponsored by **HC Commissioner Scott Kirouac** and **Harvey's Fertilizer & Chemical**, were won by **Dan Bott** in the A & B players group and **Miles Armstrong** in the C & D players group.

Winning the closest-to-the-pin contest, sponsored by **Carlson Accounting** and **FMC** in their respective groups was **Gene Moses** for A & B players and **EJ Johnson** for C & D players.

Flight winning teams received four \$75.00 gift certificates and second place team members each received \$50.00 gift certificates, all for redemption at the **Cowpokes Watering Hole Restaurant**.

In Flight #1, the **South State Bank** team of **Chad Barnhardt, Rusty Mouton, Matt Story** and **Gene Moses** took top honors after a match of cards with a -13 score of **59**. Finishing second in the flight was the **Taylor Construction** team of **Pat Taylor, Kevin Hamilton, Curtis Donovan** and **Randy Tubbs** also with a score of **59**.

See GOLF on page 20



GOLF Con't. from page 19

Winning Flight #2 with a -12 score of **60** was the **CNI Ag** team of **Cade Holliday, Keith Davis, Conner Davis** and **Carson Davis**. Finishing second in the flight with a score of **61** was the **Henry Crutchfield Groves** team of **Earl Crutchfield, Heidi Crutchfield, Don Young** and **Steve Marquart**.

In Flight # 3, the winning foursome with a -10 score of **62** was the **FMC/IQV** team of **Eric Johnson, Bo Brooker, Win Stephens,** and **Jack Kilgore**. Finishing second in the flight with a -8 score of **64** was the **Citrus Applications** team of **Steve Brantley, Wayne Harrell, Kevin Platt** and **Todd Raulerson**.

A raffle drawing for 32 great participation prizes was held courtesy of the Association and our friends at: **Lykes Bros, The Gator Ag Group, The Blueberry Patch, KeyPlex, Coker Fuel, Carden & Associates, Creative Printing** and **South Ridge Abstract & Title**

The tournament's title sponsor **Heartland National Bank** also provided each participant a "goody bag" and their continued strong support of our Association's Annual Golf Day is certainly appreciated! Please pencil in **Thursday, April 25, 2024** for the **2024 HCCGA Golf Day**.

Nominations for Wedgworth Leadership Institute Class XII

The UF/IFAS Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources (WLIANR) is soliciting nominations for Class XII of its two-year leadership development program.

Utilizing 11 multi-day seminars throughout Florida, the United States, and internationally, WLIANR develops leaders to ensure a strong and adaptable Florida agriculture and natural resources industry for generations to come. WLIANR aims to prepare leaders to assume greater responsibilities in their organizations, industries, and communities; create strategic alliances to build strong networks; analyze complex issues to influence constructive change and to develop a better understanding of self and others, as well as the diverse communities in which we live and work.

To be eligible for consideration, nominees must:

- be at least 25 years old;
- have resided in Florida for a minimum of one year;
- receive a substantial portion of their income from Florida agriculture, natural resources, and/or related industries;
- and demonstrate strong leadership potential.



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Self-nominations are accepted. Nominations close **June 1** and applications are due no later than **June 15**. Class XII will begin in Gainesville in November 2023. To learn more about WLIANR and to submit a nomination, visit wedgworthleadership.com.

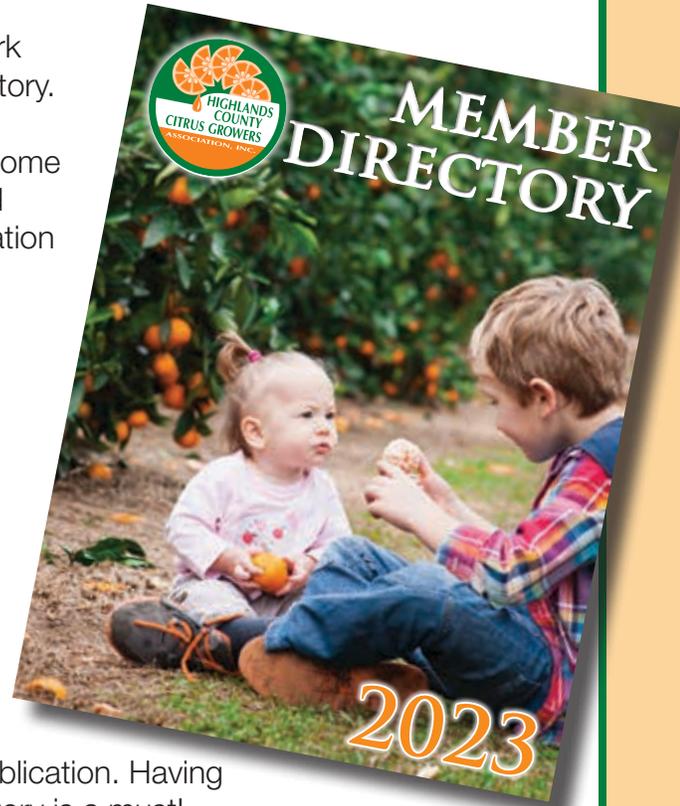
2023 HCCGA Member Directory

We are getting ready to start preliminary production work on our 2023 Annual Grower & Associate Member Directory. This year we plan to have the Directory distributed to Association members in late July. This booklet has become a valuable resource guide for our members, grower and associate alike. This year's directory will include Association information such as: Grower contact information, Associate Member Bios, Sponsorship Recognitions, Board Members, Officers, etc.

All members (*especially associates*) should make sure that they complete and return the informational form that will be mailed out to all current members in late May. If you do not receive a letter about the member directory, please let us know.

The directory serves as a valuable year-round resource guide for all of our members, and it behooves associate members to have the proper biographical and contact information available in the publication. Having your updated contact information included in this Directory is a must!

Now is the time for members to think about taking advantage of the advertising opportunities (*at the same pricing levels as the past several years*) that this Directory provides. An advertising rate sheet will be included in the mailing that all members should receive. There are several different advertising options available: quarter (\$200.00), half (\$300.00) and full page (\$450.00) black and white ads and a limited number of half page (\$400.00) and full page (\$600.00) color ads. Contact Jan or Ray at the HCCGA office at (863) 385-8091 or admin@hccga.com if you would like additional information about advertising pricing or acquiring an enhanced presence in this year's Directory.



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- **Celite® 610** - mechanical insecticide that contains 100% diatomaceous earth, OMRI Listed

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- **TresOil®** - emulsified fungicide/insecticide spray oil, OMRI Listed

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