

RIVER RAMBLINGS



The newsletter of the
Indian River Citrus League
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Utilization and Effectiveness of CHMAs

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The establishment of Citrus Health Management Areas (CHMA) in Florida began in 2007. Since that time, the number of CHMAs statewide has grown from seven to 55 CHMAs. The east coast citrus producing area of Florida, from Indian River County south to St. Lucie County, Okeechobee County, and Martin County, became the most recent region to establish CHMAs. Prior to the establishment of CHMAs in this region, the United States Department of Agriculture and the Florida Department of Agriculture maintained a constant survey of Asian citrus psyllid populations throughout the four counties. The same scouting procedure is still in place today.

Last year, growers in the Indian River production area began to discuss the need for CHMAs. It was a group effort of meetings and open discussion that led to the establishment of CHMAs on the river. The four previous mentioned counties were divided into seven individual CHMAs; Indian River North, Indian River South, 95 East, St. Lucie East, St. Lucie West, St. Lucie South, and Okeechobee. The new CHMAs were designed with input from growers, scientists, and other industry professionals with the intention of maximizing the effectiveness of each CHMA.

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Moving forward, all commercial citrus growers need to keep ACP management as one of the top priorities in their production plan. The best way to limit the exposure of HLB to trees in any grove is to control ACP. The best management we have for ACP control is the area wide management strategies of the CHMA program.

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To maximize the effectiveness of each CHMA, there are three primary aspects that need to be front and center. The first is leadership within the CHMA. Each CHMA needs a leader who is willing to help facilitate the activities of the CHMA. Examples of the activities would be planning grower meetings, organizing aerial applicators, and recruiting non-participating growers to join the coordinated effort. Second, would be communication. Growers in successful CHMAs are in constant communication about current production practices occurring in the grove and what future events are planned (coordinated sprays). Some companies and individuals have begun to release private scouting data to other members of the CHMA in an effort to facilitate more communication about ACP populations and needed control measures. Lastly, and most importantly, is participation in the coordinated sprays. A CHMA can have the best leadership possible and the best spray plan ever devised, but ultimately, it will be unsuccessful if the vast majority of the growers in the CHMA do not participate in the regional effort.

Within a CHMA, growers should decide when to perform coordinated sprays based in part on when psyllid populations are expected to begin increasing, but equally important is selecting times when the majority of growers will agree to participate. Once the timing is decided, a particular insecticide Mode of Action (MOA) for use should be determined. Using a common MOA will help reduce the likelihood of pesticide resistance developing in the psyllid population. Growers are free to choose which insecticide will be used once the MOA is agreed upon. The application method used is determined by each grower. Although most coordinated sprays will have an option for aerial application, any legal application method is acceptable. If a grower wants to apply additional materials (nutritional, miticide, fungicide, etc.) along with an insecticide from the agreed upon MOA, that is a decision for the individual grower.

The importance of CHMAs and ACP control is more important now than it has ever been. Mature producing trees continue to decline due to the increasing severity of the HLB infection. It is important to minimize the chances the tree will be fed on by HLB vectoring ACP. At this time, it is not possible to eradicate ACP but it is possible to drastically limit their colonization in commercial groves. Through the years many CHMAs have shown the possible levels of ACP control which can be achieved with coordinated sprays. Along with protecting established or producing trees, ACP management is critical for new groves and resets. A newly planted tree will produce multiple flushes of new growth throughout the growing season. Minimizing the possibility that new trees will be infected with HLB can only be done one way, ACP control. The likelihood of new trees surviving to an age where they can produce a harvestable crop is much better if the tree is aggressively managed for ACP control. The likelihood of that same tree surviving and becoming profitable is even better if the grove the new tree resides in is a grove that is sprayed in a coordinated fashion. An individual or farm based approach to ACP control does provide suppression of the insect, but an area wide or community approach will yield far better results.

ACP populations have been increasing over the past year throughout the state. In July 2015, we saw the highest average statewide ACP population to date at 18 ACP per scouted block. That figure stood as the highest average ACP population recorded since the regulatory agencies began the statewide scouting campaign in 2011. April 2016 saw a dramatic increase in ACP population. The March 2016 average ACP population was 6.3 ACP per scouted block and that increased to 19.2 ACP per scouted block in April. Historically, there has always been a spike in population during the spring time, but the increase has never been as sharp as this spring (Figure 1).

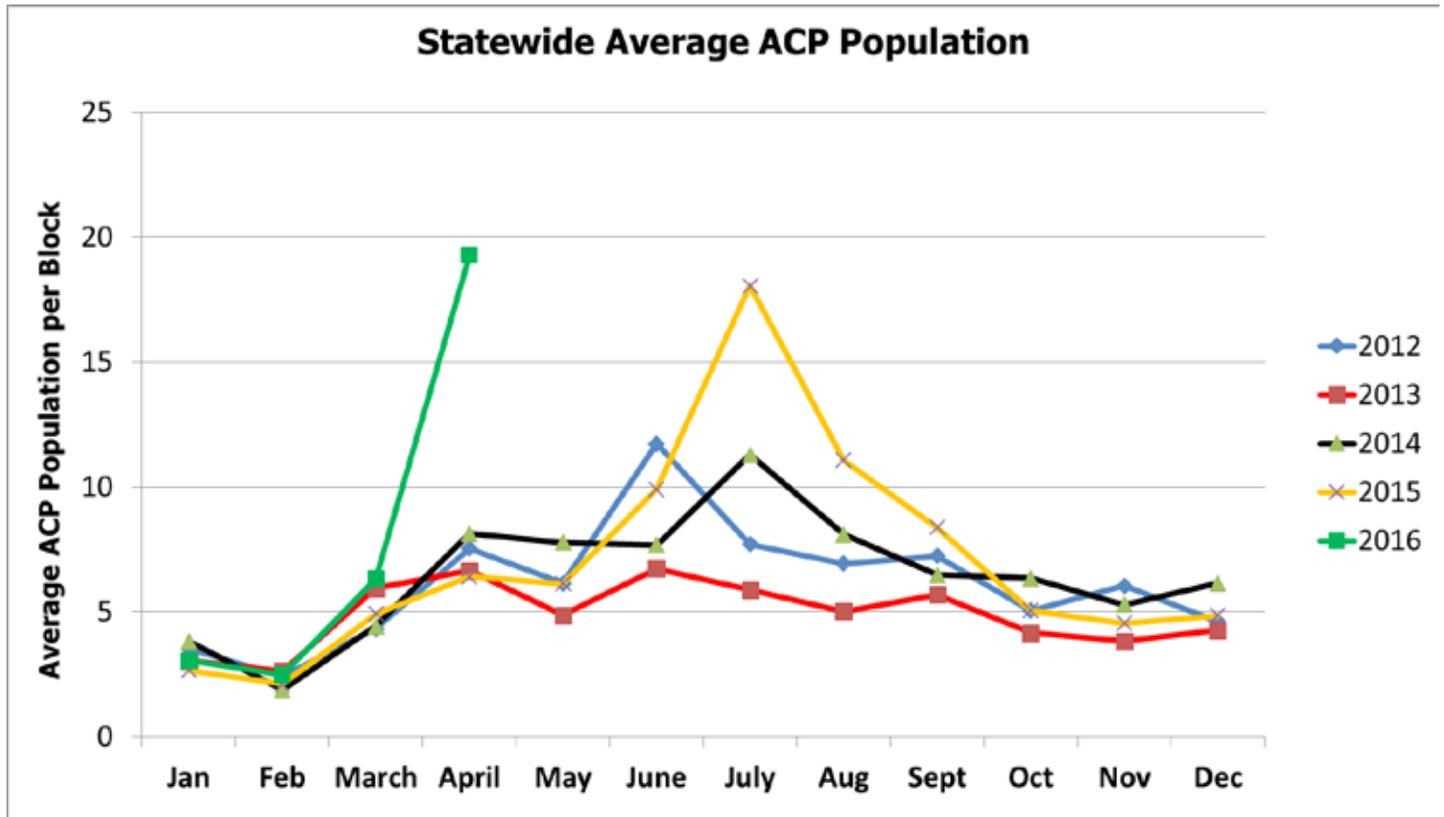


Figure 1: Monthly Average ACP populations, 2012-2016.

Moving forward, all commercial citrus growers need to keep ACP management as one of the top priorities in their production plan. The best way to limit the exposure of HLB to trees in any grove is to control ACP. The best management we have for ACP control is the area wide management strategies of the CHMA program.

Growers wanting to know more about the CHMA program can visit the CHMA website, www.flchma.org. The website has years of historical data, graphs, and instructional data growers can utilize. The CHMA Sectional Mapping Program is another great resource for monitoring the ACP population within your area of production. If you would like more information about the CHMA program, contact your local citrus extension agent (<http://citrusagents.ifas.ufl.edu>) or Brandon Page UF-IFAS CREC.



BOB BOWDEN INDIAN RIVER CITRUS GROWER

Robert "Bob" Bowden passed away on May 5 in Vero Beach. Bob grew up in Lakeland and attended Florida Southern College with a Bachelor of Science in Citrus. He was a "man of the land" who enjoyed fishing and hunting all of his life. Bob was a farmer who over the years grew Indian River grapefruit, tomatoes cucumbers and peppers with Scott & Mattson, lemons in Devil's Garden, grapefruit and oranges in Abaco and Andros, Bahamas.

Mr. Bowden was a member of various citrus organizations, and over the years, he worked with South Puerto Rico Sugar, Fellsmere Farms, Gulf and Western, Scott & Mattson, Leslie Scott and family. He served on the Board of Directors of Seald Sweet and Orange Avenue Growers Association.

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Governor Helps Citrus Industry

with Approval of Line Item in His Florida First Budget

Effective July 1, 2016, the fresh citrus industry will enjoy another tax break. A sales tax exemption for fresh fruit and vegetable packinghouses on equipment purchased, repairs to existing equipment and labor was signed and approved by Governor Scott in his 2016-2017 Florida First Budget.

This effort spearheaded by the League, originated in August 2015 and along with the help from Florida Citrus Mutual, House Speaker Steve Crisafulli and Senator Joe Negron resulted in this legislation being passed and signed by the Governor. Indian River packinghouses were polled and their anticipated savings range from \$5,000 to \$15,000 annually with this exemption.

A similar measure, driven by the League and the Packers starting in 2007, was successfully passed in 2012 allowing for packinghouses to apply for sales tax exemption for electricity used for agricultural purposes. With these combined financial saving opportunities, packinghouses are receiving the benefits of the League's efforts.

"This Governor has been very supported of our industry, especially after seeing the effects of HLB in groves during his 2012 tour in the Indian River growing district", stated Doug Bournique, EVP of the Indian River Citrus League. "He understands the gravity of this disease situation and the impact on this industry", Bournique continued.

The Department of Revenue will issue a notice to all packinghouses with a certain SIC code. For questions, please contact Kimberly Bevis at 850-717-7082.

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WHEN J.B. EGAN SPOKE, EVERYBODY LISTENED

Former, long-time budget chair for the League's Budget Committee, J.B. Egan passed away on May 4, 2016. Egan began serving as the League's Budget Committee Chair back in the 70s. He guided the League through the freezes and hurricanes with reduced budgets due to slashed fruit availability.

"I recall during many board meetings", said Doug Bournique, EVP of the Indian River Citrus League, "J. B. would present his budget report and recommendations, and no one challenged him or questioned him. His was always the quickest and thorough with his report and he would promptly leave the meeting with his Stetson hat in hand."

He was brilliant, when it came to finances and the League was very fortunate to have had the pleasure of his service considering the many organizations he served on.



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Ad Copy Specifications

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- Do not use artificial font formatting; all formatting (bold, italics, etc.) must be done using stylized fonts.

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- When submitting logos, convert all fonts to outlines.
- Preferred format: vector eps

Color

- We print in 4-color CMYK process.
- All pantone colors must be converted to CMYK.
- Black type should be made with 100% black.

Resolution

- Resolution should be a minimum of 300 dpi at actual size.
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