

RIVER RAMBLINGS



The newsletter of the
Indian River Citrus League
JUNE 2016

2015-2016 Season Wrap Up

Even though the industry faced challenges in 2015-2016 season there were some major accomplishments impacting our Indian River growing region that were achieved, and several of the successes impacted the citrus industry as a whole.

In September, in an effort to help its grower members and the industry with building grapefruit juice inventories, the League pursued a red grapefruit juice purchase by the USDA. Finally on April 5, 2016, it was announced that the USDA plans to purchase up to \$10 million in FY2016 funds of bottled grapefruit juice for its domestic food nutrition assistance programs. This purchase of \$10 million equates to 3.9 million gallons or approximately 729,000 boxes, will substantially reduce grapefruit juice inventories and provide relief to the growers. To ensure future purchases, the League hosted key USDA/AMS staff on April 7 to show the challenges of the industry.

In December, the League, in an effort to reduce its operating expenses and increase the value of the growers' investment in the League, vacated its premises in Vero and relocated to the USDA Horticultural Research Lab in Ft. Pierce. This move allowed a tenant to the lease building to help with the financial pressures being felt by the Indian River growers that support the League.

The 2016 Florida Citrus Show marked another hugely successful gathering in Ft. Pierce in January. Despite the rain, over 800 were in attendance for the two-day education program and trade show at the Havert L. Fenn Center with standing-room-only during many of the sessions. Also, the trade show was packed and sold out with more than 100 exhibitors. It is becoming known as a "can't miss" event for growers seeking the latest information on critical production issues." The educational programs focused on solutions for HLB, including the latest in psyllid control, antimicrobials, genetic modification to resist disease, and thermotherapy. Other topics included canker management, new varieties, and marketing. The Florida Citrus Show is hosted in partnership between the Florida Grower, UF/IFAS, USDA and the Indian River Citrus League. The 2017 Florida Citrus Show is slated for January 25-26,

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2017 in Ft. Pierce at the Havert L. Fenn Center. As always, kicking off the show was the Indian River Citrus League Banquet at The Club at Pointe West in Vero Beach. Next year's banquet will be held on January 24 at Pointe West.

On March 19, the first annual Indian River Citrus League River Fun Shoot was held at Quail Creek Plantation in Okeechobee. Each participant shot 100 clays from 14 different station locations. Besides a green bird 50/50 cash pot raffle there were also fantastic raffle prizes that were given out. Next year's shoot date is set for Friday, March 31, 2017 at Quail Creek Plantation. Please mark your calendars and if interested in sponsorship opportunities, please contact the League office.

On March 31, 2016, the League's Production Committee hosted a meeting to allow the manufacturers and researchers of the three products, FireWall, FireLine and Mycoshield that were recently approved for temporary use on controlling citrus greening, to present information on their product and the best method to optimize its use. Earlier in March, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam issued a crisis declaration to EPA in order to help the citrus industry fight citrus greening thus allowing the temporary use of FireWall, FireLine and Mycoshield as the EPA finalizes its consideration of the Special Use Exemption.

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.

The League continues to work on other issues as well, such as coordinating the USDA TASC grants that provide key research funding on Citrus Black Spot. This research and other TASC grants keep our export markets open and free of non-tariff trade business. Also, Doug continues to serve on the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, the Indian River Lagoon Council, SFWMD Water Resources Advisory Council and the Advisory Committees for USDA Horticultural Lab and UF/IFAS/IRREC.



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Seminar Program Preview

- Water policy, best management practices and grower incentive programs
- Status of the Florida Department of Citrus
- The "HLB Playbook": What growers should be doing now to live with HLB, including economic considerations for grove inputs
- Updates on postbloom fruit drop, citrus black spot and citrus canker
- Grower panel to discuss experiences with bactericide use in 2016



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Need a Customized Rootstock Selection? Our New Website Can Help

Steve Rogers (Ecostat, Inc.), and Bill Castle, Steve Futch and Andrew Persaud (University of Florida Citrus Research and Education Center)

One key decision in new citrus plantings is deciding which rootstock(s) are good choices for your situation. New technology we developed can now help remove some of the complexity in those decisions. In my Digital Citrus column from September 2016, I talked about the more than 20 different factors that can go into making a citrus rootstock selection. With 45 rootstock variety options on top of that, how do you zero in on the best candidates? You want to arrive at your decisions by focusing on a specific site, then take into consideration the performance of your trees on a particular rootstock at that site.

One way to make more sense out of the possibilities is to use a guide. The Third Edition of the Florida Citrus Rootstock Selection Guide is an updated version of the 2006 guide that can help you navigate new rootstock options now available. The technology we created to help with these decisions is an online version of that same guide. You can find it on the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center website at frootstockselectionguide.org. This interactive version of the guide has three new features to help you quickly find relevant rootstock information. The first feature is an online edition of the guide itself (Fig. 1).

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Figure 1
Online view of the rootstock table section of the Third Edition of the Florida Citrus Rootstock Selection Guide. You can view the table directly or print out a PDF version for reference.

The screenshot shows the website interface for the Florida Citrus Rootstock Selection Guide. It includes a navigation menu on the left with links for Search Instructions, FAQs, What's New, and Contact Us. A 'Key to Symbols' section provides a legend for rootstock characteristics. The main content area features a 'Show/Hide Columns' dropdown, a 'Print Table to PDF' button, and a table of rootstocks. The table has columns for Rootstock, Year of first avail., Seed Prop, Tree Size, Spacing, Yield per Tree, Yield per Acre, Juice Quality, and Fruit Size. The table lists several rootstock varieties with their respective characteristics.

| Rootstocks | | Horticultural Traits | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|---------|----------------|----------------|---------------|------------|--|
| Rootstock | Year of first avail. | Seed Prop | Tree Size | Spacing | Yield per Tree | Yield per Acre | Juice Quality | Fruit Size | |
| ✓-G39 (Cleopatra x Rutidosa TF) | 1994 | G | Lg | 8-12' | I | I-H | H/H | I | |
| C-35 Citrange | 1994 | G | I | 8-10' | I | I-H | H/I | I | |
| Carroll Citrange | 1932 | G | Lg | 8-12' | H | I-H | I-H/I | I-Lg | |
| Cleopatra mandarin | 1932 | G | Lg | 8-15' | L-I | I | H/H | Sm | |
| Kuharske Citrange | 1932 | G | Lg | 8-12' | [H] | I-H | M | I/Lg | |
| Sour orange | Long established | G | I-Lg | 8-12' | I-H | I-H | H+/H | I | |
| Swingle Citrumelo | 1974 | G | I | 8-12' | I | I | M | I | |



ROOTSTOCK, Continued from page 5

You can view the table directly or print out a PDF version for reference. The second feature is our new rootstock expert system (Fig. 2). Developed by Drs. Steven Rogers, Bill Castle, Steve Futch, and Mr. Andrew Persaud, this system uses artificial intelligence to help you find the best rootstocks. The third feature of the online rootstock guide are 105 downloadable references related to each rootstock and trait.

Figure 2

Landing page for the new rootstock expert system.

This system interviews you through a series of questions, and uses artificial intelligence to help you find the best rootstocks.

The expert system doesn't replace the large rootstock table, but should be used alongside it. Once you navigate to the expert system page, it'll ask a series of questions. It can reason through your answers to hone in on your best rootstock options. The expert system can help you in five main ways:

- Provide a measure of confidence that certain rootstocks are good matches for your site
- Allow you to easily test different rootstock planting scenarios
- Provide a "second opinion" regarding your initial rootstock choices
- Provide rootstock suggestions you may not have considered
- Help you see that all rootstock options are considered

We posted a brief video to show you how to use the expert system, which you can find linked on the system's first web page.

How does the expert system work? After you've entered information regarding your situation, it matches your inputs with the 900 factors in the guide, and provides a report with a ranked list of rootstocks that ON AVERAGE are top candidates for you to consider. The rankings are based on a Selection Score. This score isn't a statistical value. Instead, it refers to a relative ranking of the expert system's confidence that its suggested rootstocks are suitable for the site you described. The closer in value the Selection Score for a rootstock is to 100, the closer the match of that rootstock is for your situation. The expert system doesn't store or archive information you provide, but you can print a copy of the report to keep handy.

So, visit the new online version of the Third Edition of the Florida Citrus Rootstock Selection Guide at flrootstockselectionguide.org. Try out all three sections of the guide to see how they work for you. The expert system is new technology that has a lot of potential for future improvement. But we'd like your feedback on how we can make the whole site better. With regard to the expert system, we'd be interested to simply hear from you whether you generally agree or disagree with the ranked lists it provides. For more information about the online rootstock guide, please contact Steve Futch at shf@ufl.edu or Andrew Persaud at apersaud@ufl.edu or by phone at 863-956-1151. We're also presenting a paper at the 129th Annual Meeting of the Florida State Horticultural Society in June 2016 if you'd like to know more details about how we created the technology (<http://fshs.org/meetings>).

Disclaimer: The information in this article is provided "as is". The authors and publisher of this article disclaim any loss or liability, either directly or indirectly as a consequence of applying the information presented, or in regard to the use and application of any of this information, in whole or in part, for any purpose whatsoever. No guarantee is given, either expressed or implied, in regard to the merchantability, accuracy, or acceptability of the information. Dr. Steven Rogers is a well-known innovator of digital technologies in citrus. Thanks to Drs. Bill Castle, Steve Futch and Andrew Persaud at the University of Florida Citrus Research and Education Center for contributions to this post.

Expert System for the Florida Citrus Rootstock Selection Guide

Welcome to our Virtual Rootstock Expert. I (the Expert System) use artificial intelligence to help you find the best citrus rootstock. I am based on the Third Edition of the [Florida Rootstock Selection Guide](#). I don't replace the guide, but rather am intended to be used alongside it. I will interview you and can reason through your information to hone in on your best rootstock options. Over time, I'll keep learning in a way that will make my answers even better. Here are the ways I can help you:

- Provide a measure of confidence that a rootstock is suitable
- Easily test different rootstock planting scenarios
- Serve as a "second opinion" if you already selected your rootstock
- Provide rootstock suggestions you may have overlooked
- Help you get started with a new selection that considers the latest rootstocks

[Watch this brief video](#) for an overview on how to use this system (updated 4/12/16).

My analysis will provide a report that gives you a ranked list of rootstocks that ON AVERAGE are top candidates for you to consider in your situation. Please be sure to read the disclaimer below before proceeding.

What is the name of the site for which you'd like me to do an analysis?

OK

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Associate memberships have been established at an annual rate of \$300 and include:

Invitations to association meetings and workshops

- Subscription to our newsletter, The River Ramblings
- Sponsorship opportunities, which enable your business to market its services directly to our grower and other associate members (newsletter, luncheons, Florida Citrus and Trade Show, Annual Meeting, Indian River Citrus League Banquet and the annual Clay Shoot to name a few.
- Listing on our website (www.ircitrusleague.org) and in our newsletter

Contact the League office for further details at info@ircitrusleague.org or 772/595-5026

It's a Wrap

This issue wraps up the 2015/2016 season, but will return in September with its first issue for the 2016/2017 season. Remember, we have advertising opportunities in our newsletter. Contact the League for further details and get your company name in front of our readers. Have a safe and enjoyable summer!



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Looking for a way to reach our readers? Why not try our newsletter that reaches our grower members, packinghouses, associate members and affiliated businesses that make up the Indian River citrus growing district. Our publication schedule is September through June and is distributed electronically. Also, the newsletter is posted on our website of www.ircitrusleague.org. If interested, please give Karen a call at the League office at 772/562-2728 or email at info@ircitrusleague.org for more details.

Ad Copy Specifications

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- Please embed all fonts.
- 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.
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Resolution

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

- PDF files and InDesign files are preferred (collected output to include layout, linked pictures, embedded pictures, color profiles, screen fonts and printer fonts).
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Getting Involved.

membership opportunities

Our Associate Membership provides opportunities to network with existing customers and potential customers by providing opportunities to sponsor events scheduled throughout the year. Their partnership with our organization is important to us. If interested in joining our organization, please contact the League office for further details.