

RIVER RAMBLINGS



The newsletter of the
Indian River Citrus League
SEPTEMBER 2016



Adam Putnam to speak at Annual Meeting

The 86th Annual Meeting of the Indian River Citrus League will be held at the Club at Pointe West, 7500 14th Lane, Vero Beach, Florida on Friday, September 30, 2016 at 11:30 a.m. The meeting will feature Adam Putnam, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture, as the invited guest speaker. "We are so fortunate to have an Ag Commissioner that truly supports our industry", says Doug Bournique, Executive Vice President of the Indian River Citrus League. We gratefully acknowledge and thank Wells Fargo for sponsoring our event once again.

You are cordially invited to attend and request your RSVP to the League office (772-595-5026) or email (info@ircitrusleague.org)



Adam Putnam
Florida Commissioner of Agriculture



86th Annual Meeting
Indian River Citrus League
September 30th
11:30 am

*You're
Invited!*

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Cost of Production for Fresh Grapefruit Grown in Indian River, 2015/16

Ariel Singerman, Assistant Professor and
Extension Economist
University of Florida, IFAS, CREC, Lake Alfred, FL

This article presents the cost of production per acre for growing fresh grapefruit in the Indian River region during 2015/16. It is worth noting that the cost estimates below do not represent any individual operation; their purpose is to serve as a benchmark for the industry.

The data was collected during a Production Committee meeting at the Indian River Citrus League in mid-July, 2016. Seven grapefruit growers participated in the survey. The number of acres managed by their combined operations accounts for approximately 21,000 acres. The acreage for grapefruit in the Indian River region in 2015 was estimated at 32,401 (USDA-NASS, 2015). Thus, the sample of growers represented 65% of the acreage devoted to grapefruit in that region.

Growers brought a completed survey form to the Production Committee meeting that had been distributed to them beforehand. The questionnaire asked growers to provide annual, per acre costs by program for a "typical" irrigated, mature grapefruit grove (10+ years old) with the fruit marketed to the fresh market, including resets. By surveying growers regarding the costs of their caretaking programs, the estimates reported in this article closely reflect growers' cost.

The data collection process was anonymous and confidential. During the meeting each grower used a "clicker" or remote device to enter the costs for each caretaking program. The figures below were obtained by computing the weighted average of the responses by the acreage of each of the participating growers.

See **COST** page 2



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COST, Continued from page 2

Table 1 shows the costs of production by program. Such estimates include both the costs of materials and their application. From Table 1, the total for weed management – which includes chemical and mechanical mowing as well as herbicides – was \$198.59 per acre. At \$1,168.09 per acre, foliar sprays were the largest expense. Fertilizer was the second largest expense at \$406.06 per acre. Coordinated sprays accounted for \$18.62 per acre. The expense for pruning was \$70.29 per acre, while that for irrigation was \$209.34 per acre. The cost of canker control was \$67.00 per acre. Adding all the costs listed above, the cultural cost of growing fresh grapefruit in the Indian River during 2015/16 without tree replacement was \$2,137.99 per acre.

Costs represent a mature grove (10+ years old) including resets

	Cost per acre (\$)
Weed Management	198.59
Foliar Sprays	1,168.09
CHMA Sprays	18.62
Fertilizer	406.06
Pruning (topping, hedging, skirting)	70.29
Irrigation ¹ (including fuel)	209.34
Canker Control Costs ²	67.00
Total Cultural Costs without Tree Replacement	2,137.99
Tree Replacement (2 trees)	98.93
Total Cultural Costs with Tree Replacement	2,236.92

¹Irrigation system includes: pH management, maintenance and repairs to emitters, clean ditches, ditch and canal maintenance, water control

²Canker control includes: clean blocks before certification and harvesting; inspections before "Canker Free" certifications; mandatory citrus canker decontamination costs

Table 1

Growers were also asked to provide details regarding their reset practices, including the number of trees replaced in their groves. On average, growers replaced 2 trees per acre during 2015/16. The total cost of tree replacement, including tree removal, site preparation, and care of young trees for those trees was estimated at \$98.93 per acre. Adding such figure to the total cost above yields a total production cost with tree replacement of \$2,236.92 per acre.

Figure 1 depicts a double pie chart. The larger pie shows the cost of each program as well as the percentage relative to the cultural production costs with tree replacement. The smaller pie piece in Figure 1 provides greater detail regarding the individual components included in the foliar sprays category. The expense of \$1,168.09 per acre was divided as follows: insecticides totaled \$335.24 per acre, (representing 15% of the cultural cost of production); fungicides accounted for \$249.35 per acre (11%); foliar nutritional for \$202.18 per acre (9%); aerial application for \$6.73 per acre (0.3%); ground application of materials for \$374.59 per acre (17%).

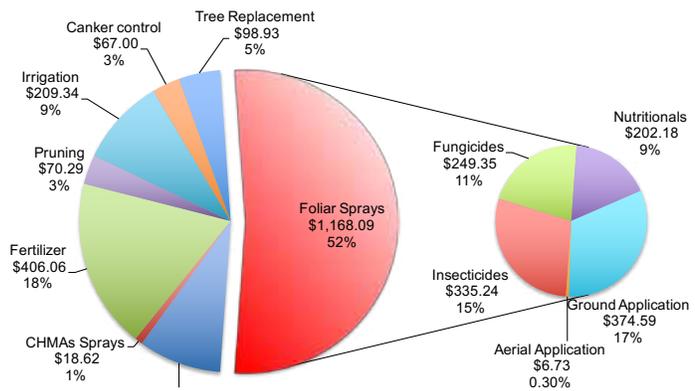


Figure 1

See COST page 5



COST, Continued from page 4

Figure 2 shows a comparison of the cost of the main production programs in 2015/16 relative to the previous season. The cost of the tree replacement program decreased not only by the largest amount (\$132) but also by the largest percentage (57%). Such decrease is due to the reduction in the number of replaced trees; while, on average, growers replaced 6 trees per acre per year in 2014/15, they only replaced 2 in 2015/16. The second largest reduction was in the foliar nutrition program; growers spent, on average, \$330 per acre in 2014/15 and \$202 per acre this past season. However, the expense on insecticides, fungicides, and irrigation increased compared to last season. Overall, the cultural cost of production decreased by \$241.69 per acre with respect to 2014/15.

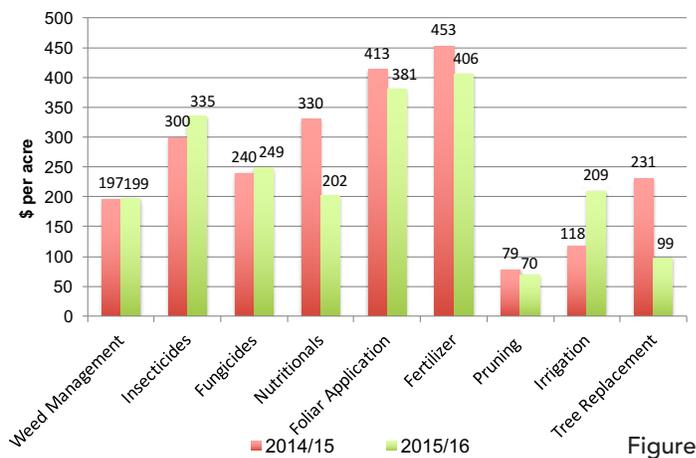


Figure 2

	Cost per acre (\$)
Total Cultural Cost of Production	2,236.92
Other Costs	
Interest on Operating (Cultural) Costs	111.85
Management Cost	70.20
Property Tax/Water Management Tax	18.50
Fly protocol	17.17
Water Drainage District Assessment	107.00
Interest on Average Capital Investment	162.25
Total Other Costs	486.96
Total Grower Costs	2,723.88

In addition to cultural costs, growers typically have to incur other costs when managing their groves; these other costs include management, regulatory, and opportunity costs. Table 2 shows the estimated total cost of production for fresh grapefruit growers in Indian River during 2015/16 was \$2,723.88 per acre; this estimate represents an 11% reduction compared to the previous season.

Summary

This article presents a summary of the costs of production for fresh grapefruit in the Indian River region during 2015/16. The methodology used to collect the data consisted of surveying growers directly to better reflect growers' costs. The total cost of production for fresh grapefruit in Indian River during 2015/16 was \$2,723.88 per acre, down \$349.50 per acre relative to the previous season. Reductions in tree replacement and foliar nutritionals expenses account for the bulk of the decrease.

References:

USDA-NASS. 2015. *Commercial Citrus Inventory: Preliminary Report*.



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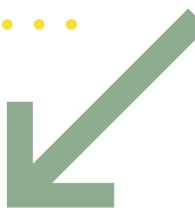
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ST. JOHNS con't from page 7

In 1977, the district took over the project area and designed an innovative plan with the Corps to revitalize the river's flow by restoring drained marshlands, plugging canals and building water conservation and water management areas.

Perhaps the most notable feature of the upper basin project is its mimicry of nature and minimal reliance on water control structures. Agricultural discharges are isolated from the river. Instead, water from citrus groves and livestock pastures is diverted to water management areas that can be used for farm irrigation and freeze protection.

After a trio of hard freezes barreled through Florida in December 2010, district Governing Board member Doug Bournique flew over Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River counties to survey freeze damage to citrus groves. The damage south of Indian River County was apparent, but Indian River County looked like a "Garden of Eden" by comparison, he recalls.

"The water in the upper basin made the difference," says Bournique, executive vice president of the Indian River Citrus League. "The upper basin project has saved hundreds of jobs and protected

the agricultural base here."

The project has benefitted fish, birds and wildlife as well.

"The district's mantra for the upper basin project has always been that we are working with nature instead of against her," Shortelle says. "The marshes are thriving with fish and wildlife, including endangered species such as the Everglades snail kite and the wood stork."

The completion of the Three Forks project is the capstone to a long and winding path to finish a project that has rehydrated a 250-square-mile footprint in Florida's marshy hinterlands. Water has already filled the Lake Lawton Recreation Area, a 7,000-acre lake and park within Three Forks, west of the city of Palm Bay.

And while the Corps' construction portion of the project is considered complete, the district continues to enhance and build upon the great successes of the upper basin project with additional projects that extend the reach and benefits of the original project.





Save the Date Florida Citrus Show

Mark your calendar for the 2017 Florida Citrus Show, January 25-26, 2017 at the Havert L. Fenn Center in Ft. Pierce. As always, the show will be jammed with educational sessions and growers will have the opportunity to network with peers and visit the exhibition hall of more than 80 suppliers of important citrus production products and services. For exhibitor information, contact Buzz Vincent at bvincent@meistermedia.com 407/539-6552, ext 16.

Upcoming Events

- October 12, 2016 - USDA October Forecast for the 2016/17 season
- January 24, 2017 – IRCL Banquet – The Club at Pointe West – Vero Beach
- January 25-26, 2017 – Florida Citrus Show – Fenn Center – Ft. Pierce
- March 31, 2017 – IRCL River Fun Shoot – Quail Creek Plantation - Okeechobee



An advertisement for Indian River Select Brand Premium Juice. The background is dark blue with a red border. On the left, the text "INDIAN RIVER SELECT® BRAND" is written in large, bold, yellow letters. Below the text is a circular logo featuring a Native American man's face, a sun, and a river. On the right, two bottles of juice are shown: one labeled "Ruby Red Grapefruit Juice" and the other "Orange Juice". Below the bottles, the text "PREMIUM JUICE" is underlined, and the website "IndianRiverSelect.com" is displayed.



Doug Bournique Reappointed to SJRWMD Governor Board

The League is pleased to announce that Governor Rick Scott has reappointed Doug Bournique to the St. Johns River Water Management District Governing Board. Doug began serving on the board in 2008 and was reappointed in 2012. This reappointment will be his third, four-year term and will continue representing Area 5, which includes Indian River and Brevard Counties.

Doug has been recognized by both St. Johns River and South Florida water management districts, where he serves on the Water Resources Advisory Council, for his commitment and leadership in the protection of the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program, which he serves on the Board of the Indian River Lagoon Council.

He continues to be the driving force in the creation of the Dispersed Water Management also known as Water Farming for the storage of excess surface water on private and public lands. To date, there are two sites in St. Lucie County under the umbrella of SFWMD, and there are two sites in the SJRWMD region that are being considered.

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New Multi-County Agent for Indian River and St. Lucie Counties

University of Florida IFAS Extension has announced that Dr. Garima Kakkar has been selected as the new Multi-County Fruit and Alternative Crops agent for Indian River and St. Lucie Counties. Garima will officially start September 6, 2016. Her office will be located at St. Lucie County Extension and will work with citrus growers, and producers of alternative crops including other fruits and vegetables.

Garima has a BS in Botany and a MS in Agrochemicals & Pest Management from the University of Delhi, India, she has a MS and a PhD in Entomology from the University of Florida. She has worked with whiteflies and thrips along with the diseases they vector; analyzed subterranean termite controls; and designed and implemented vegetable IPM in the lab, greenhouse, and field. She has been honing her knowledge of citrus and the problems the industry faces. Garima believes "the success of agricultural research depends on upon its application and adoption by the growers and for that, a strong extension program is necessary for taking research to the field or to an industry for the betterment of our production systems."

Garima is excited to join Extension and is looking forward to serving the growers in Indian River and St. Lucie Counties. She can be reached either at 772-462-1660 or by email garimaiari@ufl.edu

Farm Labor Supervisor Training Program

The University of Florida - IFAS is again offering training courses for Farm Labor Supervisors in Ft. Pierce. The classes are scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, September 20 and 21. They will be held at the Indian River Research and Education Center on South Rock Road in Ft. Pierce. These courses will cover many of the labor related issues that are important in agricultural employment

Who Will Benefit: Supervisors of farm workers: labor contractors, crew leaders, growers, bus and van drivers, compliance managers, and office support staff. Classes offered in English and Spanish

FEE: \$ 50.00 PER CLASS

REGISTRATION INFORMATION: <http://fls2016fortpierce.eventbrite.com>

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Barbara Hyman: hymanb@ufl.edu or 239-658-3461

Carlene Thissen: carlene@ufl.edu or 239-658-3449

239-658-3463 para Español

Tree Assistance Program (TAP)



By Mark J Tomsic
St Lucie/Martin/Indian River/
Okeechobee/Highlands County Executive Director
USDA Farm Service Agency

USDA Farm Service Agency is still offering the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) for Citrus Greening. Cost-share assistance is available to qualifying grove owners to replace citrus trees due to HLB Citrus Greening. The eligible trees must have been owned when the Greening losses occurred and must be no longer economically viable (abandoned groves do not qualify).

Two important points to remember: 1) Grove owners must report losses within 90 days of when it is apparent the trees are no longer viable and prior to pushing/removing trees so inspections can be conducted. 2) Growers need to report all losses annually to accumulate and document their number of lost trees for any future applications to be filed in the present or later year(s). Without losses documented and inspected yearly, we can only accept the current year losses on an application for payment. Contact the Ft. Pierce FSA office at (772) 461-4546 for more information.

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