

# LEAGUE INITIATES ESCAPE TREE PROCEDURES AND PERMIT FOR GROWERS

Since the rediscovery of the Donaldson tree at Whitemore Farms, which is a decades-old, healthy tree that is producing early-season oranges despite being infected with HLB, has generated interest within the industry and the research community. This has created a need for a streamed-line procedure of how to exactly collect and report potentially disease-resistant trees.

Pat Schirard, Florida Citrus Commissioner and League Board member, requested the League take the lead on learning, if there is a uniform process of submitting and evaluating an "escape tree". The League then took the initiative back in the spring and along with League EVP Doug Bournique; Ben Rosson, Chief of the Division of Plant Industry and League President Daniel Scott, met and from that meeting generated the following website that was established to assist growers in navigating through the process.



The Donaldson tree located at the A.H. Whitemore Foundation Farm is producing good yields and quality, despite the presence of HLB. Photo courtesy of Florida Grower.

https://www.fdacs.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Pests-and-Diseases/Plant-Pests-and-Diseases/Citrus-Health-Response-Program/Citrus-Budwood-Registration/Escape-Tree-Procedures-and-Permit

We thank Ben Rosson for his commitment to streamline a procedure and make it available to the industry.

RIVER RAMBLINGS · THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INDIAN RIVER (ITRUS LEAGUE

# **BLAST FROM THE PAST**

When the Indian River growing district was awash with citrus that was known world-wide for its outstanding taste and appearance, stealing of this citrus was a common occurrence as it brought a premium price. In an effort to curb the activity, rewards were offered, thus the signs were commonly seen out in the groves. Now with the local sheriff's agricultural units, the signs became obsolete.

Doug Bournique, Executive Vice President of the Indian River Citrus League, recalls distributing the reward funds out. He stated, "Shortly after starting with the League, I can recall meeting the officers involved and the impacted



grower to hand the officer a check and take a photo. The local paper would publish the photo to help in the effort to stem fruit theft."

We would like to thank Heather Stapleton, Executive Director of the Indian River Citrus Museum in Vero Beach, in making this photo available to us.

# CITRUS HALL OF FAME INDUCTION LUNCHEON TICKETS NOW ON SALE



**George Hamner, League Board Member**, along with the late Tillis Edwards and the late Ed Taylor, will be inducted during the Florida Citrus Hall of Fame's 60th Citrus Celebration Luncheon on Friday, October 14, 2022 from 11:30am – 1:00pm at Florida Southern College in Lakeland. Co-sponsored by Florida Citrus Mutual and The Florida Department of Citrus, tickets are \$125 for Patron Seating or \$1,700 for a Sponsor Table, which includes preferred seating for 8, table signage and a listing in the program. The event will be followed by the Florida Citrus Processors' Association's OJ "Meet & Greet" with the

inductees as they unveil their names on the Florida Citrus Hall of Fame Tree, located in the Sara D. and L. Kirk McKay Archives Center. A portion of the proceeds from all ticket sales will go to fund an Educational Outreach program to help promote the history of the Florida citrus industry. Hamner will be the 200<sup>th</sup> member inducted into the Hall of Fame, which began 60 years ago in 1962 to honor industry leaders who have made significant contributions and given unselfishly of themselves for the betterment of the Florida citrus industry.

Tickets may be purchased online at *https://floridacitrushalloffame.com/annual-banquet/* or by calling Florida Citrus Mutual at (863) 682-1111. For more information on sponsorship opportunities, please contact Brenda Eubanks Burnette at (561) 351-4314 or email at *Brenda@BurnetteandAssocisates.com*.

For more information on this year's inductees visit *https://floridacitrushalloffame.com/2022/01/florida-citrus-hall-of-fame-inductees-chosen-for-2022.* 

# INITIAL RESULTS FROM THE LARGE UF, FDACS, AND IRCL GRAPEFRUIT SCION AND ROOTSTOCK TRIAL

Dr. Flavia Zambon and Dr. Mark Ritenour

In 2018 the University of Florida Indian River Research and Education Center, the Indian River Citrus League and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services entered into a three-year long project funded by the HLB – Multiagency coordination group (USDA-APHIS-HLB-MAC) entitled "*Evaluation of Potential HLB Tolerant Grapefruit Rootstock/Scion Combinations in the Indian River District of Florida*." The main goal of this large project is to identify potential HLB-tolerant grapefruit combinations to eventually replace tree losses for fresh fruit production in the Indian River Region and gather data for future breeding choices.

Identification of potential tolerance is never easy, and field trials are even more challenging because of the magnitude of the experimental trial. For this project, we have more than **34,000 new plantings** distributed on 420 acres across the state of Florida with 16 participant growers.

Of the 420 acres, 84 acres belong to the trial itself, which contemplates **42 experimental blocks with over 12,000 trees** – the remaining 236 acres are for growers' choice plantings. Each experimental block comprises a 2-acre area with 294 trees spaced 10 x 25 ft. A total of 42 scion/ rootstock combinations – seven grapefruit scions and six rootstocks – were chosen from the Division of Plant Industry budwood catalog and grown at the Southern Citrus Nursery in collaboration with Agromilora (Table 1). Growers used their cultural practices, nutrition, and pest control management. Plantings started in August 2020 and ended in April 2022.

Scions:	Rootstocks:		
'UF N40-11-7' Red Grapefruit	X-639		
(DPI-435-0102)	(Cleo x Rubidoux TF)		
'UF N40-11-11' Grapefruit	US-802		
(DPI-435-0003)	(Pummelo x TF)		
'UF KW-1-50' Red Pummelo	US-942 UFR-4 (4x Nova+HBP x Cleo + TF) UFR-5 (4x Nova+HBP x Cleo + TF)		
'Star Ruby'			
'Flame'			
'Jackson'	SuperSour #1		
	(US-1691 – USDA-ARS Ft. Pierce variety)		
'Rio'			

Table 1. List of chosen scion and rootstock varieties for the MAC – Grapefruit variety trial project

Dr. Flavia Zambon and the Citrus Horticulture Lab measured trees one month after planting and subsequently in March or October, depending on when the trees were actually planted. This past March, the team measured more than 9,000 trees and took the first leaf sampling for *Candidatus* Liberibacter asiaticus detection. The Plant Pathology Lab at the FDACS is responsible for the extraction and detection of *CL*as.

#### TRIAL, con't from 3

Preliminary data for all blocks (Figure 1) shows dominance of US-942 and US-802 rootstocks for thicker canopy volumes of Red Pummelo 'UF KW-1-50', Red Grapefruit 'UF N40-16-11-7' and Grapefruit 'UF N40-16-11-11'. 'Flame' and 'Star Ruby' grafted onto SuperSour #1 were late on tissue culture production; therefore, they are behind on growth compared to the other scion varieties in some blocks.



Figure 1. Canopy volume of all scion/rootstock combinations. Bars represent overall mean of all blocks in all measurements; error bars represent standard error. Colored sections represent different groups – from fuller trees (top) to thinner trees (bottom).

#### TRIAL, con't from 4

There is a visible difference in canopy volume between combinations planted in August 2020 – as portrayed in the first row of Figure 2. Due to material limitations, the newest plantings do not have 'Star Ruby' grafted onto SuperSour #1. Still, height and canopy architecture differences are already visible a couple months after planting.



Figure 2. Visual differences between the best tree scion/rootstock combinations according to canopy volume measurements. Top row: trees planted in August 2020 - 'Star Ruby' x SuperSour#1 planted in April 2021. Bottom: trees planted in April 2022. Both blocks located at the Indian River District. Faded red arrow marks 1.3 meter (4.3') in height

As the project is ending its first phase, further data from harvest, measurements, and CLas detection will show which variety (or varieties) has might be tolerant to HLB, which would be a welcome relief for grapefruit growers across the Indian River District Region.

Dr. Mark Ritenour and Dr. Flavia Zambon would like to thank all participant growers, IRCL personnel, FDACS – DPI personnel, and all Citrus Horticulture Lab members – especially former lab members Sarah Stover and Darren Cole – for their relentless patience and help during the measurement of the trees.

If you want to learn more about the MAC – grapefruit variety trial, please get in touch with Dr. Mark Ritenour (*ritenour@ufl.edu*) or Dr. Flavia Zambon (*f.zambon@ufl.edu*). Funding for the project comes from USDA-APHIS-HLB-MAC and FDACS.

# **FIGHT BACK AGAINST** FRUIT DROP KPHITE Rx supports healthy root growth and combats HLB Citrus Greening KPHITE R



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September applications.	Grove sample	Total P. nicotianae	Total P. palmivora	Root Mass (g)
	Replication 1	0	0	0.32
Applications can be made with any	Replication 2	0	0	0.57
standard irrigation system or with a	Replication 3	0	0	0.36
boom application.	Replication 4	1	0	0.97

The treatment schedule was 3 applications per year at 2 gal/acre for 3 years.



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# UPDATE ON THE "GREASY GREEN" PROJECT

Mark A. Ritenour, Megan M. Dewdney, Liliana M. Cano, Eva L. Mulandesa, and Monty M. Myers

Greasy spot rind blotch disease has been a historical problem in Florida citrus for many years, ascribed to a fungal pathogen called *Zasmidium citri-griseum* (previously named *Mycosphaerella citri*). Besides causing defoliation, it also mars the peel with tiny black specks that cause the rind to remain green. The spots can coalesce into black patches in extreme cases that are sometimes called "pink pitting" or greasy spot rind blotch. Growers have had this disease under good management since the mid-2000's but in recent years there have been reports of fruit showing apparent greasy spot symptoms as early as November. The symptoms are like greasy spot rind blotch but there are few to no symptoms on the leaves on the same trees. Furthermore, affected fruit develop the green splotches as early as November, when nighttime temperatures are low and peel color is usually improving instead of regreening. Thus, the industry calls the disorder "greasy green" until a more definitive identification of the causal agent and disease development is determined.

With the support of the Indian River Citrus League and industry cooperators, a project was funded by the Citrus Research and Development Foundation and began April 1, 2022 with the following objectives:

1) Determine if the flush cycle and infection period for the greasy spot organism have changed due to the influence of HLB on citrus physiology and other possible factors like changing environment.

2) Evaluate the potential promotion of greasy green symptoms related to nutrition programs or to peel reactions (in some cases a type of chemical "burn") from different pesticide and combinations of pesticides (tank mixes).

3) Evaluate if postharvest degreening treatments might be modified to adequately remove the green coloration and methods to mitigate deleterious effects on shelf life (e.g., related to anticipated longer degreening times).

Since April 2022, efforts have been underway to positively identify the causal organism (if any) of this disorder and to collect recent isolates. The first task has been to recover archived isolates from the UF Citrus Research and Education Center's 20-year-old collection. These cultures of the greasy spot fungus (*Zasmidium citri-griseum*) were purified, propagated, and high-quality DNA obtained for sequencing. Older isolates will be used as reference isolates for comparative DNA sequence analysis and to confirm the identity of more recent isolates.

We have also selected two commercial blocks containing different grapefruit varieties to determine if the flush cycle and the greasy spot infection period have changed due to the influence of HLB on citrus physiology and other factors like changing environment. In each block, twenty randomly selected trees (uniform canopy without excessive thinning or obvious sectoring from HLB) were mapped, and ten flushes per tree were tagged. Data collection started in June with leaves collected every two weeks to determine when fungal growth begins. Fruit growth is also being measured alongside leaf sampling. We are still in the relatively early stages of data collection.

Growers have also been interviewed and a survey distributed regarding the disease with little consensus currently about the cause of greasy green or factors that contribute to the problem. The fruit often have damage reminiscent of rind blotch but there are concerns that nutritional products and/or foliar spays may contribute. Besides continued work to determine if changing grove factors are promoting greasy spot, we will also conduct further interviews with growers and inspect

#### **GREASY GREEN**, con't from 7

spray records (e.g., timing and application methods) and other cultural practices to determine if relationships exist with the disease. Affected fruit will also be subjected to different degreening conditions and durations to determine if it is feasible to remove the fruit color without diminishing shelf life. We will include evaluation of methods to mitigate any negative effects of the degreening treatments by including, e.g., a chlorine dioxide gas treatment, which previous research suggests may reduce subsequent decay.

The success of this project depends on industry collaboration, so do not hesitate to contact team members, esp. Mark Ritenour (*ritenour@ufl.edu*), with observations you may have related to this disorder.



# **UPCOMING EVENTS**

\*Florida Citrus Crop Forecast Release October 12, 2022 @ 12 noon (Opening Season Crop Estimate)

#### FL Citrus Hall of Fame Luncheon October 14, 2022 11:30-1 PM

Tickets may be purchased online at *-banquet* or by calling Florida Citrus Mutual at (863) 682-1111.

# Treasure Coast Grown Fun Shoot January 28, 2023

Presented by the Indian River Citrus League. For additional information, please contact the League office at or 772/595-5026

\*The citrus production forecast is released at 12 noon but may not be available on their website until 15-30 minutes later due to transmission schedules. The USDA report should be available immediately after release and can be found at:



# **CITRUS LABEL PROJECT**

During the first half of the 20th century, citrus was shipped in wooden crates with labels affixed at the ends.

These labels were the advertising of the individual companies and have become collectible art forms. The early ones depict scenes of "old Florida" as well as the emergence of tourism promotion with scantily clad bathers aptly named "Flo."

With the arrival of cardboard, the wooden crates and their colorful labels fell out of use. The labels are now highly prized collectors' items.

Thanks to a grant from the Indian River County Tourist Development Council, Vero Heritage has enlarged and improved its indoor authentic citrus label collection, as well as started the Vero Heritage Citrus Label Tour. This art in public places heritage tour explores the historic marketing portion of citrus though artistic labels that once adorned the wooden shipping crates.

As of summer 2022, there are three signs in Historic Downtown Vero Beach. The sign featuring FLO is just outside the Indian River Citrus Museum and was funded by George Hamner and Indian River

Exchange Packers. Two other signs were funded by the Indian River County Tourist Development Council.

By the end of September, three more signs will be installed on Indian River County-owned lands: the Hallstrom Farmstead, Jones Pier Conservation Area and Captain Forsters' Hammock Preserve. Heather Stapleton, Vero Heritage executive director says, "These county-owned lands all have historic citrus connections. The placement will be a natural fit. Working with county has been delightful. We cannot wait to get these next signs installed. And, we are awaiting approval on a 4<sup>th</sup> sign. We have our fingers crossed!"

Vero Heritage hopes to work with cities of Sebastian and Fellsmere next. Stapleton says that eventually the Vero Heritage Citrus Label Tour will consist of about 10 to 12 stops around Indian River County.









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CERTIFIED INDIAN RIVER FRUIT THINN RIVER CITRUS LEAGUE

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# 2022-23 Fresh Fruit Trainings

#### TRAINING TEAM CONTACT INFORMATION

Amir Rezazadeh amir2558@ufl.edu 772-462-1628 Mark Ritenour ritenour@ufl.edu 772-577-7359



- Please note that the Safari browser may not work properly with the program on a desktop or mobile device. It is recommended to use desktop Google Chrome or Firefox browsers.
- You will need to be able to print, scan, and upload the sign in sheet to complete the training modules.
- The cost is \$3.00 per a person total for as many modules as they wish to complete, or a maximum of \$100 per company.
- Certificates and training kits (hand sanitizer, mask, educational materials, and more) will be sent via FedEx.

#### TRAININGS OFFERED IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH





Virtual trainings can be accessed at <u>https://crec.ifas.ufl.edu/resources/videos-and-training/fresh-fruit-packinghouse/</u>

# Syngenta Citrus Internships- Summer 2023

#### **Company Overview**

Syngenta is a leading agriculture company helping to improve global food security by enabling millions of farmers to make better use of available resources. Through world class science and innovative crop solutions, our 28,000 people in over 90 countries are working to transform how crops are grown. We are committed to rescuing land from degradation, enhancing biodiversity and revitalizing rural communities. There's never been a more important time to join Syngenta.

#### **Program Overview**

When you are a citrus intern with Syngenta, you will gain hands-on experience in the ag industry. This is a paid internship that also provides a vehicle for work use. You will be assigned to a mentor and a territory for your summer project. You will gain experience with territory management along with pest and disease identification. The internship presents opportunities to gain sales and marketing experience, exposure to the citrus industry, as well as opportunities within Syngenta Crop Protection.

#### **Intern Focus**

- Pest scouting support (miticides/insecticides)
  - Minecto Pro, Voliam Flexi, Agri-Flex, & Agri-Mek
- Soil sampling support (fungicides)
  - Ridomil & Orondis

#### Qualifications

- Seeking future employment in the Florida Agriculture Industry.
- Basic familiarity with production agriculture.
- Basic familiarity with pest, disease, and weed control.
- Basic computer skills.
- Willingness to work outdoors.
- Self motivated, detail oriented, honest, and personable.
- Ability to relocate to or originally from one of the following counties; Polk, Highlands, Hardee, Desoto, Hendry, Collier, Lee, Okeechobee, Martin, Osceola, St. Lucie, or Indian River.
- Sophomore or Junior level (Seniors will be considered).
- Satisfactory results of a pre-employment background check, drug test, and driving record evaluation.



### Zach Langford Florida Citrus Internship Coordinator Syngenta Retail Rep 407-212-5631 zach.langford@syngenta.com



### Chad Warrick Syngenta Retail Rep 830-832-5269

chad.warrick@syngenta.com



Follow QR Code or link to apply: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SyngentaCitrusIntern



# CITRUS GROWERS INVITED TO FIELD DAY AT MAJOR EXPERIMENTAL GROVE, AHEAD OF FIRST YIELD DATA FINDINGS

FORT PIERCE, Fla.---The University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Science's Indian River Research and Education Center (UF/IFAS-IRREC) will host a field day in a large-scale research trial for growers and other citrus industry stakeholders to see firsthand. The IRREC Millennium Block Variety Trial Field Day event will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, Oct. 19. The Millennium Block is at 7850 Pruitt Research Road, Fort Pierce, Florida, within a couple of miles of the exits for Interstate 95 and the Florida Turnpike.

"Citrus growers from all of the state's important regions can benefit from the findings that are now visible in the rootstock variety trials in IRREC's Millennium Block," said IRREC Center Director Ronald D. Cave. "The harvest this fall and winter will be the first for the four trials, and by late January, we should have the first data to share with growers."



Those interested may register at the following online link *https://www.eventbrite.com/e/millennium-block-field-day-tickets-416608355807*. To register by email or telephone, call Tom James, IRREC biological scientist, at 772-468-3922 or email: *hjames1@ufl.edu* The experimental grove was established in 2019 in response to a decline in Florida's fruit production due to citrus greening, the most serious citrus disease worldwide. New rootstocks combined with tree scions, the

#### EXPERIMENTAL GROVE, con't from 15

aboveground part, are widely believed to identify combinations that will tolerate the disease, Cave said. Cave leads the 20-acre citrus grove research program at the research center, in addition to his duties as director for the facility of more than 70 employees. As part of his work to oversee the center's citrus research program, Cave supervises Tom James, a biological scientist who manages the trial grove.

James said the grove features more than 5,500 2- and 3-year-old trees. A total of 154 new citrus scion-rootstock combinations are the trees included in the active research project. Many trees bear fruit that will be harvested later this fall.

"We have a grapefruit scion trial with 18 selections on three commercial rootstocks and three independent rootstock trials with 'Ray Ruby' grapefruit, 'Glenn 56-11' navel orange, and 'UF 950' mandarin as scions," said James.

Field day attendees will stop at tented information booths at the trial entrance. Researchers, graduate students, IRREC team members, and Extension professionals will respond to questions and provide printed maps and key plant growth data for each citrus variety under study.

"In each research trial, visitors can stop, look at each plot of five trees, and see which combinations perform best, visually identifying those they feel are the best performers," James said.

Each experimental plot is identified by a code tag and replicated six times across the trial.

The Millennium Block is a trial to determine which scion and rootstock combinations can better adapt to the Indian River's Flatwoods soils and tolerate citrus canker and citrus greening while producing profitable crops.

"The strategy that offers the most hope for Florida growers to keep citrus groves productive in the current citrus greening era is tree variety improvement," said Cave.

UF/IFAS plant breeders Jude Grosser, Fred Gmitter and Bill Castle at the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center in Lake Alfred developed citrus varieties they expect will tolerate citrus greening, Cave said. Breeders Ed Stover and Kim Bowman with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Horticultural Research Laboratory in Ft. Pierce (USHRL) also contributed citrus varieties for the study.

Bill Castle, UF professor emeritus and Peter Spyke, a local grower, contributed to citrus variety selection for the project, along with Indian River Citrus League board members and the USHRL director and researchers.

"We are testing a wide variety of grapefruit scions and rootstocks available," said Cave. "And early next year, we will provide growers with the first yield data from the experiment, and that's key to science-based decisions that will help growers sustain the work they love," Cave said.

### 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. 772-595-5026 or

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# Advertising Opportunities .....

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 call the League office at 772/595-5026 or email at info@ircitrusleague.org for more details.

#### Ad Copy Specifications

#### Fonts

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

#### Logos

- 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.
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- Resolution should be a minimum of 300 dpi at actual size.
- 72 dpi images pulled from websites are not acceptable.
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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).
- Other file formats accepted: eps (Adobe Illustrator) tif (Adobe Photoshop) jpg (Adobe Photoshop)

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As an associate member, you have access to most of the League's benefits and services. Associate members gain the opportunity to network their products, services, and information with our full membership. All associate members will receive:

- Invitation to association meetings
- Subscription to our newsletter
- Access to sponsorship opportunities, which enable your business to market its services directly to our grower and other associate members (newsletter, luncheons, The Florida Citrus Show, and our annual Treasure Coast Grown fun shoot to just name a few
- Listing on our website (www.ircitrusleague.org) and newsletter

The Indian River Citrus League, headquartered in Ft. Pierce, was established in 1931 to protect the Indian River Citrus name and growing region that stretches from Volusia to Palm Beach Counties.

The League's responsibilities have expanded from the original purpose of "protecting and enhancing the Indian River name" to include a responsibility of voicing members' opinions at all industry meetings; to all governmental agencies as well as the Florida Legislature and Congress in Washington.

If you feel that a membership would be appropriate for your company, simply complete the attached application and return it along with your dues. Please don't hesitate to call, if you have any questions. Annual membership is \$300.

Contact: 2001 S. Rock Road Ft. Pierce, FL 34945 772/595-5026



# TREASURE COAST GROWN FUN SHOOT

The annual Treasure Coast Grown Fun Shoot has been set for January 28, 2023 and is building into a must attend gathering. This one-day event will be held at the Vero Beach Clays and Shooting Sports and provides fun, fellowship and networking opportunities. It's not too soon to begin thinking about partnering with us. Contact Karen at (772-595-5026) or email (*karen@ircitrusleague.org*) for more details of how you can be a part of our growing event. There are various levels of sponsorship so there's something for everyone! We are thrilled to welcome returning sponsorship commitments from:

FL Department of Citrus – Grapefruit Station Sponsor
Carden & Associates – Cart Sponsor
Everglades Farm Equipment - Shot Gun Sponsor
Florida Coast Equipment – Lunch Sponsor, Presented by Countryside Citrus
Central Life Sciences – Coffee Bar Sponsor
Natalie's Orchid Island Juice Co. – Beverage Sponsor
There's still room to add your company!