

RIVER RAMBLINGS



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JUNE
2024

IT'S A WRAP...2023-24 SEASON UPDATE

Below are some highlights and updates from this past season. Our next issue will be in September, kicking off our 2024/2025 publication schedule.

2024 Indian River Citrus League Fun Shoot

The Indian River Citrus League Fun Shoot, held on January 27 at Vero Beach Clay Shooting Sports in Vero Beach, had nearly 100 shooters, which exceeded expectations. The event went off seamlessly and the shooters enjoyed a beautiful morning on the course and the newly construction clubhouse that featured citrus themed décor recognizing the iconic industry here on the River.

The League, in partnership with **Hale Groves** and **Sailfish Brewing Company** were co-title sponsors of this event. We thank **Florida Coast Equipment** for once again participating in the event as the lunch sponsor, which shooters enjoyed a unique lunch prepared by **Countryside Citrus** (A shout out to Chef Timm for a job well done.)

This event would not have been possible without the unbelievable support from Alex Brown and he's fantastic staff at Hale Groves.

We are grateful for the generosity of **Everglades Farm Equipment**, who once again sponsored the Shot Gun Raffle. There was also a green bird 50/50 cash pot raffle that is always very popular at this event.

The funds generated from the event will allow the League to continue representing our grower base on issues impacting our industry, along with enhancing and protecting the iconic citrus industry here in the Indian River growing district and desires to continue in that role as this industry rebuilds.

Thank you to all our Indian River Citrus League Fun Shoot sponsors for your support in making this a successful event!!

We are already receiving sponsorship commitments for next year's shoot **scheduled for January 25, 2025**, so it's not too early to begin thinking about the 2025 event. Contact the League office for further details.

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2024 Florida Citrus Show: A Tailgate Success

The 2024 Florida Citrus Show, presented by AgNet Media, with its freshened-up format was an overwhelming success once again.

The open-air exhibitor area provided a laid-back, hometown feel for the show. Nestled in between the research facilities of IRREC and USDA, the more than 50 exhibitors set up in the parking lot. With the tents and food that various exhibitors provided, created a festival-type atmosphere that gave a relaxed feeling as you strolled up and down the rows. The expanded lunch break between the educational sessions provided more time for vendors and attendees to engage and enjoy the delicious and unique food on hand.

This year, something new was added, *The Top Tailgater Award* for the best food. The winner was based on votes by the attendees and Everglades Equipment Group came out as the winner and was awarded the \$500 prize for its outstanding ribs.

The general session, held in the morning at IRREC took on big-picture issues that are impacting Florida agriculture, while the afternoon sessions held at USDA, featured vegetable production that focused on research on key specialty crops grown in Florida, and the citrus production portion of the show was held at IRREC.

Grove First Project – Gearing up for Next Round of Testing

The Grove First Project, funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), a USDA's granting agency, continues to move forward evaluating the various molecules. The Grove First component was developed by Drs. Michelle Heck and Randall Niedz with Dr. Heck serving as the overall Project Director for this grant. Both Drs. Heck and Niedz are leading the team comprised by researchers at USDA-ARS, the University of Florida, and other partners.

The key component of this project is testing for promising molecules screened directly in the field to identify molecules that show large visual effects; lab assays are not used to select molecules and that sets this trial apart from the traditional research done in the lab. These molecules then go to a second level screen by growers – this screen is larger, conducted by growers, and constitutes the validation testing. Promising molecules will be identified in these two-level validation screens.

A recent meeting held last month showcased some of the promising molecules that are showing results in improvement of foliar, fruit weight and fruit drop. A follow-up meeting will be held sometime during the summer.

The key component of this project is working directly with the grower. This approach saves time and money with the growers; includes subject matter experts in all phases of the project. The growers are the citriculture subject matter experts and assist in experiment planning and determining effect size to detect as this determines how to design the experiment, particularly the number of replicates needed. For HLB, large effects are required to solve the problem. Large effects allow fewer replicates to be used.

There are ten growers participating in this round of experiments with seven groves currently being injected and the remaining three are upcoming.

As the project evaluation continues, there will be significant amount of data that might be of immediate value to the growers. Growers will be involved with experiment planning and will be compensated for all expenses relating to testing in their groves. Over 1,000 molecules will be screened – all in grower's groves and with grower's involved in the experiments. If you have an interest in participating in the next round of testing in 2025, please let the League know at karen@ircitrusleague.org to be added to the wait list.

REDISCOVERED RED GRAPEFRUIT VARIETIES POISED FOR HLB TRIALS IN FLORIDA



The USDA, ARS citrus scion breeding program has recently re-discovered several noteworthy grapefruit cultivars, including Florida Red, Red Blush, and Henderson, at the Whitmore Foundation Farm in Groveland, Florida. These low-seeded red grapefruit varieties, which have not been tested in Florida replicated trials since the arrival of Huanglongbing (HLB) in 2005, are now ready for trial. After being cleaned by the Division of Plant Industry (DPI), these cultivars are set to be evaluated for their tolerance to HLB under commercial or semi-commercial conditions.

In addition to field testing, these varieties may also have the potential to thrive in CUPS structures with reduced seed numbers and high pack out. Dr. Matthew Mattia is actively seeking collaboration with commercial growers to assess the performance and viability of these re-selected varieties in combating HLB, offering additional varieties that may perform better under HLB conditions to contribute to a more sustainable Florida grapefruit industry. If interested, please contact Dr. Mattia at matthew.mattia@usda.gov for additional information.

NEW CENTER DIRECTOR OF IFAS/IRREC NAMED

It was announced that Mark Kistler, PhD will lead the Indian River Research and Education Center in Fort Pierce as its next director, effective June 17, 2024.

Mark comes from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC), in Tifton, GA, where he currently serves as professor and dean of the School of Agriculture and Natural Resources (SANR).

Under Mark's leadership over the last six years, SANR's enrollment, annual gifts and corporate partnerships have increased notably. He established a Department of Agricultural Education and Communication.

It is a homecoming for Mark, who grew up in Winter Haven, where he was involved in the cattle and citrus industries. He earned a bachelor's and master's degree from CALS and served as a member of the UF/IFAS faculty in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication.

Mark started his career as a UF/IFAS Hendry County Extension 4-H agent. He also served as an agricultural agent in Sarasota County before becoming the Okeechobee County Extension Director, where he often worked with IRREC faculty and staff.

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GENETIC AT ITS FINEST – HOW THE MILLENNIUM BLOCK AND THE MAC GRAPEFRUIT VARIETY TRIALS ARE SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE FLORIDA FRESH FRUIT INDUSTRY

As a grapefruit grower, you are likely familiar with the groundbreaking Millennium Block and MAC grapefruit trials. These projects, led by Dr. Flavia Zambon, Assistant Professor of Horticulture Production of Citrus and Other Crops, encompass over 17,000 citrus trees at the Indian River Research and Education Center and 12 grower collaborators.

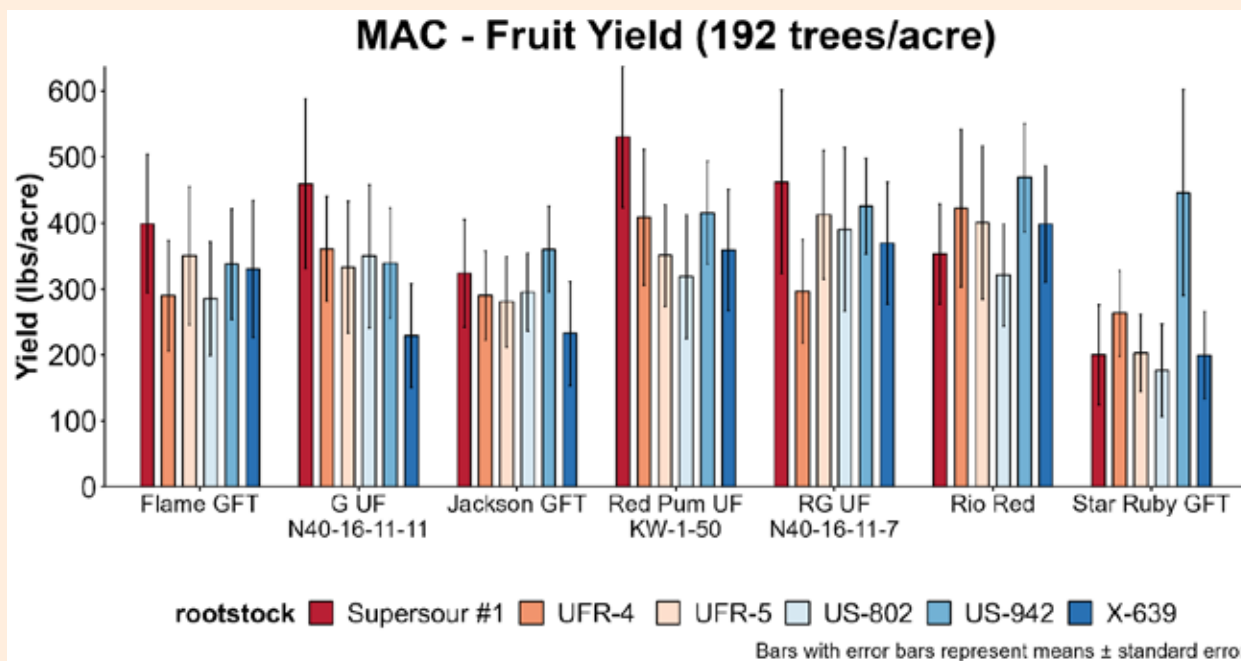
The ‘MAC’ trial -

Growers idealized the ‘MAC’ trial to evaluate available varieties in the field for potential HLB tolerance. In its first phase, the FDACS, the IRCL, and the University of Florida determined the plot design, and trees were planted between 2020 and 2022.

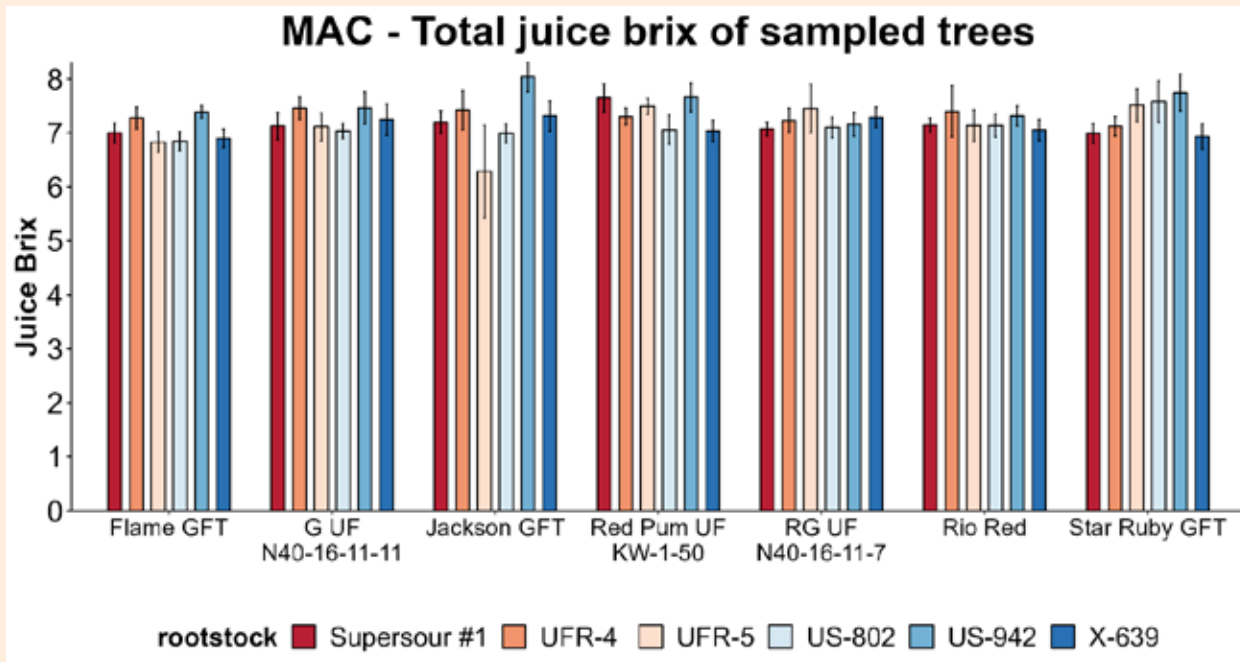
This trial is one of the most robust experimental plots for grapefruit research established for grower-driven decision-making. Comprised of more than 12,000 trees across the state in 40 blocks, in collaboration with 12 growers, seven grapefruit scions and six rootstocks were chosen, totaling 42 combinations. The selected scions for the trial are: ‘Rio Red’, ‘Star Ruby’, ‘Flame’, ‘Jackson’, ‘UF GF N-40-11-11’, ‘UF Red GF N40-11-7’, and ‘Red Pummelo UF KW-1-50’. While for rootstocks: ‘UFR-4’, ‘UFR-5’, ‘US-942’, ‘US-802’, ‘SuperSour #1’, and ‘X-639’.

Dr. Zambon and the horticulture lab team carried out biannual evaluations of trees' performance since their planting, measuring height, canopy volume, and stem diameter, as the performance of some of the selected scions was still unknown. As the data compilation is still to be finished, visual observations of ‘UF KW-1-50’ is that this is one of the shortest and widest scions in the trial, while ‘Jackson’s vigorous and upright growth can’t be missed in the field. ‘US-942’ is showing its ‘Flying Dragon’ parentage, as the scions grafted onto it are shorter in height compared to X-639 or ‘SuperSour #1’, nonetheless, they are the ones with higher brix, according to the preliminary yield data of 8 out of the 40 blocks. As more

than half of the blocks will reach maturity this season, and it will bear fruit for the first time, it will be possible to infer which combination will yield high quality grapefruit.



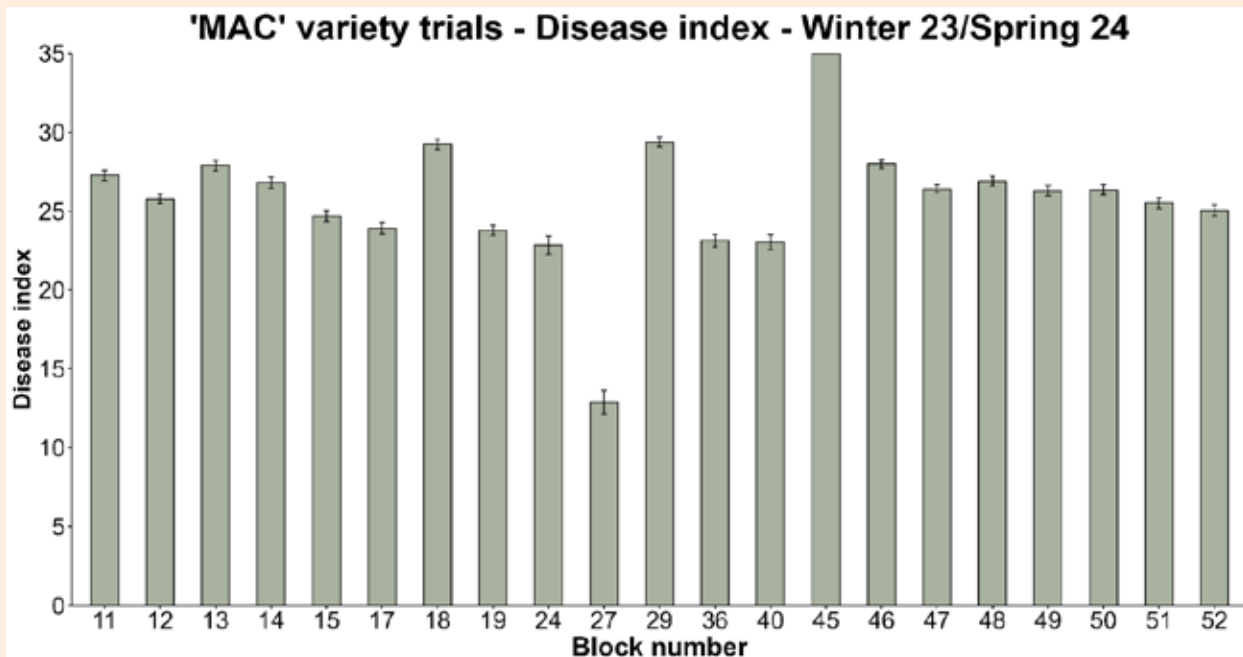
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Since the blocks are within growers' property, the trial highlights a component that would've been overlooked: grove management. Some growers planted their blocks in high-raised beds, covering the trees with IPC, spraying kaolin and clay, and implementing cover crops. These cultural management practices shift the plant response, and given the right amount of input, the genetic potential of the variables will be shown at its fullest. One consistent practice that has been noted is the use of OTC on plants over 2 years old.

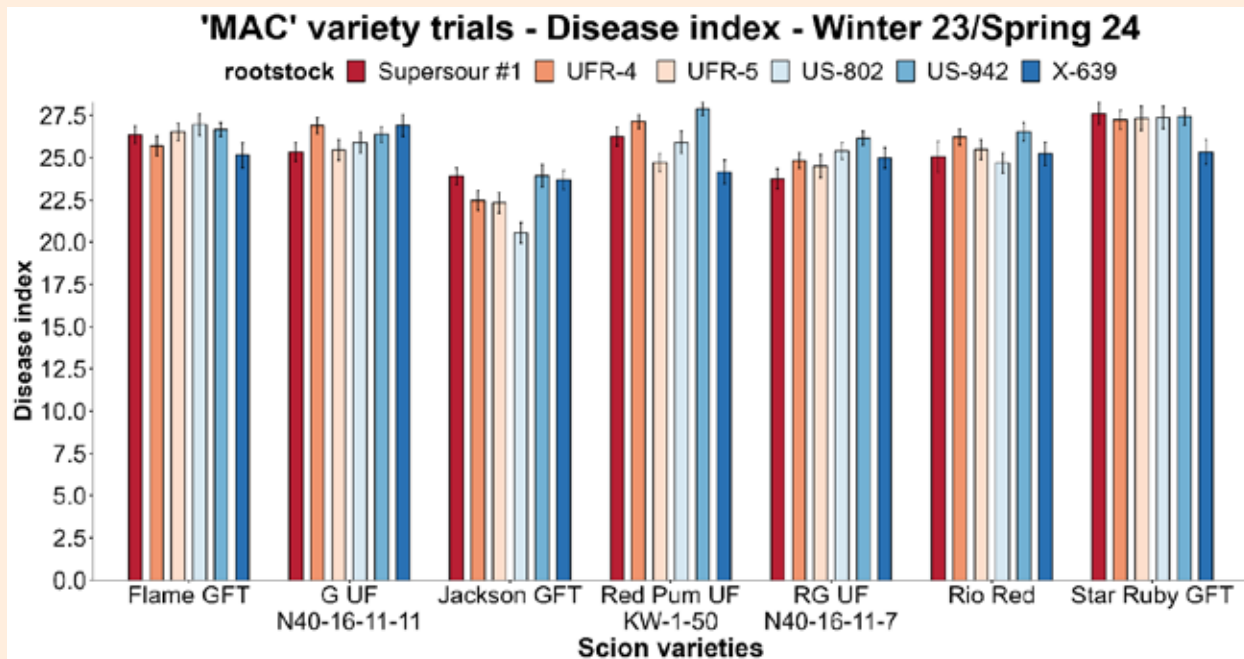
One of the variables that Dr. Zambon's team collected this past season is disease index, which translates in a ranking from the HLB severity. In this rank, the lower the number, the healthier the plant is.

From the disease index graph, grove management of block 27 has resulted in healthier trees compared to the other blocks measured in the same period. This specific grower has used IPC and just finished the second injection of OTC, plus kept weeds suppressed and rows cleaned.



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It is also possible to see that some combinations show trees that have less HLB symptoms than others, a preliminary result that can guide the growers and Dr. Zambon's team to the next measurements. Overall, 'Jackson' has one of the lowest ranks for disease index across the combinations. Diving specifically, Flame grafted onto X-639, 'UF N40-16-11-11' onto 'SuperSour #1', 'UF KW-1-40' grafted onto UFR-5 and X-639, 'UF N40-16-11-7' grafted onto 'SuperSour #1', 'Rio Red' grafted onto 'SuperSour #1', US-802 and X-639 are ranking as the healthiest of the trees on the trial.



At least half of the blocks in the MAC trial will reach a mature stage this season, so more information must be collected to draw any conclusions. The project is one of the most comprehensive studies in collaboration with growers to identify specific scion/rootstock combinations that show tolerance to HLB.

Funds for the MAC project come from CRDF project 23-003: "Evaluation of potential HLB tolerant grapefruit rootstock/scion combinations in Florida."

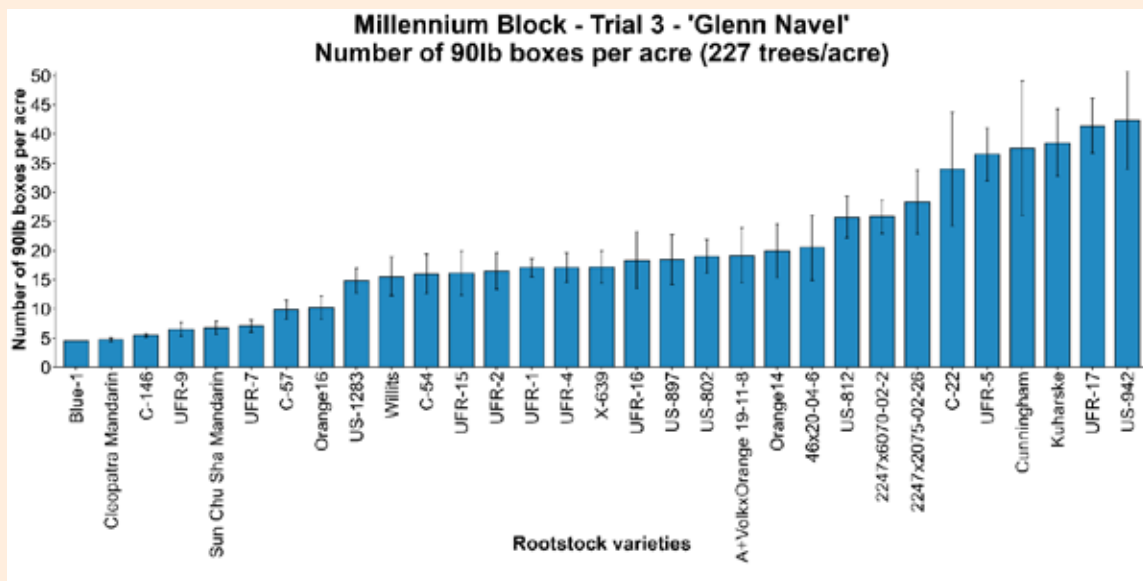
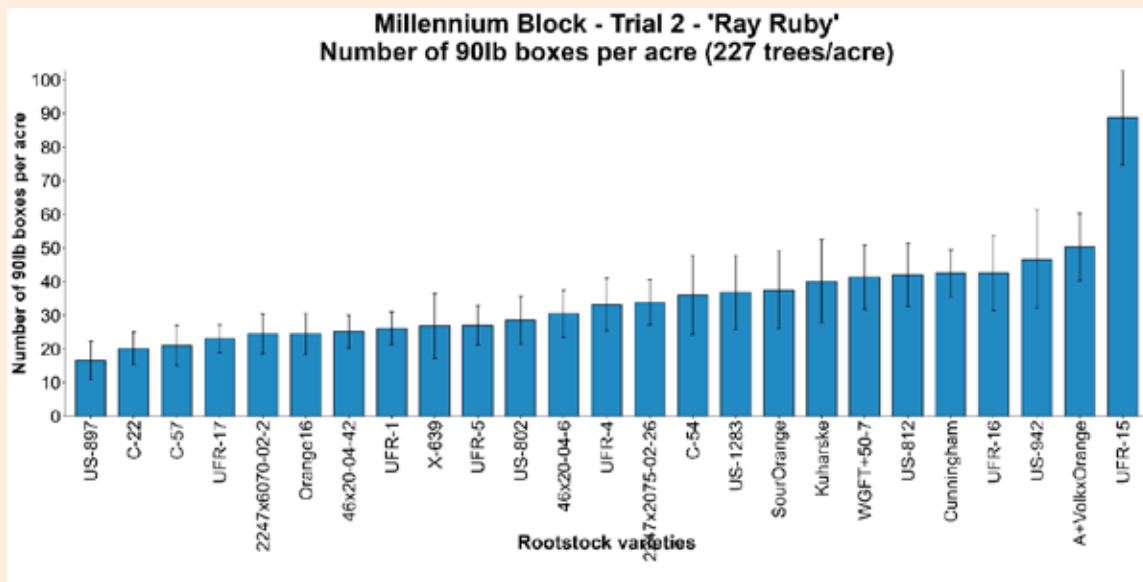
The Millennium Block

Approaching their 5th year, the 5,500 trees at the Millennium Block are yielding promising results. The 4 trials within the Millennium Block aim to unlock the genetic potential of new scion and rootstock hybrids never tested in field conditions, focusing on finding grapefruit scion/rootstock combinations that are tolerant to greening. The outcomes from the UF and USDA breeding programs have been instrumental in this endeavor, with several new scion and rootstock varieties being planted in 2019. For the first time, Dr. Zambon's group has consistent yield data and significant results from the rootstock trials. "It took time, but we are finally seeing highly different results from the 30+ rootstock materials at the Millennium Block. These differences are crucial for grower decision-making, as rootstocks influence scion canopy size, plant height, and yield."

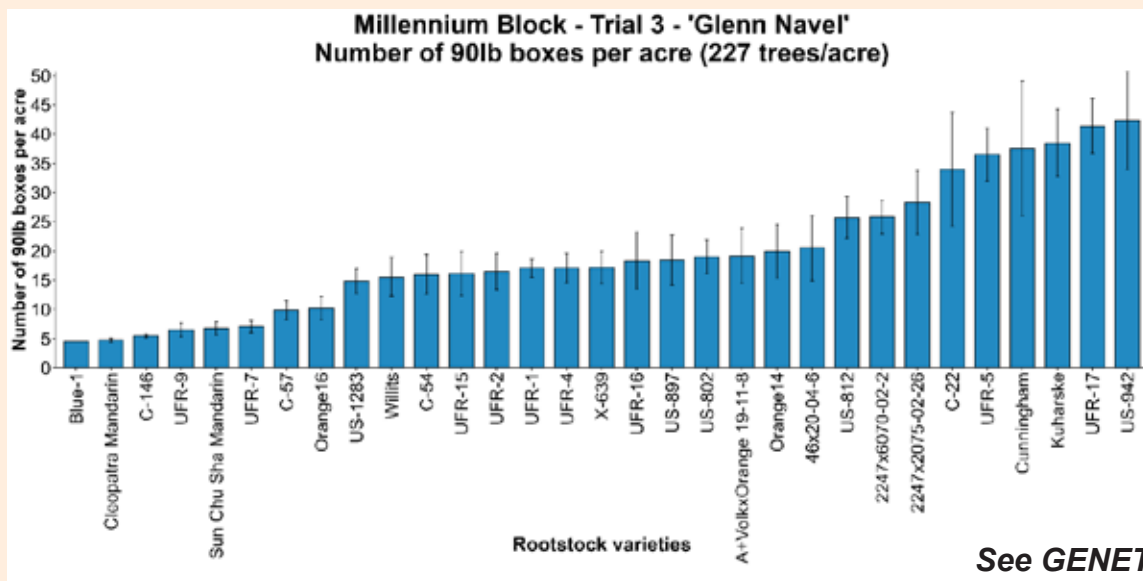
The results from the last season's trials are particularly noteworthy. It was found that 'Glenn Navel' sweet orange and the world-known 'Ray Ruby' grapefruit each require distinct genetic characteristics from the rootstock. 'UF-950' Mandarin is also part of the trial; however, it did not bear any fruit last season. Among all the rootstocks tested, 'Ray Ruby' grafted onto UFR-15 produced the highest yield, reaching an average of 90 boxes per acre (227 trees/ac) and brix between 6.5 and 7. This is significant as UFR-15 is a diploid hybrid from a conventional cross of Hirado Butan pink Pummelo and Cleopatra mandarin and has been available to growers since 2015. Higher juice quality was achieved in 'Ray Ruby' grafted onto 2247x6070-02-2, a tetrazyg rootstock that produces small trees with very high soluble solids.

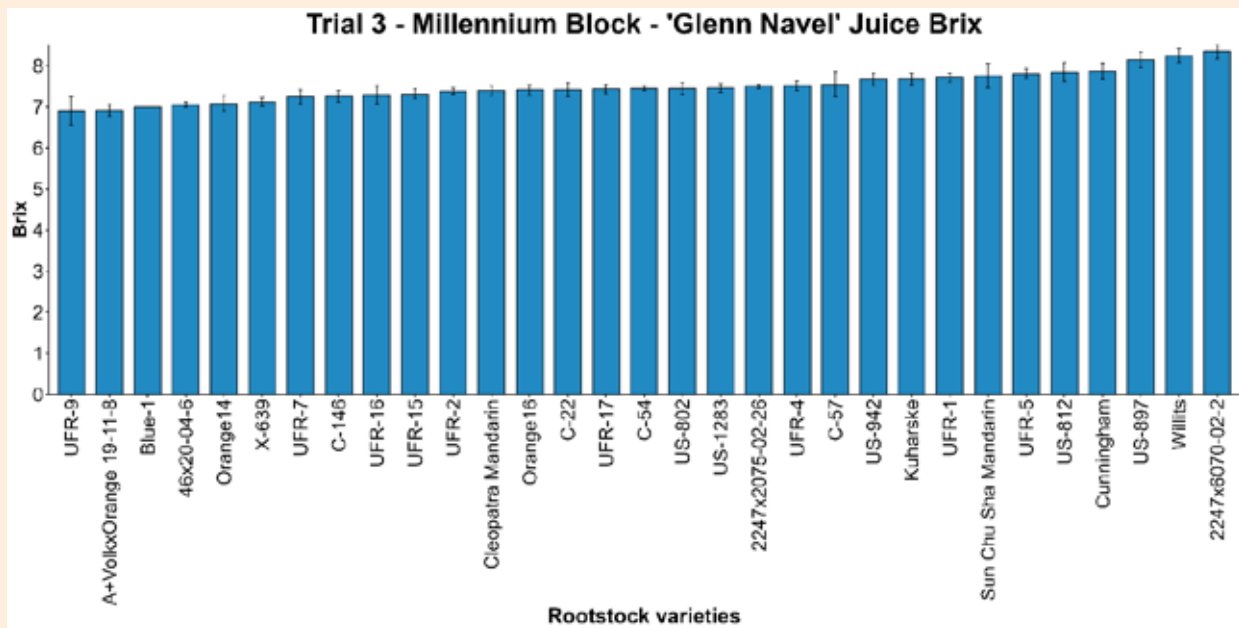
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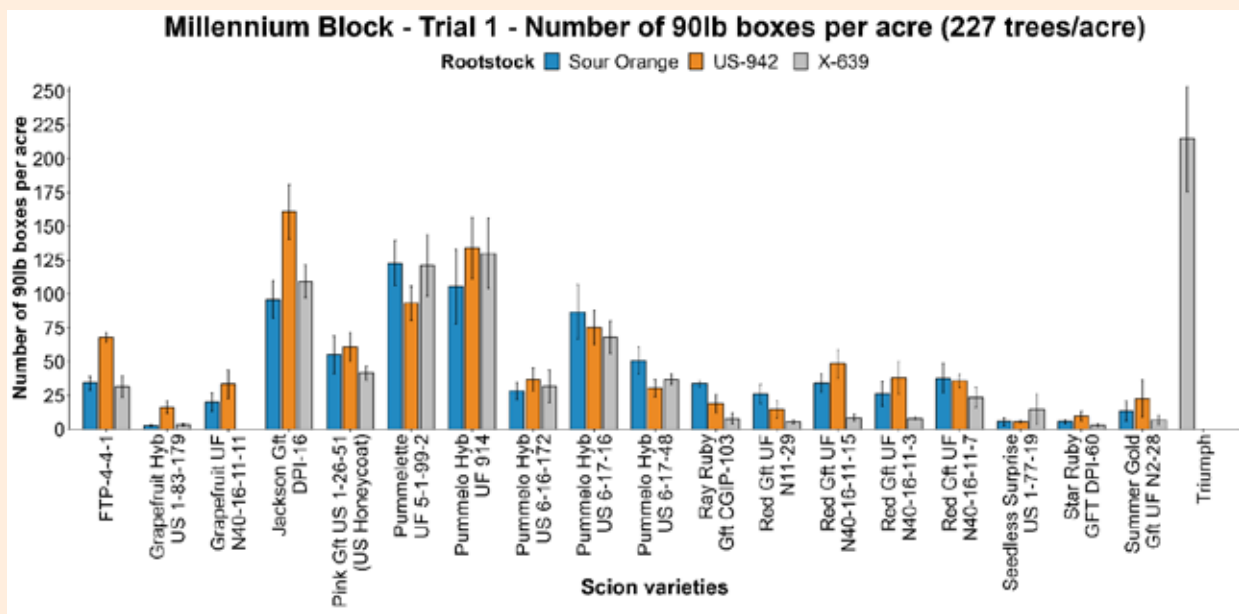
'Glenn Navel' did not show the extreme differences between one rootstock and the others, but rather a group of potential rootstocks that yielded between 30-45 90lb boxes per acre, with US-942 being the top contender of the list. Once again, the dwarf 2247x6070-02-2 performed the best for 'Glenn



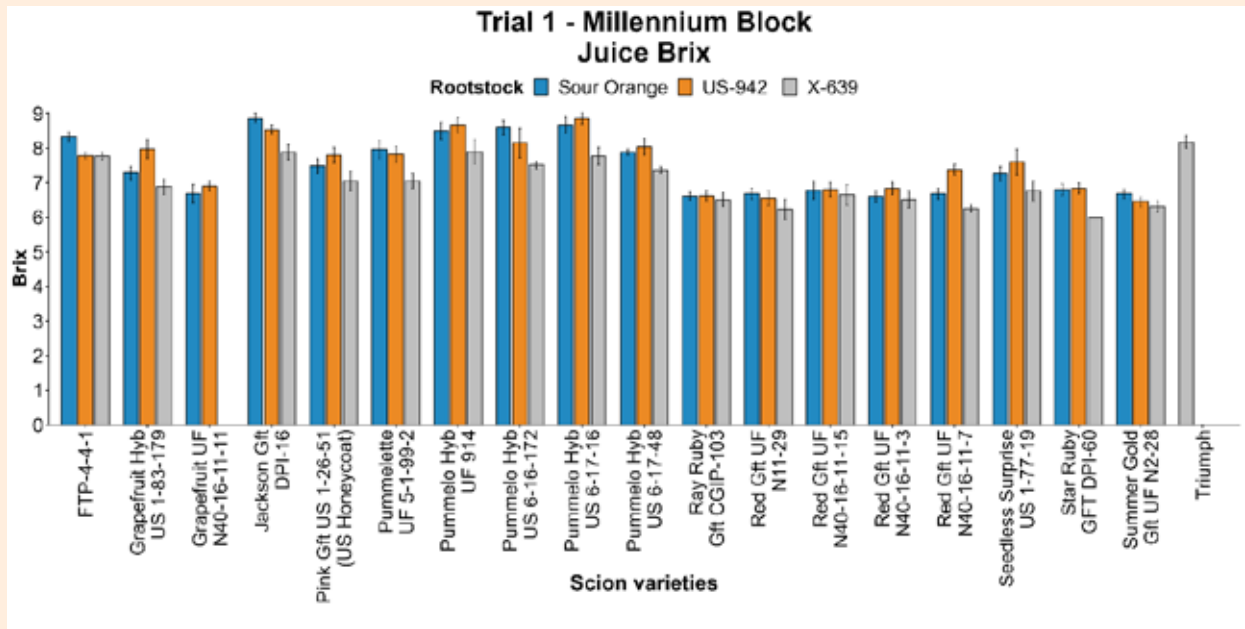


Navel' juice quality, followed by Willis and US-897, with brix between 7 and 8.

The grapefruit scion/rootstock combination trial of 18 scions grafted onto 3 different rootstocks also shows impressive results. A fortuitous label mistake led to the planting of a historical golden grapefruit named 'Triumph'. A sister of the 'Jackson' grapefruit, this seedy grapefruit x orange hybrid tree is packed with juice and has the highest yield of the trial, averaging over 200 boxes per acre in a 227 trees/acre setting, and it shows little to no HLB symptoms. Grafted onto X-639, the tree has a dense canopy and dark green leaves. The fruit breaks color very early in the season, and its harvest occurs in late November. Although setting early, the harvest window is considerable, with fruit still in the tree in mid-March and almost no fruit drop. Following 'Triumph' is its sister, 'Jackson' grafted onto US-942 and 'UF-914'. 'UF-914' is a pummelo hybrid with a deep red color and low in furocoumarins, a desirable trait for people who can't eat grapefruit due to the interaction of the component to several medicines. This variety was also among the highest in brix when grafted onto Sour Orange and US-942, reaching between 8 – 9 degrees Brix. Other combinations also had high brix values but were not yielding well in this specific field setting. For that, plant density adjustments are necessary if testing combinations that are low in productivity in the current spacing.



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Funds for the Millennium Block project come from FDOC.

Triumph in X-639 fruit



December 2023

Triumph in X-639
December 2023

2025 INDIAN RIVER CITRUS LEAGUE FUN SHOOT

Not Too Early to Think About Sponsorship Opportunities

Sponsorship levels are already being signed up for! Don't miss out on your company's opportunity to be a part of this growing event.

The Indian River Citrus League Fun Shoot is scheduled for January 25, 2025, at Vero Beach Clay Shooting Sports.

If interested in sponsorship opportunities, please contact Karen at the Indian River Citrus League office 772-595-5026 or email of karen@ircitrusleague.org for additional information.

Sponsors to date:

Everglades Farm Equipment
Farm Credit
Florida Coast Equipment
Hale Groves
MBV Engineering
Total Golf Cart
Wedgworth's, Inc.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Citrus Expo

August 21 – 22, 2024
Tampa

FL Fruit & Veg. Assoc. Convention

September 16-18, 2024
Marco Island Beach



Citrus Estimate Forecast Dates

2023-2024 Season

July 12, 2024

Packinghouse Day

September 12, 2024

Ft. Pierce



CRAFT UPDATE

The CRAFT Board of Directors recently met and voted to amend all of the Existing Tree Therapies (ETT) agreements, allowing Payment 2 to be released to growers earlier than originally stated.

The Board recognizes and understands the challenges currently facing growers related to maintaining their operations and the funding available to do so, and as such as elected to release Payment 2 following the second application of approved treatments within their CRAFT ETT projects rather than waiting until the harvest following the second treatment is complete. Staff have drafted amendments for all ETT contracts and are sending them out via email from Tamara Wood to each grower participant. If you have not received your contract amendments, please reach out to CRAFT staff.



Following the amendment, the required steps for payment 2 to be released are:

- First year's application of approved treatment.
- Harvest of fruit following first application of approved treatment.
- Submittal of first year's required treatment and harvest data to survey provided by CRAFT Foundation Inc.
- Second year's application of approved treatment.
- Submittal of second year's required treatment data to survey provided by CRAFT Foundation Inc.
- Submittal of claim form, found at the back of your contract.

Once you have signed and returned your amendment(s), please visit <https://craftfdn.org/craft-data-entry/> to enter any required data that you may have outstanding. All of the ETT surveys can be found on the CRAFT website under the "CRAFT Data Entry" tab, you can access those at any time to enter the data.



If you are entering data related to a traditional CRAFT new planting project, that data must be submitted through the CRAFT-USDA Data Portal directly. If you have any questions about how to do that, please contact Tina Buice at tina@craftfdn.org.

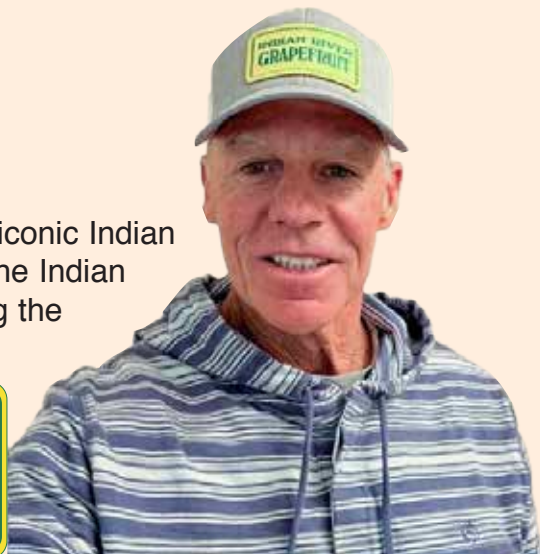
If you have any questions at all about the timing of payments or requirements, please do not hesitate to contact Tamara Wood at tamara@craftfdn.org or Tina Buice at tina@craftfdn.org.

Source: Florida Citrus Mutual

INDIAN RIVER CITRUS LEAGUE ON-LINE STORE

Come visit the League's on-line store where you will find the iconic Indian River Grapefruit tag. In addition, we have the cap featuring the Indian River Grapefruit tag patch along with other goodies promoting the world-famous Indian River citrus growing district.

Check out the store at www.irgrapefruitshop.com to order your merch!



2024-25 SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

With the 2023/2024 citrus season wrapped up, we wanted to share information on the 2024/2025 sponsorship opportunities for your budget planning purposes.

IRCL Associate Membership \$300 Annually

Newsletter Advertising Rates (publication schedule - 10 issues: Sept – June)

Full Page – color \$300 per month or \$225 w/ a monthly commitment through June

Half-Page – color \$200 per month or \$150 w/ a monthly commitment through June

Business Card – color \$60 per month or \$50 w/ a monthly commitment through June

Treasure Coast Grown Fun Shoot – January 27, 2025, at Vero Beach Clay Shooting Sports

Thank you to our partners who've already committed – **Hale Groves, Florida Coast Equipment, Everglades Farm Equipment, Wedgworth's, MVB Engineering and Farm Credit.**

Title Sponsor	\$5,000
Grapefruit Station Sponsor	\$2,000
Orange Station Sponsor	\$1,500
Lunch Sponsor	\$1,500
Shot Gun Sponsor	\$1,500
Table Sponsor	\$1,000
Coffee Bar Sponsor	\$1,000
Cattle Sponsor	\$1,000
Cart Sponsor	\$1,000
Beverage Cart Sponsor	\$750
4-Person Shoot Team	\$800

Contact Karen at 772/595-5026 or karen@ircitrusleague.org for further details on the opportunities mentioned.



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Advertising Opportunities

With the citrus season wrapped up, we wanted to share information on the new sponsorship opportunities for your budget planning purposes. Contact Karen at 772-595-5026 or karen@ircitrusleague.org for further details on the opportunities mentioned.

INDIAN RIVER CITRUS LEAGUE ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP - \$300

Newsletter Ad Specifications / Rates

- Business Card
2.833 inches across by 2 inches down
\$60/month
\$50/month w/ a monthly commitment through June
- 1/2 Page
8.5 inches across by 5.5 inches down
\$200/month
\$150/month w/ a monthly commitment through June
- Full Page
8.5 inches across by 11 inches down
\$300/month
\$225/month w/ a monthly commitment through June
- Bleed
Please allow at least 1/8" bleed.
Do not include printers marks.
- Please email all advertising materials to graphics@hirize.us
- Design services available for an additional fee

Ad Copy Specifications

Fonts

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

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.
- 72 dpi images pulled from websites are not acceptable.
- Line art should be scanned at a minimum of 600 dpi.

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), jpg (Adobe Photoshop)

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 karen@citrusleague.org.

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AgLogic Chemical
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