



# Citrus Health Response Program Update Abandoned Grove Initiative

A publication of the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Charles H. Bronson, Commissioner

Recognizing the pest and disease risks associated with abandoned citrus groves, the state has initiated a comprehensive plan for their removal and destruction. This initiative will help mitigate the impact of exotic citrus pests and diseases (namely citrus greening and citrus canker) by identifying abandoned groves and working cooperatively with county tax assessor offices and property owners regarding abatement options and tax incentives which will foster removal of these reservoirs of infection.

## Key components:

- Catalog all abandoned groves throughout the state
- Map all high-risk abandoned groves
- Contact abandoned grove owners to ask their intentions for properties
- Inform owners if their groves are not kept in production, they will not be considered part of CHRP.
- Inform owners if they eliminate live citrus trees in abandoned groves, it is considered a bona fide agricultural practice and will remain in compliance with CHRP guidelines, thus maintaining their agriculture exempt status.

*Agricultural land tax exemption* – FDACS' interpretation and position on Section 193.461(7), Florida Statutes, is that if you have a valid CHRP compliance agreement and are in good standing, then the property covered by the agreement is considered in agricultural use, thus for tax purposes is eligible for agricultural land use classification. County property appraisers in citrus-growing areas are developing policies that comply with Section 193.461(7), Florida Statutes.

Property owners with abandoned groves should contact their local CHRP office for more information (see back). Proper documentation is required by county tax assessor offices for exemption, so please contact your local CHRP office for details. If you know of abandoned groves in your area, please report the property to your local CHRP office.

### Abandoned Grove Defined:

No commercial fruit harvest during last two seasons

No production care during the past two years, including weed control and mowing

Grove use transferred to other uses (pine or livestock)



# Citrus Health Response Program Overview

## Citrus Health Response Program Mission

*Working together to produce healthy citrus*

- Ensure security of citrus germplasm and citrus nursery programs
- Support effective disease / disease vector management
- Monitor defensible phytosanitary protocol that allows fresh fruit movement to all markets
- Implement citrus nursery clean stock program

## Resources for the Industry

*Tools to support citrus*

- Compliance agreements and business plans designed to provide guidance and protect citrus
- Grower Assistance Program – decontamination training, survey assistance, self-survey and business plans
- Best Management Practices
- Participate with growers in the Business Plan Share Program

## Citrus Germplasm Introduction Program

*Important disease-free start*

- Ensures citrus germplasm is free from any known graft-transmissible pathogens
- Each variety undergoes years of intensive testing before release
- Provides approved germplasm to citrus budwood registration program
- New 20,000 sq ft facility at future Alachua County budwood site

## Citrus Budwood Registration

*Responding to disease pressures*

- Provides clean budwood to citrus industry
- Facilities located outside of citrus-growing area
- 80,000 sq ft facility in Levy County
- Redundant 60,000-sq-ft location planned in Alachua County

## Citrus Nursery Guidelines

*Providing clean stock for citrus groves*

- Rules and regulations to protect industry, 5B-62
- Geographic separation of new nurseries and groves
- Citrus nursery stock is propagated and housed in approved insect-proof structures
- All citrus nurseries are on 30-day inspection cycle
- Compliance agreements are required



## FDACS/DPI Citrus Health Response Program Offices Contact Information

### Avon Park

3397 US Hwy 27 South  
Avon Park, Florida 33825  
Phone: 863-314-5900

### Vero Beach / Ft. Pierce

8075 20th Street  
Vero Beach, Florida 32966  
Phone: 772-778-5069

### Immokalee

424 East Market Road, Unit 10  
Immokalee, Florida 34142  
Phone: 239-658-3684

### Tavares

4129 County Rd. 561  
Tavares, FL 32778  
Phone: 352-253-4547

### Winter Haven

3027 Lake Alfred Road  
Winter Haven, FL 33881-1438  
Phone: 863-298-7777

## Legend

- ★ CHRP Office Headquarters
- ▲ CHRP Office Locations

## CHRP Office Coverages

Office Name

- AVON PARK
- VERO BEACH / FT. PIERCE
- IMMOKALEE
- TAVARES
- WINTER HAVEN

