

Florida Citrus Industry Research Coordinating Council



Canker Research Task Force

Meeting Summary – May 13, 2008

A meeting of the Canker Research Task Force was held on Tuesday, November 18, 2008 at 1:30 pm at the Indian River Research and Education Center in Ft. Pierce. The following members and guests were in attendance:

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| Mark Colbert | Tim Gaver | Andy Pike |
| Rick Vachon | John Taylor | Richard Kinney |
| Doug Bournique | Calvin Arnold | Peter Chaires |
| Kevin Bynum | | |

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| Mark Ridenour | Tim Gottwald | Larry Hardie |
| Mark Estes | Dave Munyan | Courtney Forget |
| Dan Brunetti | Hamed Doostdar | Stan Carter |
| David Lowe | Michael Hornyak | Griffin Greene |
| Michael Monroe | Parker Platts | Jim Heidengyer |
| Paul Genke | Richard Gaskella | |
| John Jackson(FCIRCC) | | |

Chairman Colbert welcomed everyone and thanked them for their interest and commitment to the task force.

I. May 13, 2008 Meeting Summary

The summary of the previous meeting of the Canker Research Task Force held on May 13, 2008 was approved as posted on the web site and mailed to the task force members.

II. Old Business

A. Review of current regulatory programs

Jim Heidengyer and Mark Estes, DPI provided a brief outline of the state's canker regulatory program. DPI is responsible for compliance agreements covering growers, processors and harvesters. Jim indicated that all compliance agreements carried over from last year. Those that had an agreement and number last year had the same number for this season. Growers are told of the risks involved if they

do not follow decontamination guidelines. Enforcement of compliance agreements in the field is greatly reduced due to personnel issues.

Mike Hornyak gave an update on the packinghouse situation. Last year there was not a single canker find in fruit shipped, both domestic and foreign. This is remarkable and demonstrates the degree of inspection carried out by houses. The actual number of finds at packing houses last year was relatively small (a large percent of the finds were from one house). Again this year there is one house with a large number of finds and the rest of the industry is doing fairly well. After removing the numbers from the house with high finds the number of canker detections last year was 119 and so far there have been 99 this season (once again after removing the finds from the one house with many detections). He commented that this year there are as many finds in navels as red grapefruit! Funding for CHRP is questionable as the federal government is operating on a continuing resolution until March (same budget). Not sure what will be the situation with the new administration. Note that canker infected fruit is scheduled to be allowed to be shipped to Canada this season.

At this point Dr. Tim Gottwald commented that he had been notified that the paper dealing with canker transmission (or lack thereof with packed fruit) had been accepted for publication. He felt there would be some minor changes recommended, but the paper would be submitted very soon (before the year was over). Mr. Kinney and Mr. Bournique were extremely pleased with the news and inquired how long it would take AHIS to change the rule regarding shipment of fruit. This research will be the basis of a request to have canker classified as a grade lowering factor and to eliminate any restrictions on shipment. Mr. Kinney and Mr. Bournique indicated they would pursue the rule change vehemently!

B. California visit

Mr. Colbert summed up the California visit by stating it appears most growers are aware of greening, but have not come to grips with the fact it will arrive. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Monroe noted that California will have to make some dramatic changes in their nurseries (about half the trees are produced in the field). Those that participated felt it was most worthwhile and has opened a dialogue with regard to the citrus research process. A summary of the visit is attached to the minutes.

C. Accountability/reporting

Mr. Jackson noted that the FCPRAC web site now has a means to obtain quarterly updates on all of their funded projects. Principal investigators upload reports that are posted immediately. Anyone can obtain a status on any of the 106 funded projects. Visit <http://www.fcprac.com> and select *Reports* then Brose *Most Recent*

Reports . A listing is then provided, it may take a few minutes to find a specific report, but all projects should have a report.

III. New Business

A. CHRP Program

Richard Gaskella with Florida Department of Agriculture, Division of Plant Industries discussed how DPI uses the federal CHRP dollars for surveys, testing, research, etc. He felt the money was being well spent and essential if DPI was to stay on top of the canker situation. Mr. Gaskella passed out a CHRP Program Update to show how the dollars were being spent (a copy is attached to the minutes).

Mr. Kinney expressed concern if Florida growers tried to have the CHRP regulatory dollars shifted to research. He felt the regulatory effort was essential for fresh fruit growers and was most concerned that an effort to shift dollars could result in the loss of the funding all together. He urged all to leave CHRP dollars alone.

B. Research Update

Dr. Arnold noted that promising research had been done with mating disruption of the citrus leafminer. Scientists at USDA and IFAS are collaborating with the private sector (ISCA Technologies) to release SPLAT, a mating disruptant. Hopefully in the near future this product will be available to help growers more effectively deal with citrus leafminer. Dr. Arnold passed out an information sheet describing the work and status of the end product.

Dr. Ridenour then reviewed the work he and Dr. Jan Narciso, USDA-ARS Winter Haven lab are doing with regards to anti microbial coatings for fruit. As was reported at the previous task force meeting, these coatings offer tremendous potential and the work is moving ahead as fast as possible. Dr. Ridenour noted that a FCPRAC proposal was submitted for this year and they were optimistic it would be funded and thus allow for a more intensive effort.

C. FCPRAC Update

Mr. Pike provided information on the number of canker projects funded by FCPRAC last year. He was a strong proponent for supporting canker research and with the help of some others on the council was able to make sure canker research was supported. He provided a list of the research projects submitted for this year. He was pleased to see that work will continue with canker for this problem is more

serious for fresh fruit growers than greening (his opinion). Mr. Pike was most optimistic that canker research would continue to be well funded.

D. Transgenic trees

Dr. Mike Irey with Southern Gardens Citrus then gave a presentation on the status and challenges of obtaining genetically modified citrus trees that show some tolerance to canker and possibly greening. Southern Gardens is working with USDA and IFAS to test trees developed in Texas that have disease resistant genes inserted into several selections. Dr. Irey pointed out the time and dollars involved in getting genetically altered trees from lab to the field. It will take a concerted effort by the research institutions, growers, and regulatory agencies to expedite the process.

E. Keeping canker in the picture

The members of the task force stressed the importance of keeping canker research strong. They pointed out that for grapefruit growers canker is more of a problem than greening and research must be accelerated to find answers to the many challenges left to solve. This is one of the main goals of the task force.

Respectfully submitted,

John Jackson
Secretary