Citrus Greening Identification, Dec. 19

The Extension Service will be conducting a citrus greening identification training class at the Turner Exhibition Hall in Arcadia on December 19. The two-hour class begins at 10:00 AM and should aid growers, managers, and supervisors in the field identification of greening and procedures for getting samples tested. The hands-on training will discuss the following items:

- Greening identification from samples,
- Items that can be confused with greening,
- How to process and submit samples,
- Current distribution of greening in Florida.

To register for the class, please contact the DeSoto County Extension office at 863-993-4846. Class is limited to 40 participants.

Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, Dec. 4

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division will be conducting three free training seminars to assist farm labor contractors and agricultural employers with compliance requirements of the migrant and seasonal agricultural worker protection act. Federal and state representatives will conduct the training with special emphasis on transportation, migrant housing, as well as H2A registration information and wage and hour’s role in the enforcement of the H2A contracts. Pre-registration is not required.

All sessions begin at 5:30 PM and are scheduled for the following locations and dates:

Dec. 4, Turner Agri-Civic Center, Arcadia;
Dec. 5, Nora Mayo Hall, Winter Haven;
Dec. 6, Manatee Civic Center, Palmetto.

For more information, please contact Mike Rios at the U.S. Department of Labor, Tampa District Office at 4905 W. Laurel, Suite 300 in Tampa or by phone 813-288-1400 ext. 28.

BMP Update Information, Dec. 14

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) will be modifying a few of their rules to include nutrient management best management practices (BMPs) as a part of a BMP implementation schedule. The rules applicable to BMPs are in the Florida Administrative Code, 5M-2, 5M-5, 5M-7 and 5M-8. These rules address Indian River Citrus, Peace River Citrus, Gulf Citrus and Vegetable and Agronomic Crops statewide, respectively. Specifically, FDACS is proposing to make similar rule changes in each rule under the Notice of Intent to Implement section. The proposed change will place more emphasis on accelerated implementation of nutrient management for farmers that are currently enrolled in the BMP program.

In order to make the necessary changes, workshops have been scheduled to inform growers of this change and to seek their opinions. This will be a joint workshop, whereby both citrus and vegetable growers are encouraged to attend. The local workshop is scheduled for December 14th at 3:00 p.m. and will be at the DeSoto County Extension Service Office in Arcadia, 2150 NE Roan Street, Arcadia, Florida.
Telephone number is 863-993-4846. Additional meeting locations are in Ft. Pierce on December 14 at 9 AM and in Immokalee at 9 AM on December 15. Please try to attend this important meeting to learn more about the rules and provide your comments.

Minimum Wage Rate Increase
Florida’s minimum wage rate will increase to $6.67 per hour beginning January 1, 2007. The increase of 27 cents is to match inflation as required by the constitutional amendment approved by voters in the 2004 election. The amendment tied the state’s minimum wage to inflation, requiring adjustments which take effect on January 1 of each year. Florida’s minimum wage covers all employees covered by the federal minimum wage regulations.

FAWN Weather Information
With the approach of winter, growers can access local, real time weather information via the web or phone line for numerous locations around the state. To obtain weather information, please contact FAWN (Florida Automated Weather Network) at http://fawn.ifas.ufl.edu or by phone at 866-754-5732. The web site or phone will prompt you for the location which you are seeking weather information.

Citrus Weather Watch
Each year the Extension Service offices in Lake and Polk counties conduct a citrus weather watch. This weather watch provides weather forecasts and timely updates concerning possible freeze events. If you are interested in subscribing to the service, please contact Chris Oswalt at 863-519-8677. The recorded weather service is $100 for the season.

Critical Leaf Freezing Temperatures
Chris Oswalt, with the assistance of citrus growers around the state, is collecting data on the leaf freezing temperature for citrus. This data will be posted on the FAWN web site on a weekly basis beginning in December. To obtain the data, you will need to go to the FAWN web site at: http://fawn.ifas.ufl.edu.
Once at the location, scroll down in the page to view the chosen location.
If you would rather enter the full web address, type the following into your browser:
http://fawn.ifas.ufl.edu/scripts_crit_temp_select_guide.asp

Citrus Bud Induction
Dr. Gene Albrigo is conducting his annual citrus bud induction advisories and providing that information to growers via the web. The advisories are posted each week during the winter season to aid growers in estimating bloom periods. To view the advisories, please visit:
http://www.crec.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/fb/index.htm
To run the web based program to estimate your bloom period, please visit http://orb.at.ufl.edu/DISC/bloom
For more information about the flower bud induction program, please contact Dr. Gene Albrigo at 863-956-1151 or by email at albrigo@crec.ifas.ufl.edu.

Equipment Safety Program
Each year the Extension Service has conducted a series of separate equipment and pesticide safety trainings. In an effort to combine both of these events into one program, a safety day will be conducted on March 6, 2007. The program will offer training in both equipment and pesticide safety as well as events to allow competition between companies that include a tractor rodeo, fertilizer spread-off, herbicide shootout, and irrigation course. This event has been very successful in various counties around the state in providing necessary safety training and allows some competition between companies, thus making safety a fun event.
If you would like information on the above events, please call and I will be glad to provide you with the requirements for each of the above competitions.

Citrus Pest Management Course
Citrus Pest Management (PMA5205) will be offered at the University of Florida, Citrus Research & Education Center in Lake Alfred for the Spring 2007 term. Citrus Pest Management is a graduate-level course (3.0 credits) for students and citrus industry personnel working in the area of pest management. The course reviews the latest tactics and strategies available to manage diseases and arthropod, nematodes, and weed pests of citrus. Emphasis is given to techniques by which pests and disease organisms are monitored and how this information is
used to effectively manage pests with the least risk to the environment.

Course topics include:
- Identification and biology of citrus pests and diseases,
- Pest and disease monitoring,
- Ecological and economic principles as a basis for pest management,
- Economic thresholds and pest management models,
- Integrated pest management in citrus.

The class is conducted on consecutive Thursdays beginning on January 11 and is completed on May 11. Each session begins at 3 PM and concludes at 6 PM. Registration cost for the class is $853.32 for Florida residents. Regular and non-degree registration is Jan. 5-8 and students are strongly encouraged to register early. Students must complete the registration procedures outlined at: http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/dept_disted.htm. For more information regarding registration or class content, please contact Dr. Larry Duncan at 863-956-1151 or by email at lwduncan@ufl.edu.

Dates to remember:
Dec. 4 Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, 5:30 PM, Arcadia
Dec. 19 Citrus Greening Identification, 10 AM, Arcadia, (pre-registration required)

Sincerely,

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