



### **What's happening this quarter –**

Spring is upon us one week - and gone the next. We have experienced some cooler weather over the month of January and into February, which has helped the crop in terms of quality and color. The early fruit season is completed, and we have started to pick fresh fruit and late-season varieties. The early crop was roughly a month early, and that is holding true with the late crop. We see this as an opportunity to get the fruit off the trees prior to fruit drop. Our preliminary fruit tests show most blocks passing on the ratio needed for the juice plants, and we are waiting for them to open their doors. The cash market is strong, with prices ranging from \$2.30-\$2.40 per pound solid. We are currently in negotiations for a fruit contract with the three major players – Tropicana, Florida's Natural and Minute Maid.

### **What's happening in the grove –**

With the warmer weather through the winter time, weeds have been an issue and we just finished our first herbicide application of the year. This application cleaned up the ground and will allow our first dry fertilizer application to benefit the trees, without the weeds up taking vital nutrients. Our fertilizer program has changed slightly this year, with three dry applications planned in the months of January, March and May. Liquid fertilizer will play a larger role, with applications planned in February, April, and June along with applications through the fall in August-October. The idea behind this is to provide the trees with a constant supply of nutrients through the growing season and try to eliminate unnecessary stress. We also began our first major spray of the year in recent weeks. With the transition from colder to warmer weather, the trees are beginning to push bloom and we are ready to provide them with the nutrients necessary to set a great crop for 2016/17!

### **What's happening in the industry –**

Bactericides are the buzz word in the industry right now. We are currently waiting on EPA approval to begin using the products. Suppliers and sources in the industry believe the products will be available towards the end of February, to early March. We already have a plan in place to utilize this new tool in our toolbox to fight greening, and trial results show positive results. It is not a silver bullet, but will definitely alleviate some pressure in the short term. There have been a number of programs enacted by the state and federal governments to help citrus growers, and we are looking at all avenues of relief for our customers. These programs include the TAP program which provides assistance for removal and resetting once the removed trees hit a certain threshold, and cost-share programs providing up to 75% back on projects that will improve efficiency and environmental stewardship.

Please contact us with any questions or comments.

  
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1ST QUARTER - 2016