



**INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND
AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES**
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

**FLORIDA
COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION SERVICE**

PACKINGHOUSE NEWSLETTER

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THIRTIETH ANNUAL CITRUS PACKINGHOUSE DAY

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1991
CITRUS RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTER
700 EXPERIMENT STATION ROAD
LAKE ALFRED, FL 33850

Will Wardowski
Citrus Research and Education Center
Lake Alfred

Citrus fruit decay, peel injuries, export conditions and much more will be featured at the annual Citrus Packinghouse Day scheduled Thursday, September 5, 1991 with registration beginning at 8:30 AM and the program beginning at 9:30 AM. Tickets for lunch may be purchased at registration. There is no meeting registration fee and reservations are not required.

Equipment displays will be in the afternoon. Exhibitors are encouraged to register soon. Phone (813) 956-1151 for W. Miller or W. Wardowski to obtain an exhibitor registration form.

There will be fewer morning presentations in order to allow more time for each speaker. Your comments about the presentations and any other aspect of the meeting will be carefully considered for future years.

FLORIDA CITRUS POSTHARVEST DECAY CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS

Will Wardowski
Citrus Research and Education Center
Lake Alfred

Citrus decay, like taxes, is always with us. Different types of decay occur at different seasons and some are worse on certain varieties. Each season is unique, and yet each season is somewhat predictable. You can expect *Diplodia* stem-end rot during the degreening season, mold during the cool winter months and sour rot late in the season. Yes they occur at other times, but are most prevalent at these times.

Our decay control recommendations are found in Circular 952 (see Available Publications). The recommendations cover topics of humidity control, sanitation, fungicides, and refrigeration. Among these, fungicide availability is the only variable. We have recently lost one postharvest fungicide and are in the process of losing another. That leaves only three registered fungicides for use in the United States. A letter this month from someone in another country questioned why we don't recommend the use of two postharvest fungicides which they use. The answer is, of course, that they are not approved for use here.

Prospects for approval of the new postharvest fungicides are slim. The combination of very high costs for tests and red tape for registration makes the task difficult. Attempts have been made for approval of other postharvest fungicides in the United States, and we will inform you if any new one obtains a use label.

The best use of humidity control, sanitation, and refrigeration, therefore, becomes more important because of limitations on fungicides. Also, careful harvesting and handling are very critical to delivering sound citrus to the markets.

If you want to know the details of our recommendations, request the new publication. Also, a 21-minute slide-tape presentation on citrus decay and blemishes is now in our library. You are welcome to stop by and view this presentation.

A RESPONSE TO ANTI-PESTICIDE HYSTERIA

Bill Grierson, Professor Emeritus
Citrus Research and Education Center
Lake Alfred

Few readers of this newsletter will need to be reminded of the shattering financial losses to U.S. (and Canadian) apple growers, packers and dealers occasioned by the totally unjustified campaign against Alar by Meryl Streep and her followers in the National Resources Defense Council. Citrus exports were adversely affected when an unfounded rumor emanated from Korea to the effect that Florida grapefruit carried residues of Alar.

Alar was, and continues to be, a generally innocuous growth regulator, but it is hard to get that message over to the public when its detractors have hired a national public relations company to tell the public that Alar is giving their children cancer.

No one knows which agricultural chemical or which horticultural industry will be the next victim to be crucified on the cross of ill-informed do-gooderism. So it behooves each and every one of us to know where to turn for accurate information on potential pesticide hazards. For this we can rely on the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST). This is an organization of 29 associations of agricultural scientists, including the American Society for Horticultural Science (to which I and most other horticultural scientists belong) and the International Society of Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology (the worldwide association of scientists who evaluate potential toxic hazards from foods, drinks, and drugs).

CAST has published a very authoritative, very conservative, brief (15 page) report explaining, in layman's language, just how pesticide residues are regulated and the methods used to keep individual and accumulative pesticide residues well below levels that might be expected to cause cancer or any other illness.

This CAST report (see Available Publications) is recommended reading for anyone willing to speak up in rebuttal to misinformation. Misinformation, with no scientific justification whatsoever, destroy the livelihoods of individuals who depend for their living on growing, packing or selling whatever fruit or vegetable is targeted next. We all need to be able to fight back with the truth whenever we get the chance to do so.

AVAILABLE PUBLICATIONS

Available from Dr. W. Wardowski, CREC, 700 Experiment Station Road,
Lake Alfred, Florida 33850

Postharvest Decay Control Recommendations for Florida Citrus Fruit:
1991, by W. F. Wardowski and G. E. Brown. IFAS, Univ. of Fla.,
Fla. Coop. Exten. Serv. Circ. 952.

Concerning Pallet Boxes, by W. Grierson. The Citrus Industry
71(10):54-56, October, 1990.

Mr. Bean's Box Still Haunts Us, by W. Grierson. The Citrus
Industry 72(1):47-50, January, 1991.

Regulation of Acid Hydrolysis of Sucrose in Acid Lime Juice Sac
Cells, by Ed Echeverria. Physiologia Plantarum 81:51-54.

Available from the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology,
137 Lynn Avenue, Ames, IA 50010-7197

Pesticides and Safety. Comments from CAST 1990-1. \$4.00.