

# Introduction to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

## Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement



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- FDACS agricultural inspectors began inspecting citrus fruit shipments in 1935 as mandated by Florida statute.
- Inspections were conducted to ensure that all shipments of citrus complied with standards established by the Florida Citrus Commission and the US Department of Agriculture.
- Originally, most stations were staffed by local citizens, generally farmers, looking to supplement their income.
- Stations were often housed in tents and used kerosene lanterns for lighting. Inspectors used their own vehicles to chase down those failing to stop.
- In 1951 the inspection stations began operating 24 hours a day, year round and inspected fruits and vegetables.



Tick inspection station, Baker County, circa 1930.



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1959 – Legislature created the Road Guard section within the Division of Inspection. It later became the Bureau of Road Guards.

1975 – Legislature created s. 570.15 FS, giving the personnel within the Road Guard Bureau the authority to inspect certain vehicles and making the inspectors “Special Road Guard Officers”. They attended a limited police standards training school which ultimately enabled them to carry firearms.

1981 – Required full Police Standards Training.

1992 – The Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement was created.

2002 – Received full law enforcement authority.



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The Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement was awarded accredited status by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Association in June 2007 and re-accredited in June 2010, 2013, 2016 and 2019.



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OALE employs 240 sworn personnel assigned to two bureaus:

- Investigative Services
- Uniform Services



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Florida's protected agricultural area consists of all counties south of the Suwannee and St. Mary's Rivers.

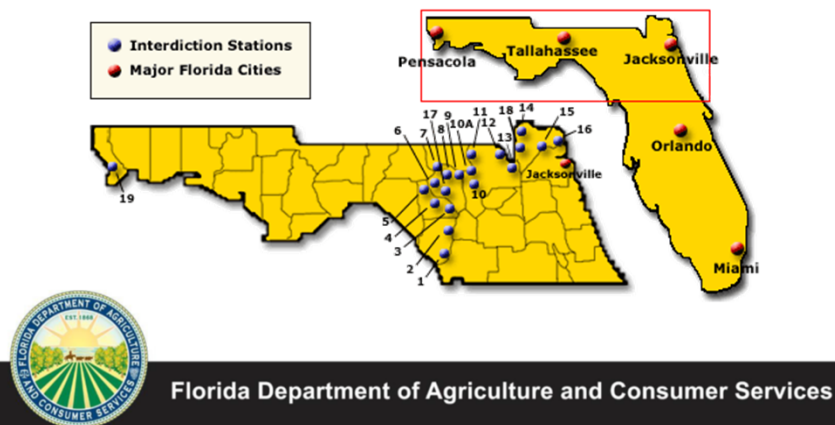


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The Bureau of Uniform Services has four operational regions and 23 inspection stations located in North Florida and the Panhandle.

The stations are located on every paved highway crossing the natural boundary of the Suwannee and St. Mary's Rivers.



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Inspections are conducted at  
each location around the clock,  
365 days a year.



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### Core Mission

Officers conduct inspections of agricultural, horticultural, livestock and aquacultural products to ensure compliance with FDACS regulations, Federal and State Marketing Agreements and Florida laws.



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### Transporting Requirement

Marketing Order Clearance  
Certificates (MOCCs)

<https://www.fdacs.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Fruit-and-Vegetables/Agricultural-Marketing-Orders-FAQ>



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## Transporting Requirement

Quarantine Paperwork

<https://www.fdacs.gov/Divisions-Offices/Plant-Industry/Agriculture-Industry/Citrus-Health-Response-Program/Citrus-Quarantine-and-Disease-Detection-Maps>



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## Transporting Requirement

Quarantine Paperwork

Citrus plants or plant parts (except USDA inspected and certified fruit) from other states, territories or countries may not enter Florida. Citrus plants may leave Florida only if certified by USDA and originating from a nursery operating under compliance with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). Each citrus plant must be individually tagged at the nursery, and identity of the plant and the nursery must be maintained throughout movement to final destination. See [Rule Chapter 5B-62](#), Florida



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### Seeking Violations



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### Seeking Violations



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## BLITZES

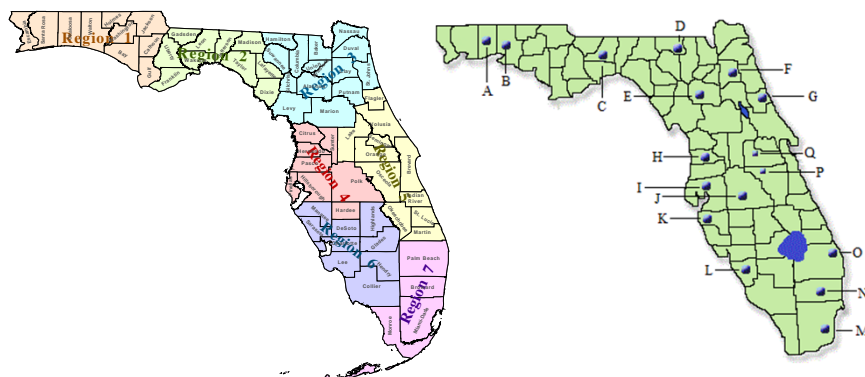


OALE saturates a Region/Interdiction Station with officers, DPI personnel, USDA personnel, DAI personnel, Food Safety personnel, FWC officers to amp up inspections.



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The Bureau of Investigative Services operates with seven regions and has 17 field offices.



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## Bureau of Investigative Services Types of Consumer Complaints and Cases Investigated

- Security Guard Certifications
- Motor Vehicle Repair Fraud
- Charitable Solicitations
- Telemarketing
- Wildland Fires
- Aquaculture
- Timber Theft
- Pet Lemon Law
- White Collar Crime
- Skimmers
- Food Safety



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## Emergency Response Teams

The Bureaus work closely with local, state, and federal agencies, providing investigative assistance and support as needed.

- Domestic Security Task Force
- Emergency Response Team (along with FWC and FHP)
- Security Services for events such as FTAA and Super Bowl



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## OALE Contact Information

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