



# CITRUS RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION GROWER RESEARCH REPORT

Volume 5, Issue 3

December 2015

## CRDF to Define Role in the Future

Over the next two months, the Citrus Research and Development Foundation will continue an intensive strategic planning process designed to provide the organization with a refined focus going forward as the Florida citrus industry battles HLB.

The CRDF has engaged the Business Talent Group (BTG) to manage the process which includes extensive interviews with CRDF Board members, growers and other stakeholders. The goal is to undertake an updated and vetted process to define CRDF focus, planning, budget allocations, organization and stakeholder engagement for the next 6 years.

“The CRDF has clearly moved away from funding basic research to product development because we need to find bridge solutions and get them to the field while longer term solutions are sought,” said Harold Browning, chief operating officer of the CRDF. “This is a healthy process and will give us a roadmap as the fight against HLB enters its next phase.”

In preliminary interviews BTG identified low stakeholder engagement as an issue and said the CRDF should seek to improve industry participation beyond researchers and select growers. BTG also reported the CRDF may need to broaden its expertise to include experts on commercial product development.

BTG stated the multi-tiered goals of the strategic planning process include:

- Determining a project planning process that has a greater probability of achieving viable solutions in a faster time-frame.
- Identifying key projects to be prioritized over others and redirect resources accordingly.
- Aligning the Program Management function and Commercial Product Development function to have a revamped and more focused process.
- Creating an engagement/incentive plan for the industry and stakeholders – With global players, industry consortiums, regulators and large agricultural companies.
- Communicating results and getting buy-in on new strategy from CRDF committees and stakeholders in time for 2016-2017 planning.

The CRDF is scheduled to unveil the findings of the strategic planning at its February Board meeting.

## Upcoming Board & Committee Meetings

Most meetings are held in the Ben Hill Griffin Hall at the UF-IFAS, CREC campus in Lake Alfred, Florida.

1/26/16 - Board of Directors Annual Mtg. 9:30 am

## EPA Expected to Render Decision on Bactericides by Early Next Year

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is now reviewing the Florida citrus industry’s request to grant Section 18 Emergency Exemptions to two bactericides shown to decrease the HLB bacteria in infected trees.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services sent the Section 18 packet to the EPA in early December. Traditionally the review takes about 90 days which would place approval sometime in late February.

“We will get an indication fairly early on whether EPA has issues with the packet,” said Dan Botts of Third Party Registrations Inc. which is assisting CRDF on the request. “They will let FDACS know what direction they want us to go.”

The EPA will pore over data submitted by the CRDF regarding maximum application rates and timing of the bactericides - Firewall® (streptomycin), Fireline® (oxy-tetracycline) and Mycoshield® (oxy-tetracycline). As part of the process, the EPA will split the request into different pieces to evaluate the bactericides human effects, biological effects and economic analysis. The EPA will also consider the occupational, ecological and environmental risks.

AgroSource and Nufarm Americas are the private registrants on the bactericides. Botts said he expects a public comment period prior to any Section 18 exemption being granted.

To learn more about the Section 18 process go to <http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/pesticide-emergency-exemptions>



## New Search Engine Allows Growers Easier Access to Progress Reports

Growers can now more easily access CRDF Research Progress Reports dating as far back as 2008 by using the new CRDF Report Web App.



The new search engine allows growers to browse all progress reports, view the most recent reports, or search by keyword.

The search engine can be found under the 'Grower' tab on [www.citrusrdf.org](http://www.citrusrdf.org).

## CRDF Hires Program Assistant

Dr. Mariana Mansur joined CRDF in November as a Program Assistant, filling the position vacated earlier in the year by Diane Johnson. Mariana has extensive experience in accounting and financial management, having been employed for a decade by the United Nations Development Program. At UNDP, Mariana provided accounting and reporting management for a portfolio of UNDP-sponsored projects. Her hire brings additional capability to the staff in managing the CRDF portfolio.



More than 65 growers gathered at the Citrus Research and Development Foundation's Themothepy Field Day in early December to observe two prototype steamers treat citrus trees infected with HLB. The event took place at Polk County groves operated by Wheeler Farms. The machines were engineered by Premier Energy of Woodstock, GA., a private firm that specializes in industrial steam equipment and Reza Ehsani of UF-IFAS. Everyone agreed that visually the trees treated this spring looked good. However, final data on the increase in yields will not be available until after this season. Preliminary data handed out at the field day indicated the steam is having a positive effect. Scientists are still determining the best temperature and exposure time to knock back the HLB bacteria without causing tree damage as well as how long treatments will last. Ehsani has often said therothepy will provide growers with a viable therapy if it clearly increases yields and the revenue exceeds the cost.



*Photos courtesy of Premier Energy*