



Citrus Research and
Development Foundation, Inc.

CRDF received a lot of questions and comments following the afternoon educational session at the Indian River Citrus Show January 28 focused on bactericides. Several presentations on this topic provided updates on ongoing field and greenhouse experiments, generating discussion and interest in how these materials might be helpful in maintaining the health of infected citrus trees. Of particular interest was a presentation comparing 12 candidate bactericides in field trials, and providing preliminary evidence for effects on bacterial titer (PCR results).

Since the meeting, additional discussions have occurred between growers, ag-chem suppliers, and those involved in conducting the research, which is funded in part by CRDF. We at CRDF have sought clarification on the extent to which the preliminary data emerging from these trials can be used to make management decisions as growers plan for the 2016 growing season.

CRDF feels it appropriate to encourage a degree of caution in interpreting the preliminary results from this work, especially as it relates to incorporation of these candidate tools into seasonal plans. Some considerations that have come from the discussions are:

- The field trials involving the 12 bactericidal candidates are in their first year, and data presented at the Show represented results 4 and 8 months after treatment. Applications were begun in April 2015
- The field trials are evaluating bactericides, alone or in combination with thermal therapy and supplemental nutritional treatments
- Each site has 4, single-tree replicates for each of the 48 treatment combinations, and these treatments are being applied to young trees with moderate infection.
- No yield or fruit quality data have been collected from this trial to date
- The three trial sites are grapefruit in the Indian River, and thus results may not be representative of what might be expected on oranges or other scions, on older trees ages, or in other parts of the state.
- Data emerging from the first year of this two-year test have not been subjected to analysis, and the presentation provided an overview of results across the bactericide alone and in combination with thermal treatment and nutritional. Individual effects of these treatments have not yet been separated from the overall results.

With the above considerations, you are encouraged to exercise caution in making treatment inferences from these preliminary results. Those conducting the research agree with the general statement that at this point, there is no way to predict commercial performance of materials tested in these field trials with data that have emerged to date. This is true for grapefruit trees, the target of these trials, but even more so for orange trees in other regions of the state. Since the



trials involve young trees, it also is difficult to predict how these materials might perform on older, larger, more chronically infected trees.

CRDF continues to support the field evaluation of HLB treatments and management practices so that growers will have access to the best possible tools, and will communicate results that will provide confidence in implementing emerging tools. Please contact Stephanie Slinski, Bactericide Project Manager or Harold Browning, COO if you have questions.

