

## CRDF Rootstock Trials Call for Grower Cooperators

**February, 2021**

The Citrus Research and Development Foundation (CRDF) is establishing a new project with the objective of evaluating the most promising citrus rootstocks in grower field trials, which are projected to be planted in the spring or summer of 2022. The goal of the new trials will be to identify plant material with the traits needed by growers to realize the highest possible pounds solids per acre and increased tree viability in the HLB era.

The CRDF rootstock trials will be large-scale field trials assessing new rootstock varieties in the final phase of evaluation. Trials will be scientifically designed and set up for powerful data analysis to identify the best performing varieties. Sixteen rootstocks have been chosen for evaluation based on superior performance in small-plot field trials.

Of these 16 rootstocks, some of the new plant material will have been previously unavailable for commercial use and others will be known rootstocks which will be used as a standard for comparison. There will be 3 scions used: Valencia 1-14-19, Vernia UF 35-15, and Hamlin 1-4-1. These scions will be combined with the 16 rootstocks resulting in 48 rootstock/scion combinations. Each rootstock scion combination will be replicated 5 times for a total of 240 plots in the trial. Each plot will have 20 trees per rootstock/scion combination. The total complement of trees for each trial site is 4,800. At about 200 trees per acre, each site will require about 24 acres.

Below is a list of all the candidate rootstocks for this project:

<b>USDA Candidate Rootstocks</b>	<b>IFAS Candidate Rootstocks</b>	<b>Testable Rootstocks</b>	<b>Standard Rootstocks</b>
US 1282	UFR 5	US 812	X 639
US 1283	Orange 14	C 54	US 942
US 1281	Blue 1		Kuharski
US 1279			Swingle (sour on the east coast)
US 1284			
US 1516			
Super Sour 2			



A critical aspect of any research trial is the identification of growers willing to host a trial site. Initially CRDF will require three trial sites for this project. The goal is to identify grower cooperators willing to host a trial in each of the three eco-regions of the Florida citrus industry (Ridge, East Coast, and Flatwoods).

Growers selected to host a trial would be provided trees at no cost and a supplement for tree planting and installation of tree wraps. CRDF personnel and subcontractors would require regular access to the field trial planting to conduct evaluations, plant tissue and soil sampling, tree canopy rating, and per plot yield evaluation once the trees reach bearing age. In addition, CRDF will plan and conduct an annual Field Day at a selected site to disseminate data. As well, the data will be shared on the [citrusrdf.org](http://citrusrdf.org) web site.

Grower cooperators would be expected to uniformly apply production inputs to support the trees from establishment through to mature tree production. Production practices are expected to conform with UF-IFAS recommendations for irrigation, drainage, fertilization and pest control. No special treatments would be allowed in the trial which could possibly invalidate the rootstock trial data.

Growers interested in participating and hosting a trial site should submit a letter with their contact information, site location, soil type and acreage available by email to [catp@citrusrdf.org](mailto:catp@citrusrdf.org).

