

CRDF Scion Trials Call for Grower Cooperators

April, 2023

The Citrus Research and Development Foundation (CRDF) is establishing new field trials to evaluate new citrus scions that may have elevated tolerance to HLB. The trials are to be planted in late 2023 or the spring of 2024. The goal of the 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 scion trial will be a Stage 1 field trial assessing new genotypes, most of which have not been fully evaluated and do not have sufficient “resumes” to be completely confident of success, which is why caretaking compensation to grower-cooperators is prescribed. Nevertheless, they have been selected by growers and scientists for these trials because of their potential.

Trials will be scientifically designed for powerful data analysis to identify the best performing varieties. One rootstock (US 942) will be used in this project. There are 29 scions that will be evaluated, four of which are industry standards (Hamlin 1-4-1, Vernia UF 35-15, Valquarius, and Valencia 1-14-19).

Of these 29 scions, most will be plant material not previously available for commercial use and others will be commercially available but with little to no existing knowledge of performance. Of these scions, one is graft incompatible with US 942 and will instead be grafted to US 812. Each rootstock/scion combination will be replicated five times for a total of 145 plots in the trial. Each plot will have five trees per rootstock/scion combination. The total complement of trees for each trial site is 725. At a planting density of 200 trees per acre, each site will require approximately 3.6 acres.

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

R26-T14	C4-7-29	Ftp.6.58.87
R26-T10	UFGNV0187	Ftp.6.58.90
N 13-32 Hamlin	R25-T2 Vernia	FF.B1.SH.7.28
OLL 13W-4-13	R25-T12 Vernia	FF.1.79.1
OLL 13W-9-33	N 14-10 Hamlin	Parson Brown F56-2
OLL 13W-1-12	Sun Dragon	Carney Orange 229-2
1859	FF 1-89-11	Carney Orange 229-3
SF 11-1-24	FF 5-6-36	Hamlin 1-4-1
Valencia UF 6-2-55	Ftp.6.58.35	Vernia UF 35-15
Valquarius LTUF SF 14W-62	Valencia 1-14-19	

A critical aspect of any research trial is the identification of growers willing to host a trial site. CRDF will need two trial sites for this project.

Growers selected to host a trial would be provided trees at no cost and a per acre supplement of \$2,000 annually for caretaking. CRDF personnel and subcontractors would require regular access to the trial site

to conduct tree 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 web site.

Grower cooperators would be expected to uniformly apply production inputs to support the trees from establishment to mature tree production. Production practices are expected to conform with UF-IFAS recommendations for irrigation, drainage, fertilization and pest control. No special treatments (such as injecting oxytetracycline) would be allowed in the trial since this could frustrate the purpose of identifying the scions that are the most tolerant of HLB.

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 by May 1, 2023.

