

Grower Trials Report # 3 – Posted November 2, 2006

From RC 'Rick' Vachon, Production Manager, Packers of Indian River Regarding grove experience in Charlotte County FL

Variety: Grapefruit

When the eradication program halted in January, 2006, many Growers like myself were faced and still faced with the agonizing decisions of where do we start and what do we do first, and what do we follow up with. I am happy to report that even though we have made some mistakes, We have decreased the incidence of Canker in some blocks and held the Canker from spreading in other blocks.

Our approach:

All of the below is done at the driest time of day:

1. Survey as often as you can to detect where canker is (we are on an every row, every 30 day schedule) Don't forget strict Decontamination!
2. Determine how intense the find is (Is it 1, 5 or 10 trees infected ?) Try to determine how it got infected (Top of tree, down low)?
3. Remove canker immediately (pick leaves, prune twigs, defoliate ?) Don't forget strict Decontamination, during the removal process!
4. Map the trees infected if you can (we are using block graph paper), You will appreciate the fact that you can go back to THE tree or tree's
5. Follow up immediately with a Canker Suppression spray. (Below you will find what we have found to be best in our eyes right now and still looking)
6. Follow up, Survey these hot spots every 14 days, remove infected leaves etc. (Then follow #2 thru #6 procedures)

Canker Removal: Our Experience

1. If infection is on a high percentage of foliage and trees in a block (Pick dry conditions and hedge and top, your trying to cut it off). Follow up with Oxidate @ 1 gallon per 100 gallons of water with 4# to 6# copper hydroxide, spray both sides of trees and slow.
2. If infection is on a low percentage of foliage and very few trees, pull, cut with clippers, etc., Bag and Burn and follow up with spray above.
3. If infection is very spotty here and there, spot spray to defoliate. We started using 4 oz. of CS2005 per gallon of water and got mixed results, we then used 5 oz, and mixed results, then went to 6 oz. and what you spray will fall off. We found that adding a surfactant is useful if following an Oil application as the defoliant wants to bead off of the leaves.

General Caretaking: Our Experience

1. Decontaminate personnel and equipment like you never did before. (Make and Follow a stringent Policy for Hedgers, Pickers, etc.)
2. Set a Policy for your Grove for moving about only in dry conditions (or the driest you can and still get work done)
3. Canker Maintenance Spray program: If canker is on 10 trees on the west 1/4 of a 100 acre block, treat the west 1/2 of the block as if it all had canker by adding to your regular spray program (for us it is Oxidate @ the rate of 2.5 gallons per 1000 gallon tank, plus copper hydroxide at 3 to 4 pounds per acre.
4. If you, like I are growing a canker susceptible variety like Grapefruit, include low rate, frequent applications of copper.
5. Take advantage of Fall and Winter (normally the driest months) to survey your groves and vigilantly remove all of the Canker you can prior to

Spring. Spring is the worst time of the year to remove canker because there is so much susceptible foliage (new flush not hardened off yet) .
6. Take advantage of dry periods and add some days to your normal spray intervals (I know this sounds wrong, but if you have no young flush the foliage hardened off is not susceptible to canker) Normally Fall and Winter.

Special Note: Does anyone know of a somewhat inexpensive product, labeled for Citrus that will control Leafminer? I have not found one yet, and if we do not control Leafminer it is going to make Canker control less effective.

Summary: I hope this helps someone, I hope to learn from this page. I Thank, Jerry Newlin, Barbara Carlton and Gary Cooper for making this happen.

I strongly encourage Growers to come forward, take the time to share your experience. I have been hearing rumors that some growers have found that other products show great promise. Please share your Experiences. We can survive in the presence of Canker only if we come together as a unified group.

Thanks, Rick Vachon (Production Manager)