Florida growers face a host of complex issues, including:
- rising land prices
- unpredictable weather/climate variability
- labor concerns
- competition from foreign markets
- new food safety regulations
- a steady stream of new pests and diseases

UF/IFAS Extension provides research and science-based educational programs to tropical fruit growers, grove managers, and industry representatives in South Florida to help increase the industry’s sustainability, profitability, and competitiveness.

**Florida’s Tropical Fruit Growers**

- 25 different fruit crops are grown in South Florida, including avocados, mango, lychee, and longans
- 1,600 commercial tropical fruit growers

**UF/IFAS Extension Tropical Fruit Program**

- 67% of growers work with tropical fruit only part-time or have limited horticultural backgrounds.
- 437 tropical fruit growers in Miami-Dade County attended 16 UF/IFAS Extension workshops on horticultural practices and tropical fruit production in 2015.
- 77% reported practice changes, including improved pruning and planting techniques, choosing better cultivars, and better grafting practices.
- $2,300 reported average income gain – a potential gain of $775,000 for all attendees.

**Battling Pests and Diseases**

- 11,000+ avocado trees have been killed or removed in the past 5 years as a result of LAUREL WILT DISEASE. UF/IFAS educators and researchers offer training and services that have significantly reduced the spread of this disease.
- $4.1 million in tropical fruit losses due to ORIENTAL FRUIT FLY in 2015-2016. Quick and decisive action by UF/IFAS, USDA and FDACS contained the outbreak, potentially saving growers a further $19 million in losses.

**Florida’s Tropical Fruit Industry**

- 25 different fruit crops are grown, including avocados, mango, lychee, and longans
- 1,600 commercial tropical fruit growers
- $1.8 billion in value to the state

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