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.

$1.8 billion in value to the state.