Coming in Fall 2006

Visit the model grove of the future, designed for mechanical harvesting, at the University of Florida's SWFREC Demonstration Site, Immokalee.

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Citrus Mechanical Harvesting

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IFAS

High Headed Nursery Trees: Preparing for the Future of Mechanical Harvesting

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June 2006

Grower Advantages of Planting High-Headed Trees Suitable for Mechanical Harvesting:

- Grower gets a larger tree requiring less care after planting.
- Tree begins fruiting sooner because it is larger and older when planted.
- Because structure of tree is modified from the beginning, skirting is easier to maintain.
- Cost of preparing trees for mechanical harvesting is reduced or eliminated.
- Irrigation pattern not affected by low hanging branches and more uniform water distribution.
- Irrigation emitters easier to check for clogging and make repairs.
- Better distribution of fertilizer, both dry applications and fertigation.
- Better uniformity of herbicide applications without injury to low vegetation.
- Lower harvesting costs in the long term when trees become productive.

Plant High-Headed Trees– Accept No Substitute

- **Cost of nursery trees in the future**… About $8.00- $10.00
- **Cost of labor to hand harvest a grove for juice**… More than you can afford to pay
- **Value of planting high-headed nursery trees and harvesting fruit mechanically**… Giving your children a future in citrus

Criteria and Standards for High-Headed Nursery Trees

- Trees should be headed at 24 inches.
- Requires a clean, straight trunk to accommodate fruit catch frame and if using trunkshaker machine needs 15 to 18 inch zone above the bud union.
- Current practice of budding at 4 to 6 inches for the bud union is suitable.
- Tree should be able to stand on its own without staking when planted in the grove and this will require a trunk diameter of about ⅝ to ¾ inch.