



**THE FLORIDA SENATE**  
**SENATOR BEN ALBRITTON**  
*President*

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**Senate Unveils Make Citrus Great Again Budget Proposal**

**Tallahassee**—The Florida Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government, chaired by President Pro Tempore Jason Brodeur (R-Sanford), today released its proposed budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The Committee’s proposed budget includes \$200 million in key funding for Florida’s heritage citrus industry, a priority of Senate President Ben Albritton (R-Wauchula). This proposal will be included in Senate Bill 2500, the General Appropriations Act, the Senate’s balanced budget proposal for the upcoming fiscal year.

“Mark my words, Florida citrus is not going down on my watch. This heritage industry is not only vital to our state’s economy, but it is truly a part of the DNA of Florida. To those growers who are left in the business, hear me when I say, you are not forgotten, you are not alone, and the Florida Senate is running to this fight,” said President Albritton. “Research and new technologies offer a renewed hope for the future of citrus. Florida will lead the way in pursuing these opportunities. We’re on the edge of something special. Florida Citrus is making a comeback, one tree at a time.”

“Preserving and expanding our iconic citrus industry is key to Florida’s overall economy. Citrus production, harvesting, packing and shipping creates steady, good-paying jobs in rural, heritage communities across Florida’s Heartland. These are small, family-run operations that have a generational impact on local economies. We won’t stand by as these jobs are lost to foreign countries. Our citrus industry will adapt and overcome the current obstacles and challenges, and come back better and stronger,” said President Pro Tempore Brodeur.

**Large Scale Field Trials**

The budget includes \$190 million to request a proposal for large scale field trials that demonstrate the impact of utilizing a combination of grove management, therapeutic tools, and disease resistant varieties for new plantings and the rehabilitation of existing trees, including, but not limited to, grove design, planting preparation, pest management, disease management, pest and disease exclusion structures, and post planting production practices that promote increased production of citrus.

### **Acquisition of Trees**

A minimum of \$125 million (of the \$190 million) will be made available for costs directly associated with the acquisition of trees. Initially, 60 percent of the funds will be made available to growers who have citrus groves of at least five acres but less than 2,500 acres. After the initial solicitation period, remaining funds will be available to all growers. A maximum of two percent of the funds, not to exceed \$2 million may be used by the entity administering the program for direct operational and staffing costs.

### **Statewide Public Meetings and Reporting on Citrus Research**

The Citrus Research and Development Foundation must hold quarterly meetings at locations that best represent all geographic regions of the state with an emphasis on citrus production. The public meetings must include reporting on the results of non-confidential completed research projects, current research and planned research projects on citrus disease, including but not limited to citrus canker and citrus greening. Scientists, growers, industry representatives, and Citrus Research and Development Foundation administrators must be represented at the public meetings. Public meetings must provide the opportunity for public input, questions and comments.

### **Cost Share for Rehabbing and Purchasing Citrus Packing Equipment**

Additionally, the budget includes \$10 million for the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to provide 80 percent cost-share funding to citrus packinghouses for equipment refurbishment, adoption of new technology, or purchasing new equipment. To be eligible, a packinghouse must be in operation, located in Florida, and provide a cost share of 20 percent of the cost to purchase or repair the equipment.

For more information, please visit [www.FLSenate.gov](http://www.FLSenate.gov).

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