

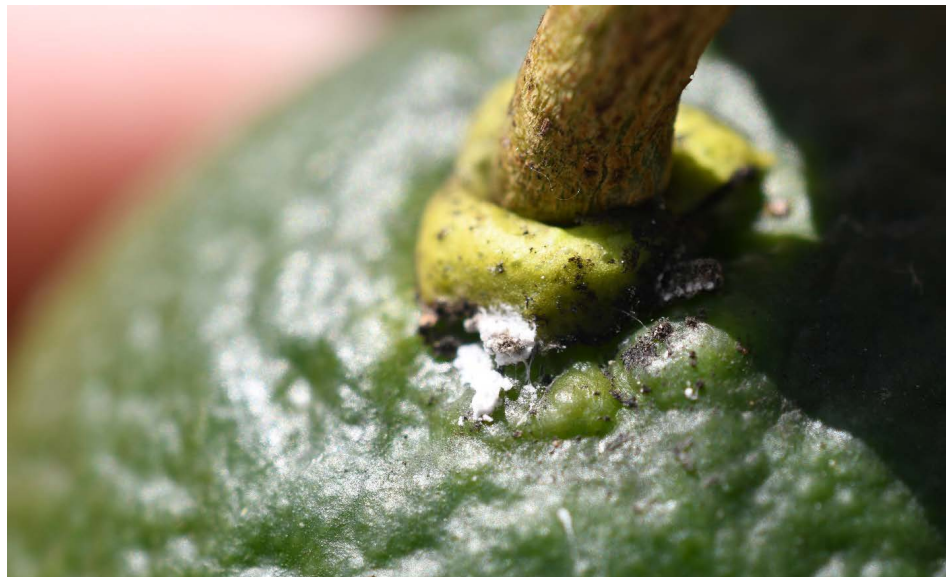
Lebbeck Mealybug Seasonal Population Development

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We sampled lebbeck mealybug populations in eight commercial citrus groves in Central Florida. We started this study in January 2021. From January through late February 2021, we observed low to zero mealybug population densities in all citrus groves sampled in Central Florida. Populations of immature lebbeck mealybugs increased in late March and adult females emerged in late

April 2021. Ovisacs were observed attached to reproductively mature adult females in early May 2021. Egg production and crawler populations increased exponentially in late May 2021. We observed that mealybugs were more likely to be located around the calyx of fruit. They feed on the developing citrus fruit causing premature fruit abortion and/or fruit necrosis

in two weeks which will result in yield loss. When we compared the mealybug population development to citrus phenology, we observed that increased egg production coincided with beginning of fruit set in April 2021. This study is ongoing but provides basic information on early season population development that can be used to help develop management plans.

Funding

