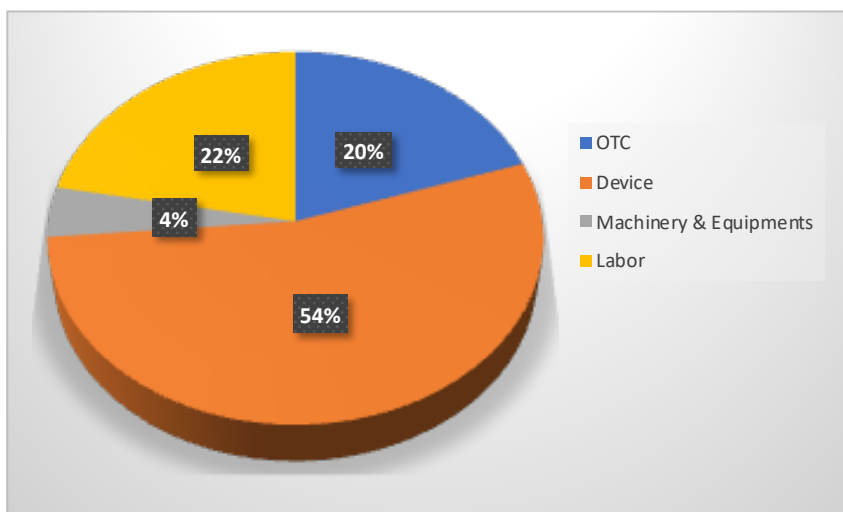


Oxytetracycline Injections in Citrus: Cost Estimates for Early Adopters

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Take Home Message:

- Preliminary results indicate it costs \$1.14/tree or \$150-\$200/acre to inject OTC in citrus trees, depending on tree density.
- OTC injection cost can account for 8%-10% of the total cost of producing oranges.

Summary: The Florida citrus industry has been devastated by the huanglongbing (HLB) or citrus greening disease since it was first detected in August 2005. Significant research was undertaken to develop technologies that facilitate better delivery of bactericides, including antibiotics to suppress the HLB-

causing *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* (CLAs) bacterium populations in citrus trees. Using trunk injections for bactericide application was found to be superior to sprays since trunk injection is more effective in reducing concentrations of CLAs and does not cause input run-offs. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services gave citrus growers Special Local Needs approval to inject Oxytetracycline Hydrochloride (OTC) in citrus trees. In this study, we estimate the costs of adopting OTC applications in orange trees. We ask growers about their practices and the associated costs and take weighted

averages of the costs considering the tree densities of their groves. Cost estimates include the costs of the OTC product, costs of injection devices, costs of machinery and equipment, and labor wage rates. Preliminary results indicate it costs \$1.14/tree or \$150-\$200/acre, depending on tree density, to apply OTC using trunk injection. This cost accounts for 8%-10% of the total cost of producing oranges. Among the major cost groups, device cost constitutes almost 54% of the total cost, while labor and OTC costs are 22% and 20% of the total costs, respectively.

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