

Current Research Objectives

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Research topic: Biotechnology-Facilitated Conventional Breeding of HLB Tolerant Commercial Scions

Primary Research Objective(s): 1. To develop HLB tolerant processing sweet oranges or sweet orange/mandarin hybrids that have quality juice amenable to pasteurization; 2. To develop HLB tolerant commercial quality, seedless fresh fruit selections competitive in the national and international markets (includes orange-like, mandarin, grapefruit/pummelo, and acid-citrus hybrids) .

Research Goal: Commercial release of processing and fresh scions that can be grown sustainably and profitably in an HLB-endemic environment.

Outcomes to date: We have identified several true sweet orange clones from various sources showing potential enhanced tolerance to HLB; these are being large-scale tested via a MAC project. Our breeding pipeline contains numerous hybrids that produce high quality fruit and are showing SugarBelle-type or better HLB tolerance; each year we expect to identify additional HLB tolerant selections with commercial quality. Currently we are there are an increasing number of commercial plantings of UF-developed HLB tolerant selections, including SugarBelle and seedless, easy-peel tangerine 950.

Funding source for this objective(s): CRDF, NVDMC, USDA-MAC