

Summary of 2022/23 Central Florida (Ridge) and Indian River-Southwest Florida Citrus Custom Rate Charges

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This report presents the results of a survey conducted by mail during December 2022 among Florida citrus caretaking companies to collect data on their custom rate charges during the 2022/23 season. Cooperatives, their members, and growers performing their own cultural practices were not included in the survey. Therefore, this report refers to grove practices that growers may contract out. The custom rates for growers who are members of such cooperatives or the costs for growers who conduct their own cultural practices may differ from the rates reported below.

Twelve caretakers participated in the survey this season. From the total number of participants, seven were citrus caretakers and service providers from Central Florida (Ridge), one was from the Indian River, and one was from the Southwest Florida region. The other three caretakers serviced two or three regions and the data they provided was used for their reported regions. Eight participants reported servicing a total of 53,685 acres, which accounts for approximately 14% of the total citrus acreage in Florida (USDA-NASS, 2022).

The average custom rate charges for the Central and the combined Indian River and Southwest Florida regions are presented in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. Tables are organized by program; each with an itemized list of grove practices. The tables also include the minimum and maximum rates reported for each practice.

Comparative data from previous seasons, additional information on citrus budgeting and cost analysis, harvesting charges, packing charges can be obtained at UF|IFAS CREC Economics Extension website: <https://crec.ifas.ufl.edu/economics/>.

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Table 1. Listing of 2022/23 custom rates reported by Central Florida citrus caretakers.

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
Cultivation and Equipment²				
Backhoe	Hour	25.00	130.00	74.70
V-Mower	Hour	15.00	52.65	33.83
Rotovate	Hour	25.00	65.00	45.92
Ant Bait Application with ATV (bait not included)	Hour	30.40	45.25	37.83
Scouting for Diseases and Pests	Hour	26.60	75.00	50.80
ATV with Driver	Hour	20.00	45.25	31.41
ATV with Driver for Imidacloprid Soil Drench Application	Hour	28.00	45.25	34.03
Flatbed Truck with Driver	Hour	39.10	50.00	44.55
Pickup Truck with Driver	Hour	35.00	76.75	46.83
Tractor with Driver	Hour	38.70	75.00	58.18
Water Supply Truck with Driver	Hour	38.90	50.50	46.47
General Labor ³	Hour	16.00	26.75	21.04
Mechanic Labor ³	Hour	45.00	85.00	60.00
Mechanic Labor with Truck	Hour	60.00	85.00	72.00
Weed Management²				
Disc 7 - 8'	Hour	49.50	49.50	49.50
Disc 7 - 8'	Acre	14.00	21.95	17.98
Disc 9 - 10'	Hour	41.40	50.00	45.70
Disc 9 - 10'	Acre	14.00	21.95	17.98
Disc 11 - 12'	Acre	21.95	21.95	21.95
Bush Hog	Hour	44.95	55.00	49.98
Mow 5 - 7'	Hour	44.95	50.00	47.48
Mow 5 - 7'	Acre	15.00	19.95	16.98
Mow 8 - 12'	Hour	16.50	52.65	38.05
Mow 8 - 12'	Acre	15.00	27.00	19.24
Mow 13 - 16'	Acre	14.50	19.95	16.49
Chopping	Hour	40.45	40.45	40.45
Herbicide Strip/Band (Single Boom)	Hour	47.40	47.40	47.40
Herbicide Strip/Band (Single Boom)	Acre	16.00	27.00	19.50
Herbicide Strip/Band (Double Boom)	Hour	68.00	68.00	68.00
Herbicide Strip/Band (Double Boom)	Acre	15.00	17.75	15.95
Chemical Mow	Hour	68.00	68.00	68.00
Chemical Mow	Acre	15.00	27.75	21.38

Table 1. Listing of 2022/23 custom rates reported by Central Florida citrus caretakers (cont'd).

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
Spraying Air Blast Sprayer Without Electronic Sensors⁴				
<u>PTO Powered (1,000 gallons tank)</u>				
50 to 99 GPA	Acre	22.25	23.50	22.88
100 to 124 GPA	Acre	23.50	23.50	23.50
125 to 149 GPA	Hour	23.50	37.75	30.42
150 to 249 GPA	Hour	30.00	30.00	30.00
250 to 500 GPA	Hour	30.00	36.00	33.00
Spraying Air Blast Sprayer With Electronic Sensors⁴				
<u>PTO Powered (1,000 gallons tank)</u>				
16 to 25 GPA	Acre	17.50	18.00	17.75
50 to 99 GPA	Acre	20.00	27.00	21.75
100 to 124 GPA	Acre	28.00	31.00	29.50
125 to 149 GPA	Hour	76.90	76.90	76.90
150 to 249 GPA	Hour	76.90	76.90	76.90
250 to 500 GPA	Hour	76.90	76.90	76.90
Aerial Application²				
Fixed Wing 5 to 9 GPA	Acre	10.50	10.50	10.50
Fixed Wing 10 to 15 GPA	Acre	15.50	15.50	15.50
Fixed Wing > 15 GPA	Acre	20.50	20.50	20.50
Irrigation²				
Start/Stop, System Supervision	Hour	23.50	37.20	30.35
Start/Stop, System Supervision	Run	30.00	45.00	36.50
Maintenance of Drip System	Hour	22.00	22.00	22.00
Maintenance of Microsprinkler System	Hour	18.00	27.40	22.86
Drainage System and Canal Management²				
Water Furrow Disc	Hour	41.40	65.00	53.20
Water Furrow Cleaner	Hour	41.20	41.20	41.20
Ditch Bank Mower	Hour	35.00	44.45	39.73
Ground Herbicide Application	Hour	40.00	50.00	45.75

Table 1. Listing of 2022/23 custom rates reported by Central Florida citrus caretakers (cont'd).

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
Fertilizer Application and Soil Amendments²				
Injection of Liquid Fertilizer into Irrigation System	Hour	23.50	51.20	41.57
Injection of Liquid Fertilizer into Irrigation System	Acre	2.00	10.00	4.31
Fertilizer (every middle)	Hour	77.20	77.20	77.20
Fertilizer (every middle)	Acre	10.50	27.00	15.74
Fertilizer (every other middle)	Acre	9.50	15.00	10.90
VRT Spreader (every middle)	Hour	89.90	89.90	89.90
VRT Spreader (every middle)	Acre	15.00	15.00	15.00
Hand Spread (Young Trees)	Hour	16.00	29.50	22.78
Fertilizer Spreader (Young Trees)	Hour	37.50	49.80	44.10
Lime or Dolomite Application	Acre	13.75	27.00	18.80
Pruning²				
Tree Skirting (single side)	Acre	22.00	22.00	22.00
Tree Skirting (single side)	Hour	80.00	150.00	115.00
Hedging (double side)	Acre	20.00	25.00	22.50
Hedging (double side)	Hour	80.00	290.00	176.67
Topping	Acre	28.00	35.00	31.50
Topping	Hour	125.00	290.00	207.50
Push brush out of the grove	Hour	68.00	85.00	76.60
Chop Brush	Hour	40.45	40.45	40.45
Mow Brush	Hour	44.95	70.00	54.98
Front-end Loader	Hour	68.00	95.00	79.00
Tree Removal and Disposal²				
Tree Pushing	Hour	68.00	85.00	76.60
Tree Clipping	Hour	68.80	80.00	75.56
Hauling Clipped Tree out of the grove	Hour	68.00	85.00	76.00
Herbicide spray tree stump	Hour	28.65	30.00	29.33
Tree Resetting and Care²				
Tree Site Preparation ⁵	Hour	47.75	47.75	47.75
Tree Planting and First Watering ⁶	Hour	22.00	26.75	24.38
Tree Wrap Installation ⁶	Hour	18.00	26.75	21.20
Sprouting and Pruning	Hour	18.00	29.70	23.63
Spot Herbicide Application	Hour	20.00	44.00	30.17
Neonicotinoids Drench Application (Psyllid Management)	Hour	26.75	30.40	28.38
Slow Release Fertilization	Hour	20.00	27.00	22.67

Table 1. Listing of 2022/23 custom rates reported by Central Florida citrus caretakers (cont'd).

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
Grove Management²				
Grove Care Supervision	Acre/Month	2.50	4.00	3.25
Chemicals and Fertilizers Handling/Supervision	Percent	8.00	20.00	14.33
Marketing and Fruit Handling	Box	0.10	0.20	0.15

¹Calculated by averaging the total number of data points reported.

²Rates include labor and equipment.

³Rates only include labor.

⁴Rates are based on every middle application.

⁵Includes disk and/or rotovate tree site.

⁶Does not include tree cost.

Table 2. Listing of 2022/23 custom rates reported by Indian River & Southwest Florida citrus caretakers.

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
Cultivation and Equipment²				
Backhoe	Hour	55.00	80.00	67.50
V-Mower	Hour	85.00	85.00	85.00
Rotovate	Hour	60.00	60.00	60.00
Scouting for Diseases and Pests	Hour	80.00	80.00	80.00
ATV with Driver	Hour	21.00	36.00	29.50
ATV with Driver for Imidacloprid Soil Drench Application	Hour	21.00	31.50	26.25
Pickup Truck with Driver	Hour	48.00	58.00	53.00
General Labor ³	Hour	18.00	32.00	24.50
Mechanic Labor ³	Hour	45.00	75.00	63.33
Mechanic Labor with Truck	Hour	75.00	120.00	90.00
Weed Management²				
Disc 7 - 8'	Hour	60.00	80.00	70.00
Mow 13 - 16'	Hour	100.00	100.00	100.00
Mow 13 - 16'	Acre	16.00	20.00	17.50
Herbicide Strip/Band (Single Boom)	Acre	16.50	18.50	16.13
Herbicide Strip/Band (Double Boom)	Hour	112.00	112.00	112.00
Herbicide Strip/Band (Double Boom)	Acre	16.00	20.00	17.50
Chemical Mow	Acre	2.00	8.00	5.00

Table 2. Listing of 2022/23 custom rates reported by Indian River & Southwest Florida citrus caretakers (cont'd).

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
<u>Spraying Air Blast Sprayer With Electronic Sensors⁴</u>				
		<u>PTO Powered (1,000 gallons tank)</u>		
100 to 124 GPA	Acre	28.00	35.00	31.50
125 to 149 GPA	Acre	38.00	38.00	38.00
150 to 249 GPA	Acre	46.00	46.00	46.00
250 to 500 GPA	Acre	54.00	54.00	54.00
<u>Irrigation²</u>				
Start/Stop, System Supervision	Hour	23.50	75.00	46.17
Maintenance of Microsprinkler System	Hour	21.00	23.50	22.25
Maintenance of Microsprinkler System	Acre	9.00	9.00	9.00
<u>Drainage System and Canal Management²</u>				
Water Furrow Disc	Hour			
Water Furrow Shaper	Hour	120.00	150.00	135.00
Rotary Ditcher or Auger	Hour	60.00	60.00	60.00
Ditch Bank Mower	Hour	75.00	115.00	95.00
Track Hoe	Hour	125.00	130.00	127.50
Ground Herbicide Application	Hour	60.00	112.00	86.00
<u>Fertilizer Application and Soil Amendments²</u>				
Injection of Liquid Fertilizer into Irrigation System	Hour	23.50	40.00	31.75
Fertilizer - every middle	Acre	15.00	15.00	15.00
Fertilizer - every other middle	Acre	15.00	15.00	15.00
VRT Spreader - every other middle	Acre	12.00	13.00	12.50
Hand Spread (Young Trees)	Hour	21.00	23.50	22.25
Lime or Dolomite Application	Hour	195.50	195.50	195.50

Table 2. Listing of 2022/23 custom rates reported by Indian River & Southwest Florida citrus caretakers (cont'd).

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
Pruning²				
Tree Skirting - single side	Acre	22.00	32.00	27.00
Hedging - double side	Acre	20.00	30.00	25.00
Topping	Acre	35.00	44.00	39.50
Push brush out of the grove	Hour	100.00	100.00	100.00
Push brush out of the grove	Acre	450.00	450.00	450.00
Front-end Loader	Hour	75.00	105.00	90.00
Tree Removal and Disposal²				
Tree Pushing	Hour	80.00	105.00	92.50
Tree Clipping	Hour	105.00	105.00	105.00
Grinding Tree in place	Hour	250.00	250.00	250.00
Grinding Clipped Tree	Hour	250.00	250.00	250.00
Hauling Clipped Tree out of the grove	Hour	95.00	95.00	95.00
Tree Resetting and Care²				
Tree Planting and First Watering ⁵				
Solid set block	Tree	1.65	1.65	1.65
Tree Wrap Cost ⁵				
Solid set block	Tree	0.35	0.35	0.35
Tree Wrap Installation ⁵				
Solid set block	Tree	0.25	0.25	0.25
Tree Wrap Installation ⁵	Hour	21.00	21.00	21.00
Sprouting and Pruning	Hour	21.00	22.00	21.50
Spot Herbicide Application	Hour	22.00	31.50	27.83
Neonicotinoids Drench Application (Psyllid Management)	Hour	31.50	32.00	31.75
Slow Release Fertilization	Hour	20.00	21.00	20.50
Grove Management²				
Grove Care Supervision	Acre/Month	4.00	8.25	5.31
Chemicals and Fertilizers Handling/Supervision	Percent	10.00	30.00	20.00
Marketing and Fruit Handling	Box	0.10	0.25	0.18

¹Calculated by averaging the total number of data points reported.

²Rates include labor and equipment.

³Rates only include labor.

⁴Rates are based on every middle application.

⁵Does not include tree cost.

References

USDA-NASS. 2022. Commercial Citrus Inventory.