

2022/23 Average Packing Charges for Florida Fresh Citrus

Ariel Singerman, Associate Professor and Extension Economist
University of Florida, IFAS CREC, Lake Alfred, Florida

In this report, we summarize the data collected from Florida fresh citrus packers regarding their packing charges during the 2022/23 season. This season four packinghouses participated in the survey including operations in the Ridge and Indian River regions. The average of their responses was computed to obtain the estimates presented below. It is worth noting our estimates correspond to packing charges, not packing costs. These estimates are useful for computing on-tree prices from delivered-in prices, which in turn are useful for computing growers' economic returns.

The charges by citrus variety are shown in Table 1. For grapefruit, the 2022/23 average Packing Charge, Industry Assessment, and Sales Charge were \$7.006, \$0.199, and \$0.584 per carton, respectively, whereas for oranges, the charges were \$7.299, \$0.192, and \$0.583 per carton, respectively. The charges for tangelos were \$7.685, \$0.194, and \$0.617 per carton, respectively, and for tangerines, they were \$8.559, \$0.199, and \$0.610 per carton, respectively. The Total Packing Charge by variety is calculated by adding across those three categories.

Table 1 also shows the estimated charges for Drenching, Packinghouse Eliminations, and Hauling Charge for Eliminations. The charges for Drenching were \$0.300 per field box for grapefruit, oranges, tangelos and tangerines, whereas the charges for Packinghouse Eliminations were \$0.850 per field box for all citrus varieties.

Table 2 provides a comparison of the 2022/23 packing charges to those of 2015/16 through 2021/22. To make the estimates comparable across seasons, the Packing Charge, Industry Assessment, and Sales Charge for the last three seasons were added together.

Industry stakeholders have been facing multiple challenges due to Huanglongbing (HLB, citrus greening), such as decreasing yields and production, lower quality and fruit size, and higher tree mortality rates. As a consequence of the decrease in the state's supply of fresh citrus, the number of packinghouses has declined significantly in recent years. The estimates in this report document the changes in packing charges as the industry adapts to remain profitable. For additional information on citrus budgeting and harvesting charges, please visit the University of Florida, IFAS, CREC Economics Extension website at <https://crec.ifas.ufl.edu/economics/>.

Table 1. Estimated Average Packing Charges for Florida Fresh Citrus, 2022/23

	Grapefruit	Oranges	Tangelos	Tangerines ³
	-----\$ per Carton -----			
Packing Charge ¹	7.006	7.299	7.685	8.559
Industry Assessment ²	0.199	0.192	0.194	0.199
Sales Charge	0.584	0.583	0.617	0.610
Total	7.790	8.073	8.495	9.368
	-----\$ per Field Box -----			
Drenching Charge	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.300
Packinghouse Elimination Charge	0.850	0.850	0.850	0.850
Hauling Charge for Eliminations	0.659	0.659	0.643	0.694

¹Packing Charge includes the following items:

1. Materials including labels/PLUs (Price look-up codes).
2. Includes supervisor/foreman labor, grading, shipping and general labor. Includes payroll taxes (FICA), workers' compensation, insurance, etc.
3. Other direct packing costs include: fruit treating; power, lights and water; repair/maintenance; miscellaneous supplies; etc.
4. Indirect packing costs include such items as: insurance-fire and casualty; taxes and licenses, depreciation and rent.
5. General and Administrative (G&A) costs include: office personnel (FICA, with compensation); packinghouse and general manager; office supplies; telephone; etc.

²Industry Assessment includes: Advertising taxes, Inspection fees, Florida Citrus Packers tax, and a Citrus Administrative Committee (CAC) tax.

³Starting in 2016/17, Temples have been reclassified as Royal Tangerines by the USDA.

Table 2. Comparison of Average Packing Charges for Florida Fresh Citrus by Season

	Season	Grapefruit	Oranges	Tangelos	Tangerines ²
		-----\$ per Carton -----			
Total Packing Charge ¹	2022/23	7.790	8.073	8.495	9.368
	2021/22	6.425	6.987	7.235	8.041
	2020/21	6.214	6.534	7.303	7.606
	2019/20	5.915	6.263	5.993	7.118
	2018/19	6.167	6.436	6.512	7.295
	2017/18	5.587	5.927	6.458	7.263
	2016/17	5.173	5.402	5.597	6.489
	2015/16	5.565	5.767	6.060	6.958
		-----\$ per Field Box -----			
Drenching Charge	2022/23	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.300
	2021/22	0.286	0.286	0.283	0.316
	2020/21	0.288	0.288	0.288	0.288
	2019/20	0.270	0.270	0.267	0.292
	2018/19	0.283	0.283	0.290	0.290
	2017/18	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250
	2016/17	0.317	0.354	0.354	0.382
	2015/16	0.211	0.213	0.213	0.210
Packinghouse Elimination Charges	2022/23	0.850	0.850	0.850	0.850
	2021/22	0.960	1.220	1.288	1.660
	2020/21	0.634	0.634	0.738	0.634
	2019/20	0.904	0.964	0.733	0.962
	2018/19	0.608	0.608	0.600	0.600
	2017/18	0.738	0.738	0.738	0.738
	2016/17	0.623	0.625	0.630	0.630
	2015/16	0.747	0.789	0.813	0.876
Hauling Charge for Eliminations	2022/23	0.659	0.659	0.643	0.694
	2021/22	0.576	0.592	0.670	0.626
	2020/21	0.490	0.493	0.574	0.553
	2019/20	0.588	0.588	0.690	0.593
	2018/19	0.511	0.533	0.600	0.567
	2017/18	0.578	0.588	0.684	0.650
	2016/17	0.547	0.577	0.615	0.610
	2015/16	0.566	0.557	0.645	0.676

¹Total Packing Charges include Packing Charge, Industry Assessment, and Sales Charge as defined in Table 1.

²Starting in 2016/17, temples have been re-classified as royal tangerines by the USDA. In the past, temples were grouped with tangelos.