

CITRUS

A Step Closer To Abscission

photo courtesy of Oxbo International

An Experimental Use Permit will be submitted to the EPA this year for CMNP, an abscission agent that will aid in mechanical harvesting of citrus.

Research is demonstrating that efficacy is promoted by uniform coverage of the agent throughout the canopy.

The 2009-2010 citrus-harvesting season will be an anticipating time for the research and development of the abscission compound, CMNP. Having shown to be the best candidate for loosening sweet oranges, it will gain much attention from the Florida citrus industry, as its registration progresses through EPA testing protocols.

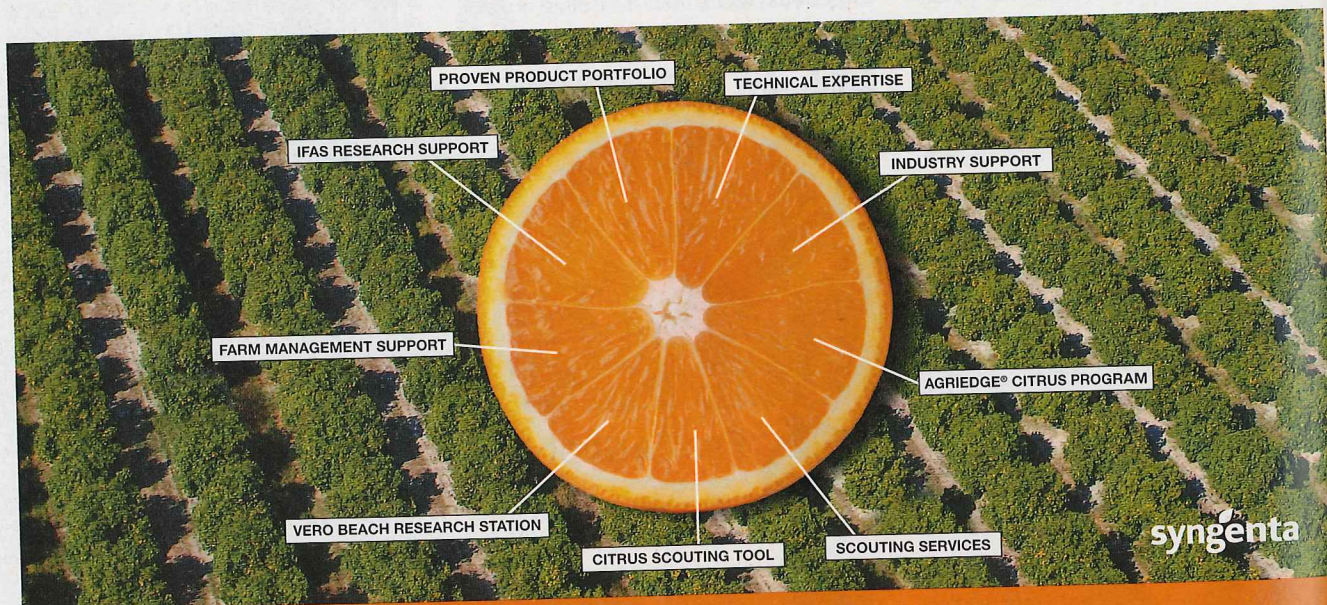
Early Efforts

Early abscission efficacy studies to identify compounds that would aid mechanical harvesting were first conducted with funding from USDA in the late 1960s. That support was lost in the 1970s due to lack of funding for the

development of "labor-saving" technology in agriculture. Additionally, severe freezes in the 1980s significantly reduced Florida citrus production and bearing acreage, and interest in mechanical harvesting research and development waned. In the late 1990s, however, interest in abscission compounds for mechanical harvesting emerged again due to the shortage and expense of field labor.

Improving Harvesting

The Florida Department of Citrus' Citrus Harvesting Research Advisory Council initiated long-term funding for research on abscission compounds and mechanical harvest-



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