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**BRIEFING MEMORANDUM FOR THE PROCESSING STATISTICS REPORTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE FLORIDA CITRUS COMMISSION**

**FROM:** Marisa L. Zansler, Director, Economic and Market Research Department

**SUBJECT:** Release of Post Estimate Fruit Reports 2025-26 Season, FCC Discussion, Legal Counsel Opinion, and Direction

## ISSUE:

At its March 18, 2026 meeting, the Florida Citrus Commission, after public discussion and advice from General Counsel, Kristie Hatcher-Bolin, confirmed the official date defining "post-estimate" for the 2025-2026 citrus season as the initial USDA citrus crop forecast released and published on January 12, 2026. The October 9, 2025 scheduled forecast was not released or published due to a Federal government shutdown. Under this clarification, and there being no qualifying post-estimate fruit contracts reported from processing facilities, the third and final Audited Post Estimate Fruit Price Report for the 2025-26 early-midseason was released on March 24, 2026. The final report reflects zero reported boxes and corresponding prices for non-Valencia fruit.

## PROCEDURE:

Rule 20-3.007, Florida Administrative Code, establishes the reporting requirements for Post-Estimate Price Reports. The rule requires licensed citrus fruit dealers engaged in processing to submit weekly data beginning after USDA's initial crop estimate release and publication, regardless of volume reported, and the Department must compile and publish audited reports at designated harvest thresholds.

Specifically, Rule 20-3.007(2) requires reports to be filed weekly regardless of reporting volume, and Rule 20-3.007(4)(a) requires the Department to compile and publish audited Post-Estimate Price Reports at established harvest milestones.; and

20-3.007(3) states that data "*is reported only for fruit for which a contract has been executed after the release of the initial USDA Crop Estimate for the current fruit season* (generally released in October of each year) (Emphasis added)." It is important to note that the initial USDA Crop Estimate for the 2025-26 season was officially released on January 12, 2026.

Rule 20-3.007(3) requires Post Estimate details to be reported in three pricing categories for early & mids, Valencia and Red/Pink and White grapefruit:

(a) Category 1: Final prices known week of delivery;

(b) Category 2: Intermediate prices week of delivery with a defined index for known rise and final payment is based accordingly; and,

(c) Category 3: Intermediate prices with final price not known week of delivery, only boxes are reported.

## REQUIRED DEPARTMENT ACTION:

At the March 18, 2026 meeting, the Commission voted to release the third and final Audited Post Estimate Fruit Price Report for the 2025-26 early-midseason in accordance with Rule 20-3.007, F.A.C. The audited report was issued on March 24, 2026, following audit verification of input forms submitted by processing facilities.

Because there were no qualifying post estimate fruit contracts, the audited report reflects zero fruit boxes and no associated prices to report for non-Valencia oranges. Consistent with Rule 20-3.007 requirements, the Department is required to publish the audited report regardless of number of boxes reported to maintain continuity and transparency in the reporting series.

In alignment with the Commission's direction at the March 18, 2026 meeting, the Department will convene a meeting of the PSRAC to evaluate and recommend contingency criteria for future seasons in which timing of the initial USDA citrus crop estimate or other disruptions may affect the standard reporting practices.

## SUMMARY

This memorandum documents the Commission's clarification and the Department's compliance in releasing audited post-estimate fruit price reports in a season with no qualifying post-estimate fruit contracts.

Reporting and auditing activities remain ongoing for the remainder of the season. Post-Estimate reports will be issued as qualifying boxes are received and verified in accordance with Rule 20-3.007, F.A.C.

The Commission further seeks discussion and advice from the Processing Statistics Reporting Advisory Committee (PSRAC) to review the purpose for the Post-Estimate fruit price reports, current provisions of the rule and potential rulemaking that contemplates changes in the USDA citrus crop forecast structure, timing and availability, and to recommend contingency criteria for circumstances in which federal or other disruptions delay the release of the USDA initial citrus crop forecast.


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