

Florida Department of Citrus Rules for Organic Grove Registration and Fruit Movement ¹

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Effective August 1, 2003, certified organic citrus growers in Florida are required to register their groves and use approved trip tickets when moving fruit. According to established Department of Citrus Rules (20-39.017), all certified organic groves placing fruit into commercial channels must be registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture, Division of Fruit and Vegetables, License and Bond, and registrations must be renewed each year by August 1.

Grove Registration

Required grove documentation includes: current organic certification by a USDA accredited certifying agent; organic certificate number; name of the grove property owner; the grove location referenced in Global Positioning System coordinates; citrus varieties grown; and an estimate of current season production in field boxes.

Transportation of Fruit

A trip ticket issued by the Florida Department of Agriculture, Division of Fruit and Vegetables must accompany organic fruit transported on state

highways. These tickets, filled out before fruit is hauled, must list the name of the USDA-approved certifying agency, organic certificate number, grove owner, handler, trailer number, and driver's name. Copies of this ticket must be given to the grower or dealer, the harvester, and to the scale operator or receiver at the load destination.

Loads made up of lots from different groves must be accompanied by trip tickets from each grove, and the grower name, grove name, and grove location must be indicated. Such loads must also be labeled as mixed loads. However, when loads of organic fruit are mixed at a packing house or other location, a single trip ticket can be used for subsequent fruit movement. But the fruit dealer doing the mixing will be responsible for maintaining the above described trip tickets for each separate fruit load that was delivered to his or her facility. Furthermore, organic fruit cannot be commingled or mixed with nonorganic fruit.

These Rules provide federal penalties of up to \$10,000 per violation for anyone who knowingly sells or labels a product as organic in violation of the

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Federal Organic Food Production Act and/or the USDA National Organic Program.

These rules will sharpen local definition of already established national standards and, in providing accurate records of organic citrus production, could improve both domestic and international marketing of organic fruit.

Additional Information

The specific rules related to organic citrus grove registration (20-39.017) and fruit transport (20-2.002 and 20-2.003(6)) can be found at <https://www.flrules.org/>. Enter the rule number of interest (as shown here) in the “By Rule Number” search box and click “go.”

For more information on grove registration or to acquire a trip ticket, visit the Florida Department of Agriculture, Division of Fruit and Vegetables Web site at <http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/fruits/>.

The National Organic Standards can be found at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/NOP/>.