

Summary of 2018/19 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 2018 among Florida citrus caretaking companies to collect data on their custom rate charges during the 2018/19 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.

Twenty-one caretakers participated in the survey this season, giving a response rate of 28%. From the total number of participants, seven were citrus caretakers and service providers from Central Florida (Ridge), two were from the Indian River, and three were from the Southwest Florida region. The remainder nine caretakers serviced two or three regions, and the data they provided was used for both reported regions. Participants represented 100,062 acres, which accounts for approximately 22% of the total citrus acreage in Florida. When also considering the area serviced by participating aerial spraying companies, the acreage represented in the survey increases to 124,062, approximately 28% of the state's citrus area (USDA-NASS, 2019).

The average custom rate charges for the Central and Indian River – 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 UFIFAS CREC Economics Extension website: <https://crec.ifas.ufl.edu/economics/>.

Table 1. Listing of 2018/19 custom rates reported by Central Florida citrus caretakers.

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
Cultivation and Equipment²				
Backhoe	Hour	56.00	80.00	71.50
V-Mower	Hour	42.50	42.50	42.50
V-Mower	Acre	12.00	13.00	12.67
Rotovate	Hour	28.00	85.00	55.20
Ant Bait Application with ATV (bait not included)	Hour	27.50	35.00	31.25
Scouting for Diseases and Pests	Hour	25.50	25.50	25.50
ATV with Driver	Hour	12.00	40.00	26.15
ATV with Driver for Imidacloprid Soil Drench Application	Hour	17.00	35.00	27.08
Flatbed Truck with Driver	Hour	25.00	41.50	32.67
Pickup Truck with Driver	Hour	25.00	45.00	36.25
Tractor with Driver	Hour	25.00	75.00	41.25
Water Supply Truck with Driver	Hour	17.50	37.00	28.17
General Labor ³	Hour	13.50	20.00	17.01
Mechanic Labor ³	Hour	25.00	60.00	48.14
Mechanic Labor with Truck	Hour	25.00	85.00	60.50
Weed Management²				
Disc 7 - 8'	Hour	36.00	65.00	50.50
Disc 7 - 8'	Acre	9.50	13.00	11.17
Disc 9 - 10'	Hour	35.50	85.00	54.17
Disc 9 - 10'	Acre	9.50	15.50	12.33
Bush Hog	Hour	36.50	50.00	41.63
Mow 5 - 7'	Hour	36.50	37.50	37.00
Mow 8 - 12'	Hour	38.00	42.50	40.25
Mow 8 - 12'	Acre	11.50	17.00	13.93
Mow 13 - 16'	Acre	11.50	16.50	14.00
Chopping	Hour	34.70	65.00	49.85
Herbicide Strip/Band (Single Boom)	Hour	41.50	41.50	41.50
Herbicide Strip/Band (Single Boom)	Acre	14.00	20.00	16.38
Herbicide Strip/Band (Double Boom)	Hour	60.00	60.00	60.00
Herbicide Strip/Band (Double Boom)	Acre	13.00	16.50	14.72
Chemical Mow	Acre	1.50	8.00	5.13
Chemical Mow	Hour	60.00	60.00	60.00

Table 1. Listing of 2018/19 custom rates reported by Central Florida citrus caretakers (cont'd).

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
Spraying Air Blast Sprayer With Electronic Sensors⁴				
		PTO Powered (1,000 gallons tank)		
16 to 25 GPA	Acre	15.00	15.00	15.00
50 to 99 GPA	Acre	15.00	26.00	20.30
100 to 124 GPA	Acre	25.00	35.00	28.93
125 to 149 GPA	Acre	27.50	29.00	28.25
150 to 249 GPA	Acre	30.00	30.00	30.00
250 to 500 GPA	Acre	35.00	35.00	35.00
Aerial Application²				
Fixed Wing 5 to 9 GPA	Acre	6.50	6.50	6.50
Fixed Wing 10 to 15 GPA	Acre	9.75	9.75	9.75
Irrigation²				
Start/Stop, System Supervision	Hour	30.00	41.50	36.67
Start/Stop, System Supervision	Run	17.00	50.00	32.00
Maintenance of Drip System	Hour	15.00	17.15	16.08
Maintenance of Microsprinkler System	Hour	15.00	24.50	18.53
Drainage System and Canal Management²				
Water Furrow Disc	Hour	35.50	44.00	39.83
Ditch Bank Mower	Hour	35.00	35.00	35.00
Fertilizer Application and Soil Amendments²				
Injection of Liquid Fertilizer into Irrigation System	Hour	35.00	41.50	39.17
Injection of Liquid Fertilizer into Irrigation System	Acre	2.00	5.00	3.24
Fertilizer (every middle)	Acre	9.50	15.00	12.44
Fertilizer (every other middle)	Acre	7.50	9.50	8.50
VRT Spreader (every middle)	Acre	9.50	15.50	12.62
VRT Spreader (every other middle)	Acre	7.25	12.50	9.21
Hand Spread (Young Trees)	Hour	13.50	32.50	21.23
Fertilizer Spreader (Young Trees)	Hour	30.00	45.00	38.30
Lime or Dolomite Application	Acre	8.00	15.00	12.42

Table 1. Listing of 2018/19 custom rates reported by Central Florida citrus caretakers (cont'd).

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
Pruning²				
Hedging (double side)	Hour	275.00	300.00	287.50
Topping	Hour	275.00	300.00	275.00
Push brush out of the grove	Hour	60.00	75.00	68.75
Chop Brush	Hour	24.00	100.00	50.93
Mow Brush	Hour	24.00	125.00	56.25
Front-end Loader	Hour	60.00	95.00	71.88
Tree Removal and Disposal²				
Tree Pushing	Hour	60.00	95.00	72.50
Tree Clipping	Hour	65.00	80.00	70.00
Hauling Clipped Tree out of the grove	Hour	60.00	95.00	73.75
Herbicide spray tree stump	Hour	16.00	30.00	24.13
Tree Resetting and Care²				
Tree Site Preparation ⁵	Hour	38.00	38.00	38.00
Tree Planting and First Watering ⁶				
1 to 5 trees per acre	Tree	3.00	3.33	3.17
6 to 10 trees per acre	Tree	3.00	3.33	3.17
11 to 25 trees per acre	Tree	3.00	3.33	3.17
26+ trees per acre	Tree	2.50	3.33	2.92
Solid set block	Tree	2.00	2.00	2.00
Tree Wrap Installation	Hour	16.25	16.25	16.25
Sprouting and Pruning	Hour	13.50	22.50	18.04
Spot Herbicide Application	Hour	23.00	30.00	26.83
Neonicotinoids Drench Application (Psyllid Management)	Hour	25.00	27.50	26.25
Slow Release Fertilization	Hour	13.50	32.50	21.91
Grove Management²				
Grove Care Supervision	Acre/Month	2.00	7.00	4.13
Chemicals and Fertilizers Handling/Supervision	Percent	5.00	25.00	12.50
Marketing and Fruit Handling	Box	0.10	0.20	0.14

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 2018/19 custom rates reported by Indian River & Southwest Florida citrus caretakers.

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
Cultivation and Equipment²				
Backhoe	Hour	60.00	75.00	68.75
V-Mower	Hour	53.00	75.00	64.00
V-Mower	Acre	13.00	17.00	14.40
Rotovate	Hour	65.00	85.00	75.00
Ant Bait Application with ATV (bait not included)	Hour	35.00	35.00	35.00
Scouting for Diseases and Pests	Hour	75.00	75.00	75.00
ATV with Driver	Hour	23.00	32.00	28.34
ATV with Driver for Imidacloprid Soil Drench Application	Hour	23.00	35.00	31.63
Flatbed Truck with Driver	Hour	41.50	41.50	41.50
Pickup Truck with Driver	Hour	38.50	55.00	45.00
Tractor with Driver	Hour	38.50	75.00	54.70
Water Supply Truck with Driver	Hour	42.00	42.00	42.00
General Labor ³	Hour	15.00	26.00	19.71
Mechanic Labor ³	Hour	45.00	60.00	50.00
Mechanic Labor with Truck	Hour	55.00	90.00	75.00
Weed Management²				
Disc 7 - 8'	Hour	65.00	75.00	70.00
Disc 9 - 10'	Hour	46.00	85.00	65.50
Mow 8 - 12'	Acre	12.00	14.00	13.20
Mow 13 - 16'	Hour	53.00	80.00	66.00
Mow 13 - 16'	Acre	14.00	17.00	15.50
Herbicide Strip/Band (Single Boom)	Acre	15.00	18.50	16.19
Herbicide Strip/Band (Double Boom)	Acre	13.00	16.50	15.01
Chemical Mow	Acre	1.00	3.00	2.00

Table 2. Listing of 2018/19 custom rates reported by Indian River & Southwest Florida citrus caretakers (cont'd).

Grove Practice	Unit	Rate Reported		
		Min	Max	Average ¹
Spraying Air Blast Sprayer With Electronic Sensors⁴				
		PTO Powered (1,000 gallons tank)		
50 to 99 GPA	Acre	17.00	32.00	24.38
100 to 124 GPA	Acre	25.00	32.50	29.75
125 to 149 GPA	Acre	27.50	34.00	29.63
125 to 249 GPA	Acre	30.00	36.00	33.67
250 to 500 GPA	Acre	35.00	39.50	37.63
Greater than 500 GPA	Acre	42.00	47.00	44.67
Aerial Application²				
Fixed Wing 5 to 9 GPA	Acre	6.50	8.00	7.33
Fixed Wing 10 to 15 GPA	Acre	8.50	9.75	9.25
Irrigation²				
Start/Stop, System Supervision	Hour	38.50	55.00	45.00
Start/Stop, System Supervision	Run	50.00	50.00	50.00
Maintenance of Microsprinkler System	Hour	22.50	32.00	27.25
Drainage System and Canal Management²				
Water Furrow Disc	Hour	44.00	48.75	46.38
Water Furrow Cleaner	Hour	43.50	43.50	43.50
Rotary Ditcher or Auger	Hour	44.00	44.00	44.00
Ditch Bank Mower	Hour	70.00	100.00	86.67
Fertilizer Application and Soil Amendments²				
Injection of Liquid Fertilizer into Irrigation System	Hour	30.00	50.00	39.13
Fertilizer (every middle)	Acre	11.00	13.20	12.10
Fertilizer (every other middle)	Acre	8.00	8.00	8.00
VRT Spreader (every middle)	Acre	12.00	13.20	12.57
VRT Spreader (every other middle)	Acre	8.00	12.50	10.13
Hand Spread (Young Trees)	Hour	16.00	32.50	24.80
Lime or Dolomite Application	Acre	11.00	14.00	12.50

Table 2. Listing of 2018/19 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	20.00	32.00	26.00
Hedging (double side)	Acre	20.00	28.00	24.00
Topping	Acre	30.00	42.00	36.00
Push brush out of the grove	Hour	75.00	90.00	82.50
Mow Brush	Hour	65.00	125.00	95.00
Front-end Loader	Hour	65.00	90.00	73.00
Tree Removal and Disposal²				
Tree Pushing	Hour	65.00	90.00	74.00
Tree Clipping	Hour	65.00	90.00	75.00
Grinding Tree in place	Hour	120.00	250.00	165.00
Grinding Clipped Tree	Hour	100.00	250.00	158.33
Hauling Clipped Tree out of the grove	Hour	65.00	90.00	76.67
Herbicide spray tree stump	Hour	25.00	25.00	25.00
Tree Resetting and Care²				
Tree Planting and First Watering ⁵				
1 to 5 trees per acre	Tree	3.33	3.33	3.33
6 to 10 trees per acre	Tree	3.33	3.33	3.33
11 to 25 trees per acre	Tree	2.00	3.33	2.67
26+ trees per acre	Tree	3.33	3.33	3.33
Solid set block	Tree	1.65	1.65	1.65
Tree Wrap Cost (solid set block)	Tree	0.35	0.35	0.35
Sprouting and Pruning	Hour	16.00	22.50	20.17
Spot Herbicide Application	Hour	22.00	32.00	25.50
Neonicotinoids Drench Application (Psyllid Management)	Hour	25.00	30.00	27.50
Slow Release Fertilization	Hour	20.00	32.50	24.83
Grove Management²				
Grove Care Supervision	Acre/Month	2.00	8.00	4.25
Chemicals and Fertilizers Handling/Supervision	Percent	7.50	19.00	10.79
Marketing and Fruit Handling	Box	0.05	0.15	0.10

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. 2019. Florida Citrus Statistics 2017/18.