

USDA grapefruit estimate for Florida drops by 800,000 boxes

After several of months of declines, the outlook for Florida's struggling orange production remained steady from March to April but grapefruit saw a significant drop.

"It's a tough hit for Florida's grapefruit growers who have been so committed to fighting pest and disease to maintain this staple of Florida's economy," said Shannon Shepp, executive director of the Florida Department of Citrus. "Florida grapefruit is, by far, what world consumers seek out for its unique flavor profile, sweetness and juiciness."

The estimate for Florida grapefruit dropped 800,000 boxes to a total of 8.1 million boxes. Just for comparison's sake, the grapefruit crop during the 2003-2004 season was 40.9 million boxes.

According to USDA, the updated all-orange forecast remains at 67 million boxes (33 million boxes of early, midseason, Navel, and Temple varieties; plus 34 million boxes of Valencias).

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