

# Grapefruit crop takes another hit

## **Grapefruit continue to fall in Florida, but not in good way.**

Since March, the forecast for the grapefruit crop has dropped more than 12 percent, with two months remaining in the growing season.

Meanwhile, the orange harvest showed a slight uptick in the May forecast released on Wednesday.

The citrus industry is now projected to fill 68 million 90-pound boxes with oranges, 1 million more boxes than forecast in April.

The number is nearly 3 percent below the forecast when the current growing season began in October.

“It is heartbreaking to watch an industry you love work so hard to survive,” said Shannon Shepp, executive director of the Florida Department of Citrus. “Florida citrus is valued around the world for its premium taste and quality. We will not let that change.”

The state remains on pace for its worst growing season in decades.

The industry --- battling deadly citrus greening disease --- filled a decades-low 81.6 million boxes of oranges during the 2015-2016 season, well below the more than 200 million boxes a year the state filled in the 1990s.

When the current season opened, the grapefruit forecast stood at 9.6 million boxes, which would be down from 10.8 million boxes in 2015-2016, an 11 percent decline.

Grapefruit production fell 16 percent from the 2014-2015 growing season to the 2015-2016 season.

Since March, the grapefruit outlook went from 8.9 million boxes to 8.1 million boxes in April and 7.8 million boxes on Wednesday.

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