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Gov. Scott Proposes \$21 Million in Aid to Florida Citrus Industry

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced he will propose a more than \$21 million investment in the Florida citrus industry as part of his 2018-2019 recommended budget. This proposal follows the Governor traveling to Washington D.C. with Agricultural Commissioner Adam Putnam to advocate on behalf of Florida's citrus growers last month. The Governor urged Congress to pass a disaster relief package in the full amount of \$2.5 billion for Florida agriculture, including more than \$760 million for the citrus industry. Following Hurricane Irma, Governor Scott also activated a \$25 million Florida Citrus Emergency Loan Program.

The Governor's proposed \$21 million investment will include:

- \$10 million for citrus research to find solutions to citrus greening, an increase of \$2 million over current year funding;
- \$4 million to support Department of Citrus consumer awareness efforts to support the market for Florida citrus and orange juice; and
- \$7 million for the Citrus Health Response Program, which helps ensure that growers are able to replant healthy citrus trees that were destroyed by Hurricane Irma, and helps minimize the spread of citrus greening.

Governor Scott said, "Florida has an incredible and iconic citrus industry and following the devastating impacts of Hurricane Irma, I am fully committed to helping this industry, and the many families that rely on it, fully recover. I am proud to announce \$21 million for Florida's world famous citrus industry which will support important research opportunities, awareness efforts and ongoing recovery operations. We will continue to fight for Florida's farmers and their families as we work with the Legislature to pass this significant investment."

Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam said, "The challenges that the citrus industry has faced and continues to face are well documented and longstanding, and I appreciate Governor Scott's leadership and support in protecting Florida's signature crop."

More details on the Governor's proposed budget will be made available in the coming weeks.

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