

Fall – 2009



## Congressman Rooney Addresses 2009 Citrus Banquet

Congressman Tom Rooney, representing Florida's 16th District, delivered the "keynote" address at the Gulf Citrus Industry Banquet held August 19th at the Harbor-side Event Center in Ft. Myers. The banquet is held in conjunction with the Citrus Expo<sup>SM</sup> at the Lee Civic Center. Over 300 citrus growers, industry leaders and invited guests heard the newly-elected Congressman, whose "District 16" is the largest "agricultural district" in Florida. It includes Charlotte, Glades, Hendry, Highlands, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties, and millions of dollars in agricultural productivity and economic impact.

Rooney, who does not have an agricultural background, however...assured the attending citrus growers and agriculturalists...that he is a "quick learner," and urged them to keep him updated and informed about the issues. "I will do all I can to help sustain agriculture in my district," he said.

"A key issue that I have been working on diligently in Washington for Florida's citrus growers...is helping to combat the dreaded 'Citrus Greening' disease," noted Rooney. "As you know, there is no single 'silver bullet' solution to 'greening.' Instead, we are taking a multi-pronged approach and dedicating resources to research, detection and prevention," he added. "One such area that I have focused on is the USDA's Citrus Health Response Plan (CHRP), that aims to provide preventative tools to guard against both 'greening' and the Citrus Canker diseases. I submitted a request to the House

Appropriations Committee for an \$8-million increase over last year's funding level, and the resultant \$43.6-million was included in the House bill. While CHRP is only one component of tackling this devastating disease...I will continue to fight for increased funding and greater resources dedicated to ending the damages caused by 'greening,'" Congressman Rooney promised.

Rooney also noted that he is in support of efforts by Florida's citrus growers to make sure that the Brazilian citrus importers are playing by the rules. He reported that he sent a letter to U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, in support of Florida Citrus Mutual's petition. "I was careful to point out in my letter, that Florida's citrus growers are continuing to address 'greening,' excessive inventories, and a global recession. And that they should not have to deal with unfair pricing by the Brazilians."

Regarding "the death tax" (estate tax), he said that it needs to be permanently repealed! "This tax goes against the very fabric that our nation was built upon. It is more than about the accumulation of wealth...it is about passing on a way of life! Whether it is farming or running a small business...there is a sense of history and pride within the families...that runs through generations. And, for the government to cause it all to end in the name of taxes...is in my book...simply wrong," said Rooney.

### Adam Putnam Speaks

Banquet attendees also heard from Congressman Adam Putnam, representing Florida's 12th District,

**continued on page five**

# Gulf Citrus Growers Association Elects 2009-10 Officers

At its 23rd annual meeting on June 3, 2009, at the Dallas Townsend Agricultural Center in LaBelle, FL, the Gulf Citrus Growers Association (GCGA) elected its officers to serve the organization for the 2009-2010 season. Elected to lead the regional citrus association are the following:

## **President**

Carey Soud  
Soud Family Partnership

## **Vice President**

Steve Smith  
Alico, Inc.

## **Secretary**

Wade Timpner  
George Austin, Inc.

## **Treasurer**

Callie Walker  
English Brothers

Carey Soud, GCGA's newly elected president, has 20 years of professional management experience in the industry here in Southwest Florida. He has served on the association's board for two separate terms and held the office of vice president for the 2008-2009 year.

He is a partner in his family's citrus operation which is based in Hendry County. Soud earned a Masters Degree in Business Administration from the University of South Florida with a concentration



## **"Gulf Citrus" Officers 2009-10**

**(Standing)** Steve Smith, vice president (left) and Wade Timpner, secretary.

**(Seated)** Callie Walker, treasurer (left) and Carey Soud, president.

in accounting. In addition to his responsibilities with the family citrus business, he is president of First Bank, which is based in Clewiston, and operates in the Southwest Florida region.

Soud also served as a district vice president and treasurer of Florida Citrus Mutual, Florida's largest citrus grower organization which is headquartered in Lakeland. In addition, he serves in leader-

ship positions in other state and community organizations.

"I look forward to working with the GCGA board of directors; the 'grower' and 'associate' members; and the staff in the coming year. We remain committed to service with 'passion' and 'excellence,' and to expanding the association's sphere of influence in the region. We encourage our members to get more involved," said Soud.

Steve Smith was elected to serve as GCGA's vice president for the coming year. He also has over 20 years experience in the citrus growing industry and has served in several leadership positions, including the association's board of directors. Smith, who earned his bachelor of science degree in agriculture from the University of Florida, was appointed by Governor Jeb Bush to the Florida Citrus Commission, and is currently serving his second term on that board which directs the Florida Department of Citrus. Smith is president and principal executive officer of Alico, Inc. which is headquartered in LaBelle.

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association represents citrus growers in Florida's "Gulf" production region including Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee counties. The region accounts for over 25% of the state's total citrus production.

## GCGA Recognizes David Wheeler

David Wheeler, who served as president of the Gulf Citrus Growers Association for an un-precedented four consecutive terms, was "officially" recognized at the organization's 23rd Annual Meeting. The association presented Wheeler with a commemorative plaque, an original "Florida orange grove" oil painting from noted artist Bill North and a "traditional" Gulf Citrus logo jacket for his years of dedicated leadership.

Wheeler also served as GCGA's treasurer prior to his term as president, and he volunteered to chair the association's Membership Committee in the coming season.

When accepting GCGA's recognition, Wheeler noted that membership in "Gulf Citrus" is important to his company's operations. "I encourage our leaders and members to become



## **Association Says Thanks!**

GCGA's Ron Hamel (left) presents the association's "thank you" plaque to David Wheeler for his service as president.

more involved in the organization and support its efforts. As I see it, GCGA is a progressive and very effective grower organization. We need to keep it that way," he said.

## **Gulf Citrus Growers Association 2009-2010 Board of Directors**

**Carey Soud, President**  
**Steve Smith, Vice President**  
**Wade Timpner, Secretary**  
**Callie Walker, Treasurer**  
**Don Barwick**  
**Mark Colbert**  
**Emmett Evans, III**  
**Joe Hilliard, II**  
**John Hoffman**  
**Paul Meador**  
**Mike Murphy**  
**Wayne Simmons**  
**David Wheeler**  
**Ron Hamel**

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# Association Officially Seats 2009-10 Directors

At its 23rd annual meeting on June 3, 2009, at the Dallas Townsend Agricultural Center in LaBelle, FL, the Gulf Citrus Growers Association “officially” seated its 2009-2010 board of directors for the coming season. The newly elected leadership will direct the organization as it

works to represent the citrus growing industry in Southwest Florida’s “Gulf” region. The “Gulf” production region includes Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee Counties.

The “Gulf Citrus” board members and their respective counties of representation

are listed below.

Each of these leaders is a volunteer and is working on behalf of all the citrus growers in the region. Please thank and support them during the coming season, and also suggest any positive changes that GCGA can make to better serve the industry.



**2009-2010 Gulf Citrus Growers Association Board of Directors**

(Left to Right) Mike Murphy, Mark Colbert, Ron Hamel, Emmett Evans III, Joe Hilliard II, Paul Meador, Wade Timpner, Callie Walker, Don Barwick, David Wheeler, Steve Smith, Wayne Simmons Carey Soud and John Hoffman.

## Florida's Gulf Citrus Production Region

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association represents citrus growers with thousands of acres of citrus in Southwest Florida’s “Gulf” region, which accounts for about 25% of the state’s total fruit production. The region’s citrus industry generates nearly \$1-billion of total economic impact.



### GCGA 2009-2010 Board of Directors

#### Charlotte County

Emmett Evans, III  
Evans Properties, Inc.

#### Collier County

John Hoffman  
Barron Collier Partnership  
Paul Meador  
Gulf Citrus Partners LP  
Mike Murphy  
Cooperative Producers, Inc.

#### Hendry County

Mark Colbert  
Duda Products, Inc.  
Joe Hilliard, II  
Hilliard Brothers of Florida, LTD.  
Wayne Simmons  
LaBelle Fruit Co. LLC  
Steve Smith  
Alico, Inc.  
Carey Soud  
Soud Family Partnership

#### Glades County

David Wheeler  
Wheeler Farms, Inc.

#### Lee County

Wade Timpner  
George Austin, Inc.

#### At-Large Seats

Don Barwick  
Heller Brothers  
Packing Corp.  
Callie Walker  
English Brothers

## Committee Chairs Appointed to Serve for 2009-2010 Season

GCGA President Carey Soud appointed the following leaders to chair the association’s operating committees for the coming year.

Please contact these volunteer leaders for updates and information related to their respective committees.

#### Associate Member

Stacy D. McCullough

#### Community Relations

John Hoffman

#### Governmental Affairs

Joe Hilliard, II

#### Labor Relations

Mike Murphy

#### Long Range

#### Policy and Planning

George Austin

#### Membership

David Wheeler

#### Research and Production

Mark Colbert

# GCGA Announces “Round 2” Psyllid Control Effort



Based on the very positive success of the 2008-2009 cooperative dormant spray efforts promoted by the Gulf Citrus Growers Association's Production and Research Committee, GCGA is preparing to launch “round 2” of this Asian Citrus Psyllid control program. This season, the GCGA Psyllid Suppression “Team,” including scientists from the UF/IFAS' Southwest Florida Research and Education Center, the region's multi-county extension citrus agent, the FDACS/ DPI area staff and citrus grower leaders, plans to coordinate two dormant sprays. The “first” spray will be initiated in the November-December period, and the other in the January-February time frame. The program is voluntary and is being coordinated through the association, area team “captains” and the applicators.

These recommendations are based on the “Team's” consensus, that last season's initiative was very effective. Follow-up surveys conducted by UF/IFAS and FDACS/ DPI personnel showed that over 80,000 acres of citrus were sprayed during the dormant period (December-February) by aerial application with additional acreage covered by ground. The surveys also documented major reductions of psyllid populations in the groves that initiated the cooperative dormant spray program. “Comparing the November and February samples, the initial effect of the aerial sprays reduced the psyllid populations by 60%,” noted Dr. Phil Stansly, UF/IFAS entomologist. “However, populations more than doubled during this time in the untreated blocks that could be identified,” he added.

The Asian citrus psyllid (*Diaphorina citri*) vectors the bacteria *Cd. Liberibacter*

*asiaticus* causing the citrus greening disease of Huanglongbing (HLB).

“Reducing psyllids in citrus groves slows the incidence of greening,” said Ron Hamel, GCGA executive vice president. “The association's leadership initiated this cooperative, coordinated effort in the ‘Gulf’ region since the science conducted to date suggests that it is one of the best

to suppress the pest is the ‘dormant spray,’ a foliar application of insecticide directed against the ‘overwintering’ adults. This spray attacks the pest at its weakest point, when beneficial insects like ladybeetles and lacewings are generally absent from the groves as well. The larger the treated area of citrus, the greater the effectiveness of the dormant sprays,” Stansly explains.

Dr. Fred Gmitter, professor of citrus breeding and genetics at UF/ IFAS' Citrus Research and Education Center in Lake Alfred, reported to GCGA members that his reconnaissance in citrus groves in China, also points to the effectiveness of strategically timed spraying for psyllid control. He suggests spraying before trees are flushing new growth and before budding occurs.

**Additional information and details regarding the cooperative dormant spray program can be provided through:**

**Dr. Phil Stansly (239) 658-3400**  
[pstansly@ufl.edu](mailto:pstansly@ufl.edu),

**Dr. Mongi Zekri (863) 674-4092**  
[maz@ufl.edu](mailto:maz@ufl.edu) or

**Ron Hamel (863) 675-2180**  
[gulfcitruscapron@embarqmail.com](mailto:gulfcitruscapron@embarqmail.com)



## GCGA “Team” Members Plan Strategy

(L to R) Mark Colbert, Dr. Phil Stansly, Dr. Mongi Zekri and Rusty Noah review details of the proposed 2009-2010 “Gulf Citrus” cooperative dormant psyllid spray program for the region.

management tools that growers can use today...to deal with this dreaded disease.”

Dr. Stansly, UF/IFAS entomologist, explained the strategy behind the coordinated dormant sprays for psyllid control. “During late fall and early winter, weather in Florida is generally dry and cool, causing citrus trees to cease producing new foliage that psyllids depend upon to lay eggs and reproduce. Adults must then ‘overwinter’ by feeding on mature leaves until the spring flush...which is generally in mid to late February. An effective tool

“There has been excellent ‘buy in’ by citrus growers in our region for this voluntary program,” added Mark Colbert, chairman of GCGA's Production and Research Committee. “We stand ready to do all we can to initiate another successful cooperative and coordinated dormant spray program again this season. And, we invite the growers who did not participate in last season's successful initiative...to join with us this season. The greater the participation...the greater the results. This benefits all citrus growers in our region,” said Colbert.



# Congressman Rooney Highlights 2009 Citrus Banquet

continued from page one

who is campaigning to be Florida's next Commissioner of Agriculture. Putnam shared his vision for the state's agriculture in the coming years.

"The 'agriculture industry' offers Florida many social benefits without demanding much in return in the form of government services. Agriculture, horticulture, silviculture, aquaculture and floriculture are the basis for sustainable land use, dynamic careers and a high quality of life in Florida. It is this vision for what Florida can be...that has called me back home... to seek the office of Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture," said Putnam.

"We cannot take for granted that a state of 17 million people will always elect a pro-agricultural candidate as Commissioner. We must have a candidate with a real agricultural background, a passion for the dynamic future of agriculture and the ability to communicate our views in the one-stoplight towns and the urban condominiums alike," he added. "The issues that face Florida agriculture are the same issues that face all Floridians...water use, land acquisition, renewable energy, labor issues and more. It is essential that a collaborative effort exists between the agricultural community and the folks outside of it...so that the best decisions for our state can occur," Putnam explained. "We must take a new look at how we continue to ensure that 'agriculture' is a large and reliable part of Florida's economic stronghold."

Ken Keck, executive director of the Florida Department of Citrus, reported that the department has continued to invest in production research in efforts to address the "greening crisis" that is plaguing the citrus growing industry. He cautioned, however, that the industry must continue to invest in marketing its products in order to remain economically viable. He recognized many Florida Citrus Commissioners in attendance and thanked them for their service to the industry.

Callie Walker, president of GCGA's Scholarship Foundation, reported that over \$63,000 in scholarships has been awarded to deserving students since the program began. She also noted that GCGA and its Scholarship Foundation were recognized by the Hispanic Chamber of SW Florida as its "2009 Distinguished Honoree" for many years of support.

Gulf Citrus Growers Association Executive Vice President Ron Hamel recognized Katherine "Kate" English for her dedicated service to the citrus/agricultural community of the region, and particularly for her efforts to negotiate an acceptable Southern Bald Eagle ordinance on agricultural lands in Lee County.



## Great Turnout for Banquet & Citrus Expo<sup>SM</sup>

**Top left:** Charles Shinn, David Bridges and Don Parrish "visit" at reception. **Top center:** Congressman Adam Putnam addresses banquet. **Top right:** David Carson, Kevin Rayburn and Rachel Walters enjoy the evening. **Top, 2nd Row:** The 2009 Citrus Expo<sup>SM</sup> Seminars were well-attended and informative. **3rd Row, Left:** FDOC's Ken Keck presents key department issues and programs. **Center:** Congressman Tom Rooney is welcomed to the podium by GCGA President Carey Soud. **Right:** Callie Walker receives GCGA's recognition on behalf of her sister, Kate English who has provided "special service" to the region's agriculturalists. **Bottom:** The tradeshow held as part of the 2009 Citrus Expo<sup>SM</sup> featured over 150 companies.

## Thank You 2009 Banquet Sponsors!

### Platinum Sponsors

Farm Credit • Florida Department of Citrus • Southern Gardens Citrus

### Gold Sponsors

Alico, Inc. • Barron Collier Partnership • Bayer CropScience  
Chemical Dynamics, Inc. • Citrus Expo<sup>SM</sup>/Southeast AgNet • First Bank  
Florida Citrus Mutual • Oswald Trippe & Company, Inc. • Pavese Law Firm  
Syngenta Crop Protection, Inc. • WilsonMiller, Inc.

### Silver Sponsors

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Fletcher Flying Services, Inc. • GOWAN Co. • MacVicar, Federico & Lamb, Inc.  
MANA • Oakley Groves, Inc. • Pacific Tomato Growers, Ltd.  
Plant Food Systems • The Andersons, Inc. • Tropicana Products, Inc. • Valent USA

# Association Holds 23rd Annual Meeting at Townsend AG Center



## Soud Delivers 1st Message!

Newly-elected GCGA President Carey Soud addresses association annual meeting attendees. He thanked the membership for the honor to serve.

The Annual Meeting of the Gulf Citrus Growers Association was held June 3, 2009 at the Dallas Townsend Agricultural Center in LaBelle.

David Wheeler, GCGA president, presided over the meeting. He recognized the "founding fathers" of the association and noted many in attendance. Wheeler thanked GCGA's board members, membership and staff for their support during his 4-year tenure. He singled out the association's "Associate" members and the "Associate Committee" for their support of GCGA through "volunteer" and financial services.

Callie Walker, treasurer, reported that the board had recently received the annual



## Associate Members Recognized

David Wheeler (left) thanks five GCGA Associate Members for their '10-years' of support to the association. (Left to right) Fran Becker, Peace River Citrus Products, Inc.; Jeff Futch and Cesar Martinez, National Employer Services; and Al Clarke, Becker Underwood. Absent from the photo but recognized were Kahn Grove Service and Jack Norris.

review of the association's finances. She noted that copies of the "review" by the public accounting firm are available to members through the GCGA office.

Ron Hamel, GCGA's executive vice president, recognized and thanked the annual meeting luncheon sponsors including Citrus Expo 2009, Southern Gardens Citrus and Syngenta Crop Protection.

President Wheeler and Ron Hamel presented "10-year" commemorative plaques to five associate members for their support of the association (see photo). Hamel also recognized Wheeler for his four years as GCGA president (see photo page 2).

Newly-elected President Carey Soud

pledged his continuing leadership to move "Gulf Citrus" ahead.

## GCGA Foundation Meeting

The GCGA Scholarship Foundation also conducted its annual meeting in conjunction with the association's session. Foundation President Callie Walker called the meeting to order and introduced John Hoffman, Joe English, Norm Todd and David Wheeler as other board members.

Walker reported that over \$63,000 in scholarships had been awarded to date, and she named the 2008-09 recipients.

The membership re-elected Norm Todd and David Wheeler to three-year terms on the board.

## SW Florida AGRICULTURAL Water Management Conference Held



The "Gulf" region's agricultural leaders recently received "the latest" information on the key water management issues impacting their production practices and operations. The conference was held October 6th and was co-hosted by the Florida Department of Agriculture, Office of Water Policy; the Florida Farm Bureau Federation; the Gulf Citrus Growers Association; the Hendry County Cattlemen's Association, UF/IFAS Hendry County Extension and UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research & Education Center.

Over 100 attendees were updated on both the water "quality" and "quantity" issues that are the most challenging for the region's agricultural producers and their leadership.

Speakers for the conference included Colonel Alfred Pantano, Jr., commander, Jacksonville District, US Army Corps of Engineers; Carol Wehle, executive director, South Florida Water Management District; Rich Budell, director, Florida Department of Agriculture, Office of Water Policy; Jemy Hinton, UF/IFAS'

Agricultural BMPs Implementation Team; Jerry Brooks, director, Division of Environmental Assessment & Restoration, Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Irene Quincey, lawyer, Pavese Law Firm. Moderators for the sessions were Bob Howard, civil engineer, Agnoli, Barber & Brundage, Inc. and Joe Collins, Lykes Bros., Inc. and SFWMD Governing Board member.

The conference covered the challenges associated with Lake Okeechobee water management, the establishment of "total maximum daily loads" (TMDLs) and basin management action plans (BMAPs) for the Caloosahatchee River basins, the implementation of AG best management practices (BMPs), securing consumptive use permits and many other key issues in water management.

GCGA thanks the co-hosts, moderators and speakers for their support of the water management conference.



# 13th "Gulf Classic" Tournament Held at Verandah

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association's 13th Annual "Gulf Classic" Golf Tournament was held May 15, 2009 at The Verandah Country Club course. This year's tournament featured 33 sponsored teams and industry-wide support of the event. The "Gulf Classic," which is hosted through the association's Associate Member Committee, is one of the key "special events" to financially support the "Gulf Citrus" community and governmental relations programs in the region.

"The Gulf Citrus Growers Association's Associate Member Committee continued to do an excellent job of putting together a 'first class' golf outing that is enjoyed by the participants and 'support staff' as well," said Ron Hamel, GCGA executive vice president. "Our association is truly blessed with talented and dedicated volunteers who provide the leadership for this and other events and activities that are necessary to continue to allow 'Gulf Citrus' to reach out to the SW Florida community in many ways," he added.

Once again the "Gulf Classic" featured \$100,000 in prizes, including "hole-in-one" and individual "special hole" prizes.

This year's "first place" winning team was sponsored by Monsanto/Keyplex and included Mike Prescott, Tommy Duda, Jay Bellflower and Heath Prescott. Winning "second place" was the Car Two team comprised of John Paul, Don Turner, Eddie Rodriguez and Mike Halloran.

The 13th Annual "Gulf Classic" individual winners were as follows: Most Accurate Drive, Don Hayes; Longest Drive (two winners) David Stephens and Jay Bellflower; Longest Putt, Randy Gilde; Closest to the Pin, (two winners) John Soltis and Gary Williams. The Putting Contest included three winners, Austin Lewis, Cliff Kruse and Eddie Rodriguez.

The 2009 "Gulf Classic" Tournament Committee included: Sarah Markle, Chair, Valent; Sonya Carnes, Ag-Tronix, Inc.; Ali Pool, Brown and Brown Insurance; Jeff Campbell, Oswald Trippe & Company, Inc.; Julie Forrest, Stallings Crop Insurance Corp.; Stacy McCullough, Farm Credit of SW Florida; Robert Murray, Wedgworth's Inc.; Rachel Walters, Bayer CropScience; Richard Woodruff, WilsonMiller, Inc. and Bernadette Rashford, GCGA.



## The "Gulf Classic" Featured 33 Teams

The 13th Annual "Gulf Classic" Tournament was one of the best attended. GCGA thanks the team sponsors and participants, as well as the Associate Member Committee.



**First Place Team Sponsored by Monsanto/Keyplex**  
L to R: Mike Prescott, Jay Bellflower, Tommy Duda and Heath Prescott of the Monsanto/Keyplex team took first place!



## Second Place Won by Car Two Team

L to R: Mike Halloran, John Paul, Eddie Rodriguez and Don Turner playing for the The "Car Two" team came in second.

## 2009 Gulf Classic Tournament Sponsors

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association would like to thank the "Gulf Classic" sponsors:

### Tee-Off Breakfast

Tropicana Products, Inc.

### Awards Luncheon

Southeast AgNet/  
Citrus Expo<sup>SM</sup>  
The Andersons, Inc.  
Zenith Insurance

### Refreshments

Agraquest  
CitriBlen – The Scotts  
Company  
Everglades Companies  
Helena Chemical Co.  
Keyplex  
Lutgert Insurance

### Photography

Stallings Crop  
Insurance, Corp.

### Communications

Spectrum Wireless

### "Gulf Classic" Visors

Bayer CropScience

### Individual Coolers & Koozies

Farm Credit of SW Florida

### Golf Towels

Citrus Expo

### Hospitality Sponsors

Fletcher Flying Service, Inc.  
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### Prizes/Holes

Environmental Consulting  
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Everglades Farm Equipment  
Ag-Tronix, Inc.  
BASF Corporation  
Steele Truck Center, Inc.  
Gulf Citrus Management, Inc.  
Car Two  
Cutrale Citrus Juices USA, Inc.  
Oakley Groves, Inc.

### Tees & Greens

Agri-Property Consultants, Inc.  
Ag-Tronix, Inc.  
Brandt Consolidated  
Brown and Brown Insurance  
Chemical Containers, Inc.  
Chemtura Corporation  
Coastal Fertilizer & Supply, Inc.  
Culligan Water  
Custom Citrus Care, Inc.  
D&K Harvesting, Inc.  
DeSoto AutoMall  
Everglades Farm Equipment Co., Inc.  
First Bank  
Flo Tec, Inc.  
Gilkey Organization, LLC  
Gulf Citrus Harvesting & Hauling, Inc.  
Heller Brothers (Green)  
Heller Brothers (Tee)  
JBT FoodTech  
Johnson Engineering  
MANA  
Monsanto

Oswald Trippe and Company, Inc.  
Peace River Citrus Products, Inc.  
Spectrum Wireless  
Stallings Crop Insurance, Corp.  
Sun Country Citrus Hauling, Inc.  
T&M Portable Restrooms, Inc.  
Thomas R. Summersill, Inc.  
Tranex, Inc. dba Valencia  
Harvesting (Green)  
Tranex, Inc. dba Valencia  
Harvesting (Tee)  
U.P.I.  
Valent USA  
Wedgworth's, Inc.  
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WilsonMiller, Inc.

### Raffle Prizes

Bonita Bay Group  
Florida's Natural  
Gulf Citrus Growers Association  
Kelly Tractor Company  
Wedgworth's, Inc.

## “Gulf Citrus” Recognized as Hispanic Chamber’s 2009 “Honoree”

The Southwest Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce recently recognized the Gulf Citrus Growers Association and its Scholarship Foundation as its “2009 Honoree of the Year.” The citrus growers’ organizations were honored at ceremonies as part of the Hispanic Chamber’s 17th Annual Gala & Scholarships Presentation held June 5th at the Harborside Event Center in Ft. Myers. Over 300 Hispanic community leaders and their guests attended the event.

The Hispanic Chamber’s leadership cited the Gulf Citrus Growers Association: “For the many years of support and contributions to making the Chamber’s scholarship program a grand success. Every dollar invested into the program by the citrus growers’ association has made the dream of attending college a reality for



### Chamber Honors “Gulf Citrus”!

Darlene Welch, member of the SW Florida Hispanic Chamber’s board of directors (left), and Veronica Culbertson, board president (right) present the Chamber’s commemorative plaque to Ron Hamel, GCGA’s executive vice president, at ceremonies naming the association and its scholarship foundation “2009 Honoree of the Year.”

many students in Southwest Florida.”

GCGA Executive Vice President Ron

Hamel received the award on behalf of the association. Carey Soud, Gulf Citrus Growers president and George Austin, GCGA past president, also attended.

In his acceptance remarks, Hamel noted that “Gulf Citrus” relationship with the SWFL Hispanic Chamber began in 1996, and has grown over those 13 years. “Thank you very much for honoring our region’s citrus growers with such ‘special recognition.’ It is gratifying... and a real pleasure for our association to ‘partner’ with the SWFL Hispanic Chamber for so many years...and especially to support the Chamber’s outstanding scholarship program,” Hamel added. “The GCGA Scholarship Foundation has awarded over \$63,000 since the program began, including over \$10,000 through the Hispanic Chamber’s scholarship program.”

## GCGA “Kicks Off” Season with Membership Drive

“For over 20 years, the Gulf Citrus Growers Association has been proactively...and successfully addressing the issues which impact citrus growers in Southwest Florida! Although the volunteer leadership on the GCGA board and committees has changed over time, our ‘Gulf Citrus’ **mission** has not! The association’s leadership remains focused on the key issues that affect our grower members’ bottom lines.” That message is the first paragraph of GCGA’s “grower member” recruiting letter that has been sent to key prospects to “kick off” the association’s membership drive this

season. The letter was accompanied by information about GCGA’s benefits to citrus growers in the region.

The Board of Directors and Long Range Planning Committee have launched an aggressive membership campaign to assure that the association will continue to be an effective “voice” for “Gulf” citrus growers in the years ahead. The association has worked tirelessly over the past 20 years to establish an effective, well-respected “voice” for the region’s citrus growers. Now it is making a strong effort to build on that success through enhanced member support.

Citrus news updates  
 and calendar of events  
 now available online.



[www.gulfcitrus.org](http://www.gulfcitrus.org)

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