

Bamboo: Florida's Future Sustainable Crop?

Bamboo is gaining momentum as a potential alternative crop in Florida, according to Steven Zoernack



Sarasota, Florida Nov 26, 2022 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - The Florida Citrus Industry is in a temporary or permanent decline due to what's being called the "greening" of citrus, according to [Steven Zoernack](#), CEO and Founder of [BambooBoss](#) out of Sarasota, Florida.

Citrus greening is spread by a disease-infected insect, the Asian citrus psyllid (*Diaphorina citri* Kuwayama or ACP), and has put the future of America's citrus at risk. Infected trees produce fruits that are green, misshapen, and bitter, unsuitable for sale as fresh fruit or for juice.

The Asian citrus psyllid feeds on citrus leaves and stems and has started to severely affect citrus trees with a bacteria that causes a serious plant disease called Huanglongbing, also known as HLB or citrus greening disease. While not harmful to humans, the disease kills citrus trees and has no cure.

"Bamboo is gaining momentum as a potential alternative crop in Florida", says [Steven Zoernack](#). There are roughly 150 bamboo farms in Florida, most are small in size. Recent developments, including improved variety selection and new infrastructure, are causing some growers to investigate the crop more closely.

Of the roughly 1,200 commercial acres of bamboo in Florida, about 95% of that is planted with the *Dendrocalamus asper* variety. This is a clumping variety that is the most important commercial variety planted in Thailand, which is a leading production region in the world.

The crop has not only caught citrus growers' attention as HLB greening disease continues to ravage Florida citrus groves. Some growers are considering it as a fill-in crop until more permanent solutions to HLB are developed.

With citrus in decline, it is good to know that bamboo grows best on citrus land, uses similar irrigation and nutrition practices but has no material pests and diseases.

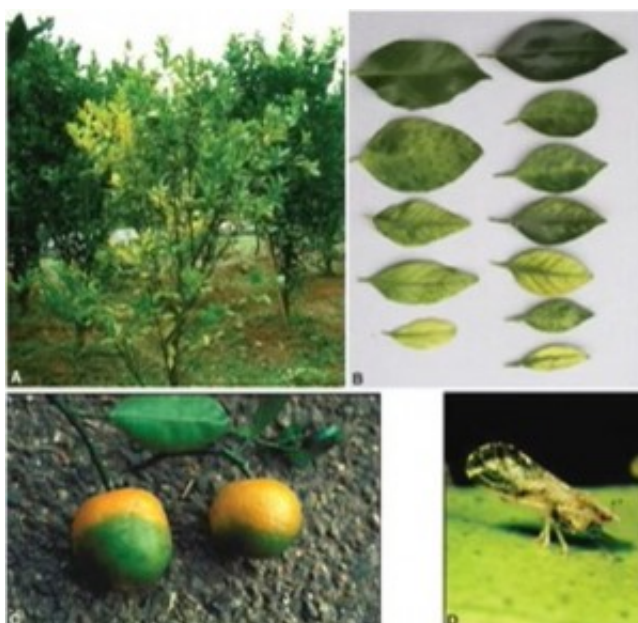
"When planted, clumping-type bamboo looks similar to an orange grove, with a planned setting and everything precisely in its place," according to [Steven Zoernack](#).

There is an opportunity to increase the food market dramatically as the edible bamboo shoots gain popularity and are further introduced to the traditional American health-conscious consumer. The market for wood is for wood floors, building products, bioplastics, textiles, and biochar soil amendments with endless demand.

"Profit potential per acre is an unknown at this point, but some are estimating double to triple what citrus can yield", says [Steven Zoernack](#).

Production begins in the third year after planting. Farmers can expect profits to begin in year three, and generally, increase as the plants mature until about the sixth or eighth year. The plants are known to last 80 years.

A lot is happening as part of developing this new agriculture industry in Florida. There are opportunities to participate in the early stages of this industry disruption.



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