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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Doc. No. AMS-SC-26-1255]

Oranges, Grapefruit, Tangerines, and Pummelos Grown in Florida; Continuance Referendum

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Referendum order.

SUMMARY: This document directs that a referendum be conducted among eligible Florida citrus producers to determine whether they favor continuance of the marketing order regulating the handling of oranges, grapefruit, tangerines, and pummelos produced in Florida.

DATES: The referendum will be conducted from October 19 through November 9, 2026. Only current Florida citrus producers within the production area that produced oranges, grapefruit, tangerines, or pummelos for the fresh market during the period of August 1, 2025, through July 31, 2026, are eligible to vote in this referendum. Ballots delivered to AMS via U.S. mail or electronic ballot must show proof of delivery by no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on November 9, 2026, to be included in the vote tabulation.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the marketing order may be obtained from the office of the referendum agents at Southeast Region Branch, Market Development Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, 1124 1st Street South, Winter Haven, FL 33880; telephone: (863) 324-3375; or from the Docket Clerk, Market Development Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250-0237; telephone (202) 720-8085; or on the internet: https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-IX/part-905.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennie M. Varela, Marketing Specialist, or Christian D. Nissen, Branch Chief, Southeast Region Branch, Market Development Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, 1124 1st Street South, Winter Haven, FL 33880; telephone: (863) 324-3375; or email: Jennie.Varela@usda.gov or Christian.Nissen@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to Marketing Order No. 905, as amended (7 CFR part 905; the Order), and the applicable provisions of the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended (7 U.S.C. 601-674) (the Act), it is hereby directed that a referendum be conducted to ascertain whether continuance of the Order is favored by fresh citrus producers. The referendum will be conducted from October 19 through November 9, 2026, among Florida fresh citrus producers in the Order's production area. Only current Florida citrus producers engaged in the production of oranges, grapefruit, tangerines, or pummelos for the fresh market during the period of August 1, 2025, through July 31, 2026, may participate in the continuance referendum.

USDA has determined that continuance referenda are an effective means for determining whether producers favor the continuation of marketing order programs. In accordance with § 905.83(c), USDA must conduct a referendum every six years. USDA would consider termination of the Order if less than two-thirds of the producers voting in the referendum, and less than two-thirds of the citrus volume represented in the referendum, vote in favor of continuance. In evaluating the merits of continuance versus termination, USDA will not exclusively consider the results of the continuance referendum. USDA will also consider all other relevant information concerning the operation of the Order and relative benefits and costs to producers, handlers, and consumers to determine whether continued operation of the Order would tend to effectuate the declared policy of the Act.

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the ballot materials used in the referendum have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and have been assigned OMB No. 0581-0189, Fruit Crops. It has been estimated it will take an average of 20 minutes for each of the approximately 200 citrus producers to cast a ballot. Participation is voluntary. Ballots delivered to AMS via U.S. mail or electronic ballot must show proof of delivery by no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on November 9, 2026, to be included in the vote tabulation.

Delaney Fuhrmeister, Rebecca Geller, Steven Kauffman, Christian Nissen, and Jennie Varela of the Southeast Region Branch, Market Development Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, are hereby designated as the referendum agents of the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct this referendum. The procedure applicable to the referendum shall be the "Procedure for the Conduct of Referenda in Connection with Marketing Orders for Fruits, Vegetables, and Nuts Pursuant to the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as Amended" (7 CFR part 900.400 *et seq*.).

Ballots and voting instructions will be sent by U.S. mail or through electronic mail to all Florida citrus producers of record and may also be obtained from the referendum agents or their appointees.

(Authority: 7 U.S.C. 601-674.)

Erin Morris
Administrator,
*Agricultural Marketing Service***.**

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