

USDA expects quick approval for genetically engineered virus to combat citrus greening disease in Florida

The Agriculture Department is expected to allow Florida citrus growers to start using a genetically engineered virus to protect trees from citrus greening disease in early 2019.

USDA is planning to issue a statewide permit once the virus is ready, likely in January 2019....

Citrus greening has nearly wiped out Florida's citrus industry. The disease, which currently does not have a cure, has infected almost all of the state's groves over the past decade, resulting in small, under-ripe fruit. The state's production has plummeted as a result. USDA is expecting Florida growers to produce just 50 million boxes of oranges in 2017-2018, 39 percent smaller than the harvest in 2015-2016.

The GE virus, which would make trees resistant to the disease, is being developed by Southern Gardens Citrus Nursery.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [USDA prepared to move quickly on GE citrus virus signoff](#) (behind paywall)