

**Florida Citrus Mutual
2009 State Legislative Agenda**

- To say we have legislative challenges this year in Tallahassee is, an understatement
- Traditionally, State legislators and committees' work should be engaged July 1 to June 30 on 2009-2010 activities. Some of that work is proceeding but a significant amount of time/effort is being spent on the current year budget shortfall - \$2.3 billion dollars.
- Next year's budget shortfall will total an unprecedented (another \$3.5 billion). It is the general consensus that the budget will be balanced by budget cuts and NO new taxes.
- It might have been a good year to "keep our heads down," introduce no new legislation and only react to proposals that would have a serious negative effect, to the citrus industry. Not exactly our position.

- FCM – lead legislation:
 - Seek new FDOC Statutory authority for the FDOC Equalization Tax. The FCM/FDOC proposal could provide an additional \$4 million dollars for marketing or research; partial resolution of the free rider issue; not a new tax?

 - Reauthorize the FDOC as part of the 2008 Sunset Review. Senate (committee) language has been drafted.

 - Protect against raids on Trust Funds
 - FCATF
 - FDACS Inspection and Box Tax
 - FASS

 - Seek General Revenue funds to supplement the Box Tax (last year \$2.0 million)

 - Possibly seek legislative authority for ACT; if requested but may be difficult.

- FCM and other agriculture coalitions
 - Protect the current agriculture sales tax exemption

 - Minimize budget damage to IFAS

- Other
 - Provide FASS authority to utilize their existing Trust Fund dollars to replace field vehicles.

 - Support Florida Citrus Packers and FFVA – a new sales tax exemption on electricity for packinghouses.