

COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE
EMERGENCY ORDER
2026-002

WHEREAS, on February 9, 2026, through Executive Order 26-33 the Governor of the State of Florida declared a state of emergency in 67 counties related to the severe impacts of winter weather, droughts and wildfire risks; and

WHEREAS, from January 31 to February 3, 2026, a powerful wintertime cold front moved across Florida, subjecting the entire State to prolonged freezing temperatures with life-threatening and hazardous wind chills recorded, including new record low temperatures in Central and South Florida; and

WHEREAS, extreme drought conditions extend across Florida causing more than 95% of the State to experience critically dry soils, stressed vegetation and below normal streamflow; and

WHEREAS, these extreme drought conditions coupled with an active weather pattern have contributed to an increase in wildfire activity across the State; and

WHEREAS, such prolonged freezing temperatures and extreme fluctuations in weather conditions impact Florida's agricultural industry statewide; and

WHEREAS, a large area of the State experienced crop loss and other damages related to these conditions; and

WHEREAS, Section 403.067(7)(d)3., Florida Statutes, requires the Department to perform onsite inspections of each agricultural producer that enrolls in the Department's best management practice (BMP) program to ensure the proper implementation of the applicable practices for the producer; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Florida; pursuant to Executive Order 26-33, Section 3, finds that the special duties and responsibilities resting upon some state agencies in responding to the emergency may require agencies to suspend the application of the statutes, rules, and orders that state agencies administer; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 26-33, Section 3, Subparagraph B, authorizes state agencies to suspend the effect of any regulatory statutes prescribing the procedures for conducting state business or the orders or rules of the agency if strict compliance would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency; and

WHEREAS, the impact of Winter Weather, Droughts and Wildfire Risks has caused financial hardships for many individuals and business in the state of Florida who are licensed and regulated by the Department and may prevent them from timely complying with regulatory statutes and rules.

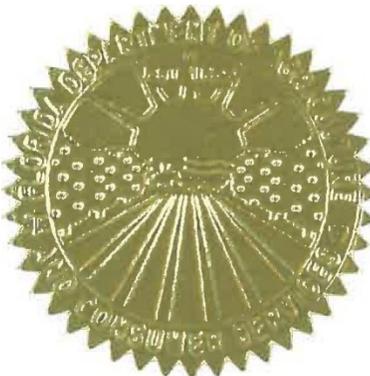
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NOW THEREFORE, in accordance with the powers and authorities conferred by Article IV, Section 4, Florida Constitution, and Executive Order 26-33, I hereby declare the following:

1. Due to the impacts from the extreme Winter Weather, Droughts and associated Wildfire Risks, the onsite verification of best management practices is not feasible and may be impossible for some producers.
2. The portion of Section 403.067(7)(d)3., Florida Statutes, requiring the Department to conduct BMP implementation verification is immediately suspended for the term of this order for producers enrolled in the Citrus, Nursery, Specialty Fruit and Nut Crops, Vegetable and Agronomic Crops, and Sod BMP Manuals in the following counties: Alachua, Baker, Bay, Bradford, Brevard, Broward, Calhoun, Charlotte, Citrus, Clay, Collier, Columbia, DeSoto, Dixie, Duval, Escambia, Flagler, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Glades, Gulf, Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Holmes, Indian River, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lake, Lee, Leon, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Manatee, Marion, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Nassau, Okaloosa, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Seminole, Sumter, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Volusia, Wakulla, Walton, and Washington counties.
3. The due date of each implementation verification shall be extended sixty (60) days for each BMP enrollee identified in 2.
4. Unless specifically suspended in this Order or any other Emergency Order, all other provisions of the statute shall remain in effect.

THIS ORDER shall expire sixty (60) days from the date of execution, unless extended or rescinded by the Commissioner of Agriculture or upon the expiration or rescission of Executive Order 26-33, or any further extensions thereof; whichever occurs first.

EXECUTED February 17, 2026.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wilton Simpson", is written over a horizontal line.

WILTON SIMPSON
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE