Freezes Damage Florida Crops, 1957-1958

Fact Sheet

Event date: Winter of 1957-1958
Event Severity: Brooksville, FL 22°F
Event Severity: Tampa, FL 27°F
Crop Loss: ~ $5.0 Million

Figure 1. Newspaper headlines indicating severe crop damage.

Summary of event:
Florida experienced disastrously cold temperatures during the winter of 1957-1958. Temperatures dropped below 20°F in many locations across Florida, with official temperature readings in Lakeland, FL of 25°F and Tampa, FL with 27°F. An arctic high centered itself over Florida several times throughout the winter season, bringing light winds, calm skies, and freezing temperatures to the state. The Florida citrus crop experienced severe damage estimated at greater than $5 Million (New York Times, 1958).
Figure 2. Patterns for minimum temperature readings, December 1957, and January 1958.
Figure 3. Patterns for minimum temperature readings, February 1958.

Links for more information:
http://www.sercc.com/climateinfo/historical/historical_fl.html,