

<https://www.wmfe.org/proposed-antibiotic-use-against-citrus-greening-raising-health-concern/99043>

PROPOSED ANTIBIOTIC USE AGAINST CITRUS GREENING RAISING HEALTH CONCERN

2 hours ago by [Amy Green](#) (WMFE)

Greening is a disease that weakens citrus trees. The fruit becomes unusable. Photo by Amy Green / WMFE

Environmental groups are raising concern about a proposal to expand the use of antibiotics against a disease that has crippled Florida's iconic citrus industry.

The fear is an increase in antibiotic-resistant diseases for humans.

The groups are asking the Environmental Protection Agency to deny the proposal to expand the use of the antibiotic streptomycin against citrus greening disease.

The Center for Biological Diversity delivered a petition with more than 45,000 signatures to the federal agency. Here is the organization's Emily Knobbe.

"The more we keep doing this the more we end up with these antibiotic-resistant bacteria out in the environment that are way more dangerous than they used to be because they used to be treatable by our modern medicine, by our antibiotics."

Florida's citrus industry says monitoring ensures the antibiotic is used safely. The industry says production is down by two-thirds since the disease appeared 12 years ago.

"We're in the fight of our lives against this disease," says Andrew Meadows of Florida Citrus Mutual. "We're an \$8 billion industry, and we generate about 46,000 jobs, and so we're very important to the state of Florida, and many of the rural communities in Florida in the interior rely on citrus."