

# Flamingo Groves'

## OUTSTANDING DEVELOPMENT

Reprinted from "The Gore Publications,"  
*Fort Lauderdale Daily News*, Monday, December 1, 1930.

### Planting of 470-Acre Area is Described Top New York Market

Topping the New York market by a margin of from \$1 to \$1.50 per package, and at a minimum cost of production of the crop is a real achievement. It is a performance which should appeal to the investor, the so-called "hard-headed" business man seeking to make more dollars through the investment of those which he has already accumulated.

This brief epitome, however encompasses concrete experience of growing and marketing oranges on the muck lands of the Florida Everglades, which up to a decade or so ago growers considered unfit for citrus culture. These concrete results may be

confirmed by access to records of what has been done in the Davie section of the Everglades.

### Investments

These results have already attracted substantial investment and the extensive planting of oranges and grapefruit on the muck soil of the Everglades by no less eminent horticulture authorities than Frank Stirling, former chief inspector of the Florida State Plant board, following many years experience and observation in both California and Florida.

One of the most outstanding citrus developments on the muck lands of the Everglades at this time is the 470 acre planting of Flamingo Groves, Inc., which company began its development with a setting of 80 acres five miles

west and a half mile north of Davie, in March 1927 with Floyd L. Wray as president and general manager and Frank Stirling as one of its substantial investors as vice president and superintendent of planting operation.

### 1 to 3 Years

This project now embracing 470 acres of oranges, mostly late Valencias and Lu Gim Gongs, ranging in the age from 1 to 3 years, presents an imposing picture of the citrus culture. The size and condition of the trees relatively surpass those of groves of twice the age on the sand and other soils of south Florida and with an expenditure of less than half the usual cost of fertilizer.

The original planting of 80 acres has been substantially augmented by the setting of 390 acres more to the same

*Founded in 1926 by Hollywood realtors Floyd L. and Jane Wray and Davie horticulturist Frank Stirling, Flamingo Groves was a unique combination of commercial orange grove, real estate venture, and experimental citrus laboratory. Its growth and success during the succeeding decade illustrates the renewed importance of agriculture to Broward County during the Depression years. This article, describing the groves' operations, appeared in "The Gore Publications," a 1930 special supplement to the Fort Lauderdale Daily News describing the area's commercial establishments and scenic attractions and aimed primarily at tourists.*

*Modern readers may note several items of contemporary interest, including the suitability of south Florida for citrus culture, a subject which has attracted attention in the wake of devastating freezes in the central Florida citrus belt in the 1980s and 1990, and the 1930 introduction of melaleuca trees, now considered undesirable, as windbreaks at Flamingo Groves. The photos accompanying this article are from the collection of the groves' sales manager, Clarence E. Hammerstein, courtesy of the Hollywood Historical Society.*

*Although the original Flamingo Groves corporation was dissolved in 1966, seven years after the death of Floyd Wray, a successor corporation has retained the name to the present day. At the Wray home on the original grove site, the Floyd L. Wray Memorial Foundation has established Flamingo Gardens, a sixty-acre botanical garden and arboretum with an Everglades museum and nature center.*



In the photo above, Flamingo Groves founder Floyd L. Wray (on right, with shovel) plants the groves' first tree, February 22, 1927. At right is a document from Flamingo Groves' articles of incorporation.

A RECORD  
of the  
ORGANIZATION AND INCORPORATION  
of  
FLAMINGO GROVES, INC.

duly incorporated under the laws of the State of Florida on the 31st day of December, A. D. 1926, with its principal place of business in the City of Hollywood, County of Broward and State of Florida.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we, FLOYD L. WRAY, FRANK STERLING and JANE WRAY, being all of the original subscribers to the Articles of Incorporation of said corporation, for the purpose of the adoption and identification of this book, with the records contained therein, as the original record of said corporation, have hereto subscribed our names and caused the corporate seal to be affixed this 2nd day of January, A. D. 1927.

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varieties of oranges during the last three years besides 20 acres of what the Flamingo Groves people are pleased to call a "citrus laboratory." This 20 acre planting embraces 51 varieties of the citrus family. It has been set not only as an aid to the company in its observation of the future propagation, but as a sort of laboratory open to the public or any other growers who may be interested in citrus development in south Florida.

Beside this "citrus laboratory" a tract of ten acres has been set to all the tropical and sub-tropical fruits the Flamingo Groves Company has been able to gather through private research and the aid of the federal department of agriculture. This ten acres on sand land of an elevated area known as Long Hammock near the south end of the company's property, now presents 450 different kinds of tropical and sub-tropical fruits.

#### Laboratory

The 20-acre "citrus laboratory" tract presents a concrete demonstration of the successful propagation of citrus on the muck soil of the Florida Everglades with a minimum of fertilization, from the limeberry about the size of buckshot to the huge shaddock, one of the

most massive of citrus fruits. In this 20-acre tract may be seen at any time of the year certain of these fruits in all stages from bloom to the ripe fruit.

Scientific research indicates that the three essentials in citrus culture are plant food, moisture in the proper amount, and abundant sunshine. The elevation at Flamingo Groves, with the drainage facilities that have been provided, appears from the maximum growth obtained, to make that an ideal section for the production of the orange. Not only do oranges grown here acquire a maximum juice content but attain attractive size and appearance combining in an acme of marketability and hence the demand for this fruit at a top price in the nation's foremost market, even at the peak of market receipts.

#### Fertilization

The minimum fertilization required on the muck land of the Everglades in the production of citrus fruits is a very important item and one worthy the careful consideration of the prospective citrus planter or investor in the citrus property. C.F. [C.P.] Hammerstein, sales manager of the Flamingo Groves property, pointed out that the average net return to the grower of

citrus in the United States is 63 per cent per box, whereas with a production cost of 50 per cent less on muck land his grove income should be double this amount. This estimate is further strengthened by the greater demand and higher price obtainable for this fruit in Northern markets.

#### 63 Markets

As for over-production, statistics show that there are now 63 large markets in the country for citrus fruits that are but slightly flooded at the peak of the harvest, due to improper distribution, which may be overcome by better marketing. Besides these, he pointed out, there are innumerable smaller markets susceptible of development throughout the country which should profitably absorb all the citrus fruit now grown.

Another important factor in this connection which was called attention to, is the fact that the late Valencia and Lu Gim Gong oranges being grown on the Flamingo Groves project do not come in until June or July, after most of the citrus crop of the country has been marketed. Naturally this affords a strong demand and the possibility of a much better market price for the crop.



Early Flamingo Groves advertising label, c.1927.



This group, photographed at Flamingo Groves in 1928, includes three of the groves' founders: Floyd L. Wray (far left), Frank Stirling (second from left), and Clarence E. Hammerstein (second from right).

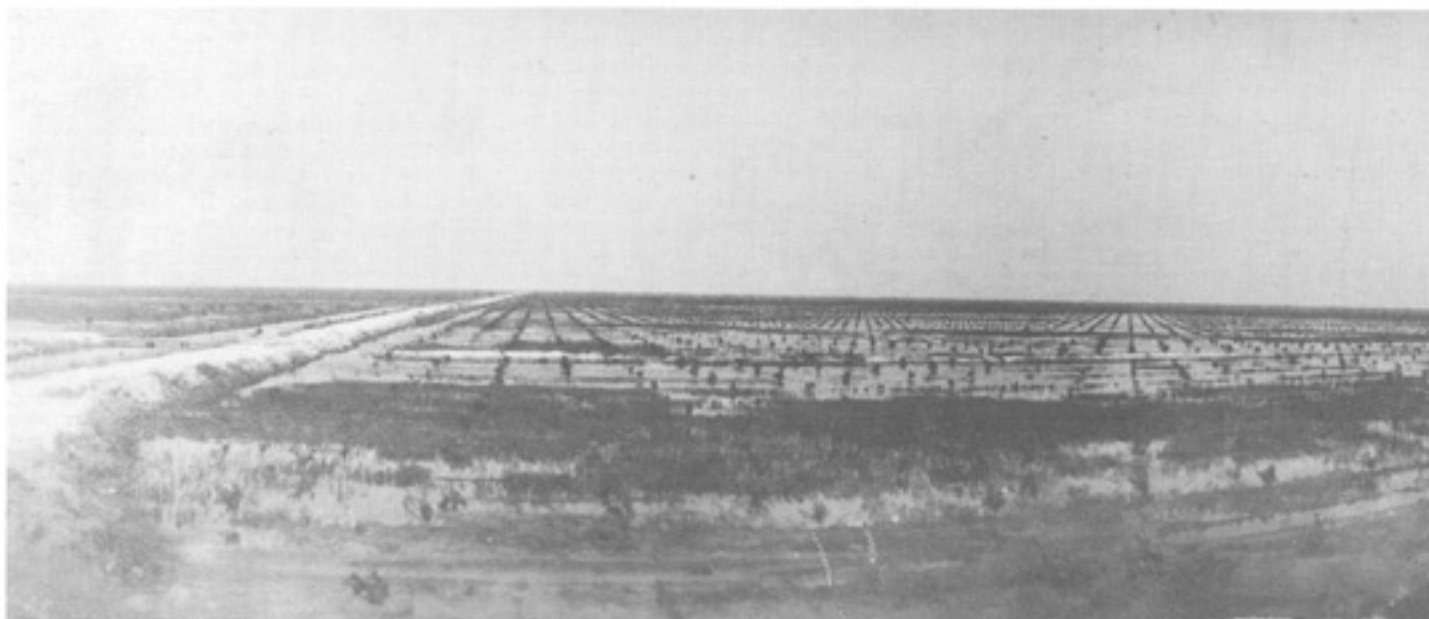
Intersection of the main drainage canal on the Flamingo Groves property with the South New River canal, with an outlet into the Atlantic Ocean, makes it possible to carry this fruit, after it has been packed at the grove, by barge direct to steamships or rail transportation at Port Everglades for northern shipment.

In addition to the 470 acres of oranges already planted on the Flamingo project 160 acres more are to be

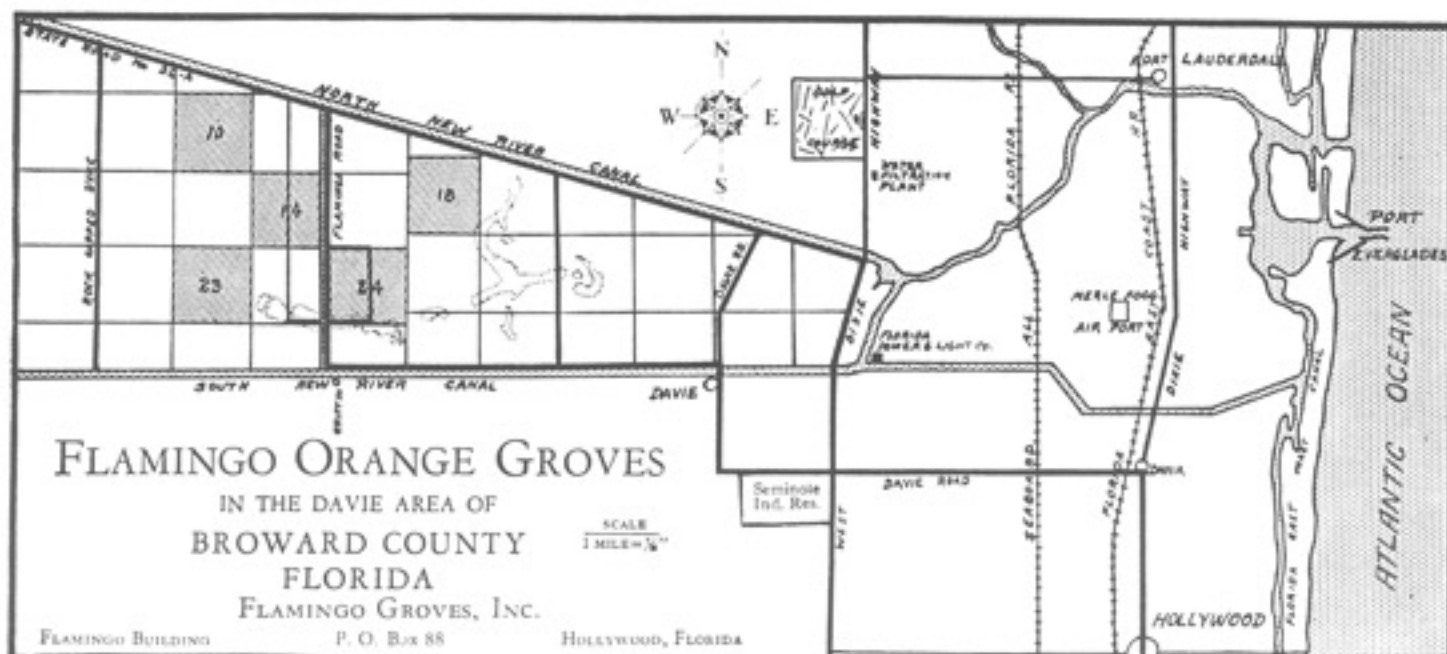
set the coming year, which will be further augmented up to a total of 3,000 or more acres. For future plantings between 14,000 and 15,000 seedlings are now growing in the seven acre nursery on the property, while seed for 45,000 more orange plants have recently been planted. The older plants will be budded and sufficiently developed for setting in the field during the season of 1932. The plants required for the 160 acres during the coming season

will be stock grown from the Glen St. Mary and similar outstanding nurseries of the state.

It is doubtful if any citrus or other fruit project in the state is carrying on more comprehensive research work relative to cultural methods and fertilization than that established at Flamingo Groves. Nor is this scientific work being confined to citrus alone. Similar data is continually being gathered and tabulated on the culture



Flamingo Groves as it appeared in the late 1920s.



Map showing the location of the Flamingo Groves property, from a late 1920s advertising brochure.

of other tropical and sub-tropical fruits, while the Flamingo technical library on tropical horticulture in their Hollywood office is perhaps more extensive and comprehensive than any other individual collection in Florida at this time.

Recently the management of this property has taken up the matter of windbreaks, and after extended and careful investigation, has adopted the

Melaleuca Leucadendron, a species of what is commercially known here as the Cajuput, which will be extensively set throughout the property as a protection against windstorms. Eight hundred plants of this will soon be ready to set while thousands of others are being grown in the nursery.

The Flamingo property has also been provided with canals and lateral ditches affording ample drainage

during periods of excessive rainfall, which may be supplemented by pumping units if found necessary.

Beginning about December 10th, the company conducts daily complimentary trips to their properties, and all who are interested in seeing the Everglades Orange Groves and winter truck gardens are invited to join these parties.



### Complimentary Guest-Trip Reservation

Reservation for a visit to Flamingo Orange Groves and Tropical Botanical Gardens, at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock, on date below

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Florida Address \_\_\_\_\_

Northern Address \_\_\_\_\_

Representative \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### FLAMINGO GROVES, Inc.

1927 Hollywood Boulevard

Phone No. 20

Hollywood, Florida

Above is a complimentary ticket issued to visitors attracted to Flamingo Groves by company advertising and articles such as the one reprinted here. At left, visitors pose with the steam shovel used to excavate the groves' numerous drainage ditches.