THE OCCURRENCE OF THE CITRUS TRIPS,
SCIRTOTHRIPS CITRI
(THYSANOPTERA: THRIPIDAE) IN FLORIDA

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During 1986 survey of grape insects at the Florida A&M University Center for Viticultural Sciences at Tallahassee, several species of thrips were swept from foliage and flowers of muscadine grapes. Specimens were sent to the Division of Plant Industry, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, for identification and among them were specimens of the citrus thrips, Scirtothrips citri (Moulton), collected in late May. This identification was confirmed by Dr. K. Sakimura, Honolulu, HI. Additional records for this species from the same locality are from mid May, 1986, and early June, 1987. On May 30, 1988 the citrus thrips was collected from muscadine grapes on the Florida A&M University West Farm, located 6.5km southwest of the Viticulture Center.

The citrus thrips is a serious pest of citrus orchards in California, Arizona and Texas (Peairs & Davidson 1956). Cline (1986) considers it a potential agent of grape berry scarring although Jensen et al. (1981) claim that it is at most a minor pest of grapes in California. They attribute berry scarring to the activities of the western flower thrips, Frankliniella occidentalis (Pergrande), which has also recently appeared in Florida (Denmark 1986).

In North Florida the citrus thrips has been found in association with other species, especially the eastern flower thrips, Frankliniella tritici (Pitich) and Iloprocius macrocellatus Watson (Flowers 1987). In most collections citrus thrips have been few in numbers along with large numbers of eastern flower thrips. Although it was once felt that the citrus thrips could not survive humid Florida summers (Denmark, pers. comm.), its appearance for the past three years indicates that it is established in at least North Florida.

REFERENCES CITED