



Florida farmers and ranchers are among the most proficient producers in the nation, growing more than 280 commodities in a commercial scale and generating farm cash receipts of more than \$6 billion annually.

But producing a product is only half the goal; proper marketing is crucial to the financial success of any business.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is charged with protecting producers under the Agricultural License and Bond Law, which helps assure that those covered by the law receive proper accounting and payment for their products.

This brochure explains how the law offers protection when you sell your products. But for the law to be effective, you need to keep written records of all transactions and deal only with those who have the appropriate license from the Department.

What You Need To Know

Under the Florida Agricultural License and Bond Law, any person who does business in the state by buying, receiving, soliciting, handling, or negotiating agricultural products from producers or their agents must be licensed and bonded by the Florida Department

of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Farmers who buy or handle agricultural products from other farmers must also comply. The limited exceptions to the law are as follows:

- (1) Farmers or groups of farmers in the sale of agricultural products grown by themselves.
- (2) A dealer in agricultural products who pays at the time of purchase with United States cash currency or a cash equivalent, such as a money order, cashier's check, wire transfer, electronic funds transfer, or debit card.
- (3) A dealer in agricultural products who operates as a bonded licensee under the federal Packers and Stockyards Act.
- (4) Dealers who purchase less than \$1,000 worth of agricultural products from Florida producers or their agents or representatives during the peak month of such purchases within the calendar year.

What Products Are Covered By The Law?

Every agricultural product grown in Florida, except citrus*, tobacco, and sugar cane, is covered by the Agricultural License and Bond Law.

(* Limes are the only citrus crop covered)

What Is The Purpose Of The Law?

The law is intended to facilitate the marketing of Florida agricultural products by encouraging a better understanding between buyers and sellers, and by providing a marketplace that is relatively free of unfair trading practices and defaults. It helps assure that transactions are recorded properly, and that the buyer is financially responsible.

How Does It Work?

Any producer or producer's agent who feels he has been damaged by a dealer's failure to make



proper accounting or payment for agricultural products may file a complaint with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Complaints must be filed within six months of the date of sale or delivery of the agricultural product and must be for at least \$500.

Each complaint must be accompanied by a \$50 filing fee which will be added to the total complaint amount and may be reimbursed if the complainant is successful.

Who Administers The Law?

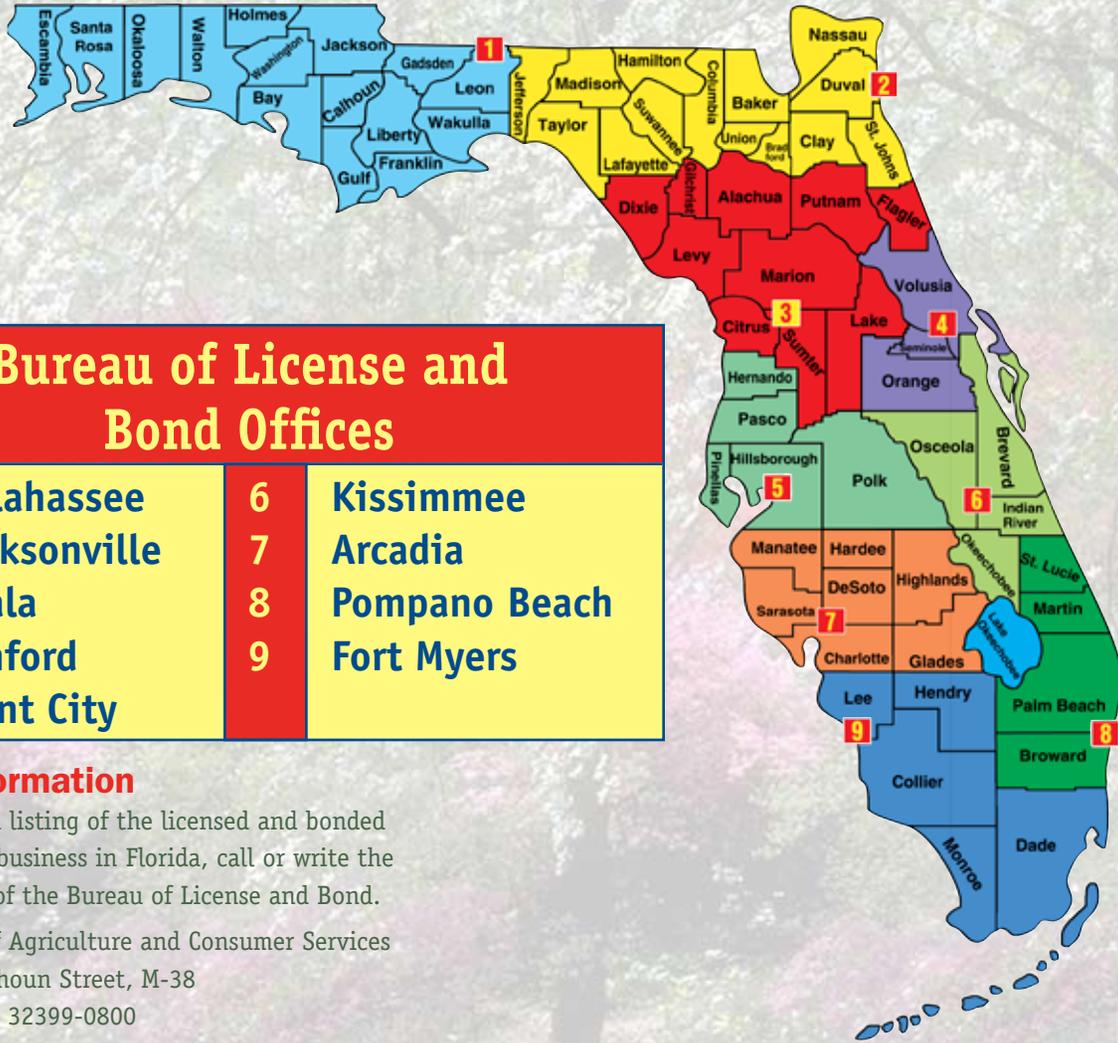
The Florida Agricultural License and Bond Law, Chapter 604.15-604.34 F.S., is administered by the Department's Bureau of License and Bond, which has recovered millions of dollars for Florida farmers since the bureau was established in 1941.

How Effective Is The Law?

In recent years, the bureau has recovered nearly \$1 million annually for Florida producers or their agents. This does not include disputes settled before a formal complaint was filed.

What Should Producers Do?

- Deal only with properly licensed dealers and check their business reputation.
- Become familiar with the marketing process and any unique characteristics of the product being sold.
- Make sure that a clear understanding is reached on the details of each transaction, including the responsibilities of all parties involved.
- Make a detailed, written record of each transaction.
- Transactions handled by phone should be confirmed the same day by a wire or fax to the buyer or agent.
- Make sure terms of sale are on the invoice/delivery ticket and that the receiver signs on delivery.
- Make sure that buyers get the quantity and quality of products purchased.



Bureau of License and Bond Offices

1	Tallahassee	6	Kissimmee
2	Jacksonville	7	Arcadia
3	Ocala	8	Pompano Beach
4	Sanford	9	Fort Myers
5	Plant City		

Other Information

To obtain a listing of the licensed and bonded dealers doing business in Florida, call or write the headquarters of the Bureau of License and Bond.

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
 407 South Calhoun Street, M-38
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-0800
 850-488-4101

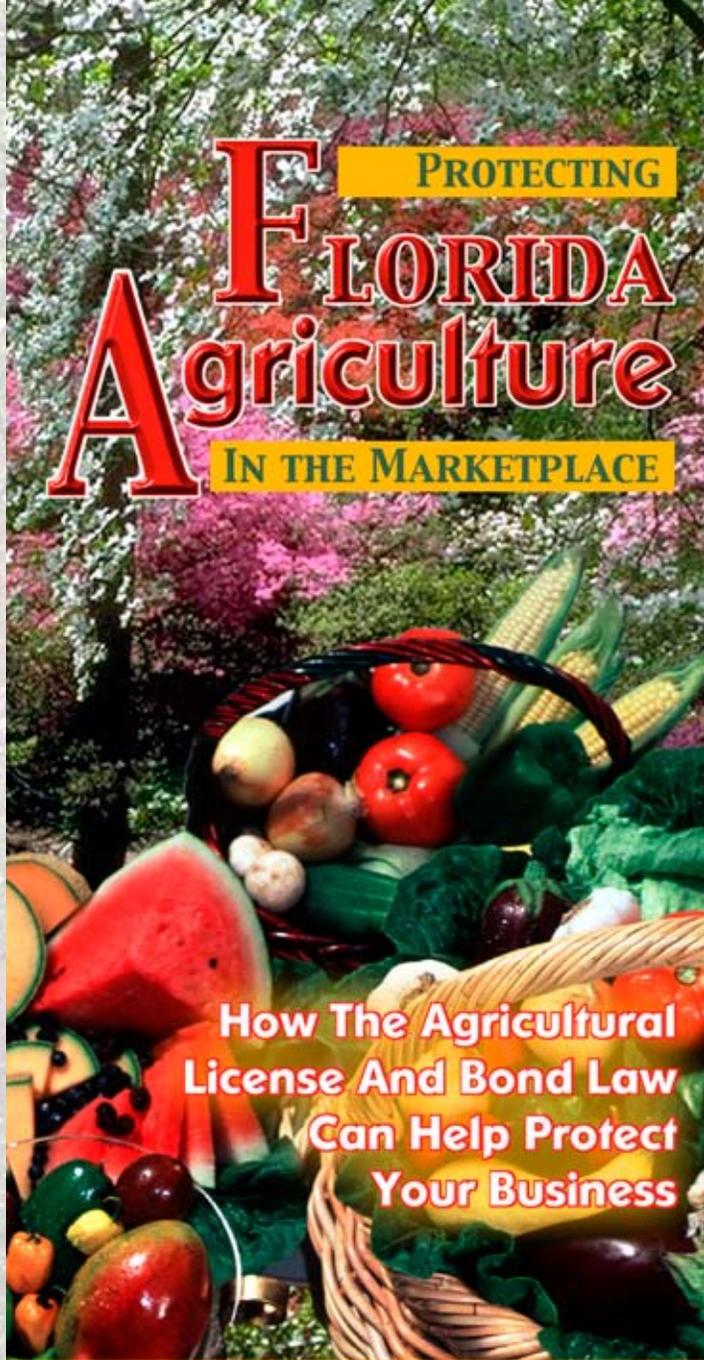
The list of dealers and other information about the Agricultural License and Bond Law also are available on the Internet at



www.florida-agriculture.com



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PROTECTING FLORIDA AGRICULTURE IN THE MARKETPLACE

How The Agricultural License And Bond Law Can Help Protect Your Business



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services