

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Strawn Historic Citrus Packing House District

other names/site number Bob White Historic Citrus Packing House District

2. Location

street & number 5707 Lake Winona Road N/A not for publication

city or town DeLeon Springs N/A vicinity

state Florida code FL county Volusia code 127 zip code 32130

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Suzanne P. Walker / Deputy SHPO 8/3/93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

[Signature]

Date of Action

9/13/93

entered in the National Register

Strawn Historic Citrus Packing House District
Name of Property

Volusia, Florida
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>12</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
		sites
<u>3</u>		structures
		objects
<u>15</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Citrus Industry Resources of Theodore Strawn, Inc. 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/Processing
Agriculture/Outbuilding

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/Processing
Agriculture/Outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style/Metal Frame Vernacular
No Style/Wood Frame Vernacular
No Style/Masonry Vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Metal
roof Metal
other Glass

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Industry

Period of Significance

1921-1942

Significant Dates

1921

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Strawn Historic Citrus Packing House District
Name of Property

Volusia, Florida
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2 approximately

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	1	7
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4	6	5	0	0	0
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3	2	2	3	1	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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Zone Easting Northing

4

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 See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carl Shiver, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date July 21, 1993

street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Theodore Strawn, Inc.

street & number Post Office Box 68 telephone _____

city or town DeLeon Springs state Florida zip code 32130-0068

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Description

Summary Paragraph

The Strawn Historic Citrus Packing House District, located at 5707 Lake Winona Road in DeLeon Springs, is an approximately two acre industrial area comprising sixteen contributing and noncontributing resources. Twelve buildings and three structures erected between 1921 and 1942 contribute to the character of the property. There is only one noncontributing building. The central feature of the district is the packing house which is used for the grading, sorting, and packing of citrus fruit. All of the other buildings and structures were constructed to support this operation. With the exception of the packing house and a barn, the buildings in the district are relatively small. All of the resources retain their original functions, and the machinery of the packing house is in working order. The buildings are all vernacular in style and employ wood frame, metal frame, and masonry construction techniques.

Supporting Narrative

The Strawn Historic Citrus Packing House Historic District is located immediately north of DeLeon Springs on a site bounded by Lake Winona Road on the west, U.S. Highway 17 on the north, a drainage ditch on the east, and the CSX Railroad right-of-way and County Road 3 on the south. The district occupies a rectangular tract of land whose boundaries are marked by a wire fence. The surrounding area is rural, and buildings and structures in the vicinity are widely scattered and include a U.S. Forest Service fire tower and support buildings and private residences, ferneries, and farms.

The historic district contains good examples of frame, industrial, and masonry vernacular construction. The packing house, the landmark building in the district is a two-story, metal frame industrial building (A) measuring 142 X 78 feet at its base. The exterior walls of the structure are composed of steel alloy panels. Its frame consists of skeletal steel members that are mounted on a poured concrete foundation. The windows are metal frames with wire glass panes.

The building has a distinctive tripartite sawtooth roof designed to maximize the distributing of natural light within the interior of the packing house (photos 1, 2). Each roof section is surfaced with corrugated metal panels. The walls of the building are composed of stamped rectangular panels, in which have been set banks of fixed and pivot wire glass windows. The windows,

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Description

set in metal mullions and transoms, are supported by steel panels at the foundation and corners, and from vertical members that separate each column of windows. Access to the interior is provided through a metal door near the northwest corner of the building.

Three pairs of large metal sliding doors are found at the loading platform on the west elevation of the building. This elevation also consists primarily of stamped metal panels interrupted by several window clusters (photo 2). The south elevation is similar to the north, with the exception of a foreman's office that protrudes from the wall surface, a pair of loading doors, and a conveyor that extends from the southwest corner of the building to the nearby cull house (photo 1). The east elevation contains numerous window panels and a pedestrian door (photo 3).

The interior of the building contains much of the original equipment that was installed when the building was constructed (photos 11-15). Although some machinery has been upgraded or repaired, many of the original mechanical devices that scrub, rinse, dry, grade, and size oranges remain. Belts, shafts, and pulleys used to power the equipment also remain. Although the packing house is fully operational, it has not been used with any frequency since the early 1980s, when hard freezes devastated local groves.

The Engine House (F), a frame vernacular building located some twenty feet east of the packing house, has a gable roof with a ridge ventilator, corrugated metal surfacing for the roof and exterior walls, metal double-hung sash windows with 4/4 lights, and a poured concrete foundation (photo 6). It historically served as the power plant for the district, containing steam boilers and a dynamo that operated the equipment in the packing house.

The Fertilizer House (D), lies about sixty feet south of the machinery house (photo 8). The wood frame building has a gable roof crowned with two gable monitors. The roof and monitors are surfaced with corrugated metal. The exterior walls are covered with stamped steel panels. A metal door on the west elevation and two large sliding stamped steel doors on the north provide access to the interior. Double-hung sash windows with 6/6 lights provide natural interior lighting.

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Description

The Office Building (B), is a masonry vernacular structure located forty feet north of the packing house. It has a gable roof with metal 3-V crimp surfacing, two brick chimneys, 3/1 light double hung sash windows, and stucco exterior wall surfacing (photo 5). An entrance porch has a flat roof and small curvilinear parapet. Although the gable roof covers the original flat roof and parapets, the building otherwise retains its integrity. The original doors, hardware, counters, safes, picture moldings, furniture, and interior floor plan remain intact.

Noncontributing Building

A two-story barn (J) lying sixty feet east of the packing house (photo 9) is the only noncontributing building in the district. Completed about 1955, it displays a gable roof with corrugated metal surfacing, shed extension, exposed rafter ends, corrugated metal exterior wall surfacing, and fixed windows. Although the barn is the second largest building in the district, its location at the eastern edge of the district mitigates any visual disruption. In addition, its massing, materials, and design are compatible with the existing historic buildings.

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Contributing & Noncontributing Resources

Contributing Resources

<u>Location</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Date</u>
5707 Lake Winona Road		
A Packing House	Metal Frame Vernacular	1921
B Office Building	Masonry Vernacular	1926
C Storage Building	Wood Frame Vernacular	c. 1940
D Fertilizer House	Wood Frame Vernacular	1922
E Box House	Wood Frame Vernacular	1921
F Engine House	Wood Frame Vernacular	1921
G & H Steel Tanks	N/A	c. 1935
I Storage Building	Wood Frame Vernacular	c. 1941
K Grease Rack	Wood Frame Vernacular	c. 1942
L Tire House	Wood Frame Vernacular	c. 1923
M Shed	Wood Frame Vernacular	c. 1942
N Blacksmith Shop	Wood Frame Vernacular	c. 1923
O Shed	Wood Frame Vernacular	c. 1925
P Water Tower	N/A	1921

Noncontributing Resources

J Barn	Frame Vernacular	1955
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Photographs

List of Photographs

1. Building A, Strawn Historic Citrus Packing House District
2. Deleon Springs, Florida
3. Sidney Johnston
4. 1992
5. Historic Property Associates
6. Southwest Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 1 of 15

The district name and items 2-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.

1. Building A
6. West Elevation, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 2 of 15

1. Building A
6. North Elevation of Packing House, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 3 of 15

1. Strawn Historic Citrus Packing House District
6. Entrance to District, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 4 of 15

1. Building B, Office Building
6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 5 of 15

1. Building F, Engine House and Storage Tanks (G & H)
6. Main (North) Facade, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 6 of 15

1. Building E, Box House
6. Main (North) Facade and West Elevation, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 7 of 15

1. Building D, Fertilizer House
6. Main (North) Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 8 of 15

1. Building J, Barn
6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 9 of 15

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**National Register of Historic Places
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Photographs

1. Building K, Grease Rack
6. West and South Elevations, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 10 of 15

1. Building A
6. Interior View, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 11 of 15

1. Building A
6. Interior View, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 12 of 15

1. Building A
6. Interior View, Looking West
7. Photo No. 13 of 15

1. Building A
6. Interior View, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 14 of 15

1. Building A,
6. Interior View, Looking East
7. Photo No. 15 of 15

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Significance

Summary Paragraph

The Strawn Historic Citrus Packing House District is significant at the local level under criterion A in the areas of agriculture and industry. The district is among the most complete historic citrus packing complexes presently documented in the state of Florida and contains a variety of buildings and structures erected between 1921 and 1942 that are devoted to preparation and packing of oranges for shipment to market. Resources in the district include a citrus packing plant where citrus fruit was washed, sorted, packed, and shipped. Support buildings and structures include an office, box house, fertilizer house, blacksmith shop, and water tower. The district contains good examples of a variety of vernacular industrial buildings constructed of wood, metal, and masonry. The packing plant district is still owned and operated by the Theodore Strawn Company, historically one of the most important citrus operations in the town of DeLeon Springs and Central Florida. The district contributes to the Citrus Industry Resources of Theodore Strawn, Inc. multiple property nomination under the historic context and property types defined in sections E and F of nomination cover.

Supporting Narrative

Theodore Strawn was born in Illinois in 1870. He attended Northwestern University where had studied law and was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1896. He came to Florida in the early 1880s to visit his parents, who in 1880 had settled in DeLeon Springs (then called Spring Garden). His father, Robert Strawn, was a winter resident of the community and had purchased several citrus groves in the area. The family also continued to maintain a farm in Illinois, returning there each spring. Theodore Strawn began making regular visits to Florida after 1897 and about 1905 began investing in real estate in DeLeon Springs and, like his father, purchased a number of citrus groves in the area.

Theodore Strawn assembled large citrus holdings over the next two decades, in part by acquiring existing groves that other growers could not make profitable. Through careful cultivation, using the latest scientific methods, he quickly made the groves profitable. He began his citrus packing operations about 1909, establishing his own "Bob White" brand. At first, he worked out of a small tent, moving from grove to grove boxing oranges. In 1912, Strawn constructed a two-story wood frame packing house located near the DeLeon Springs railroad depot. By 1915 he had become one of the major citrus growers in Central Florida,

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Significance

become one of the major citrus growers in Central Florida, cultivating nearly 100 acres of groves and shipping approximately 20,000 boxes of oranges annually.

In 1909, Strawn had joined other Florida growers to organize the Florida Citrus Exchange. However, he left the exchange in 1911 because he felt his fruit was superior in quality to that produced by most of the other members of the organization and decided he could more effectively market his product on his own. Within a very short time Strawn had found buyers for his fruit throughout the North and Midwest. Because of its consistent high quality, Strawn's fruit was in high demand and regularly brought a higher price than the majority of the other Florida and California citrus producers.

Strawn's original packing house burned in February 1921. A few months later he purchased the tract of land on which the present packing house complex stands and had the Atlantic Coast Line (now CSX) Railroad Company extend a rail siding to the site. Strawn then contracted with the Truscon Steel Company of Youngstown, Ohio to manufacture a prefabricated fireproof building to house the a new packing plant. The metal and glass structure produced by the company contained approximately 5,000 square feet of floor space and was designed to provide a generous amount of natural lighting. The sectional building was shipped by rail to Strawn's site where it was assembled and set upon a poured a concrete foundation. The work was complete by December of 1921 and had cost Strawn approximately \$75,000. (Photos 1-3).

Strawn himself designed some of the packing equipment installed in the plant, but much of the large apparatus was purchased from the Skinner Machinery Company of Dunedin, Florida. An engine house containing a forty horse power steam boiler and dynamo was also completed in 1921 (photo 6). A drive shaft connected the engine room with equipment in the packing house through a tunnel in the poured concrete floor. About the same time the packing house was completed, Strawn had a box house (photo 7), erected in which to assemble field and shipping crates. A water tower and tank (photo 4), built some years earlier, was moved from its original site near DeLand and reassembled at the new packing facility. A fertilizer house (photo 8) and several of the other outbuildings were completed in 1922 and 1923.

Theodore Strawn prided himself on the high quality of the citrus produced by his groves. His workers wore gloves in both

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Significance

the field and packing plant, allowing Strawn to claim that "the first human hand to touch the fruit was that of the customer." The citrus was rolled into field boxes rather than dumped. Afterward it was placed into a water tank at the packing house where mechanical devices scrubbed, rinsed, dried, graded, and sized it. Packing house employees were trained for specific tasks, ranging from equipment repair to grading fruit. His "Bob White" and "Intrinsic" brands were each separated into three varieties based upon color of the peel. A fine coat of paraffin was then sprayed onto the fruit, and marking machines placed the "Bob White" and "Intrinsic" seals on each orange. Packers then wrapped each piece of fruit in tissue paper and placed it in boxes for shipment to customers.

To assure that the fruit sold under his brand names were the finest quality fruit, Strawn processed only citrus produced by his own groves, which amounted to nearly 500 acres. By the time of his death in 1925, Strawn's markets extended throughout the United States and included Great Britain. Strawn began shipping fruit to England and Scotland in 1923, and one of the crowning achievements of his life came in 1924 when the renowned Frascati's Restaurant on Oxford Street in London featured Bob White oranges and tangerines in a Christmas Eve display. After his death at the age of 55, operation of the packing plant and other Strawn Company interests in DeLeon Springs passed to Theodore Strawn's wife and sons.

The heirs continued to make additions to the packing house complex. An office building (Photo 5) that was under construction when Theodore Strawn died was completed in 1926. Other buildings and structures were added in the 1930s and early 1940s, including two 1,000 gallon water tanks purchased about 1935 (photo 6) and storage and grease rack buildings (photo 10) that were erected on the eve of World War II. An increase in the demand for commercial orange juice in the post war period prompted the construction of an addition to the packing house in 1947 of a conveyor and cull house for processing juice oranges (photo 1). Theodore Strawn, Inc. continues to maintain the packing house and support buildings. Very little citrus has been processed at the packing house since a hard freeze devastated many of the citrus groves in the DeLeon area in 1983. Still, the packing plant remains fully operational and the equipment in a good state of repair.

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Section I: Major Bibliographical References

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Section number 9 Page 2

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Section number 10 Page 1

Boundary Description and Justification

Boundary Description

As shown on the district map. The district is surrounded by a wire fence that forms a square enclosing the citrus packing house and its outbuildings.

Boundary Justification

The district as shown on the map contains all of the buildings historically associated with the immediate operation of the citrus packing plant.