

\$2.6 million paid for acreage

A Massachusetts investor, purchaser of the 7,000-acre Taft Ranch two years ago for \$5 million, has bought 441 acres in southwest Orange County for \$2.6 million.

The acreage is broken into two parcels on Steer Lake Road west of the Florida Turnpike. The smaller of the two pieces, 84 acres, lies in orange grove and has frontage on Steer Lake.

A fill dirt excavation business is operated on the larger tract, 357 acres abutting the turnpike.

Dr. Robert E. O'Brien, of Maury L. Carter & Associates, said the buyer, the Edward J. Poitras Trust, has no immediate plans for the property other than to continue the excavation business.

O'Brien and Maury Carter were the brokers in the transaction.

The two parcels were assembled by the late L. Frank Roper, a citrus magnate and member of a pioneer family. Handling the sale of the property as trustee was Roper's son-in-law, D. L. Dupenthaler.

In 1978, the Poitras Trust bought the huge Taft Ranch south of the Martin Andersen Bee Line Expressway.

The acreage was bought for long term investment and currently is being used for cattle grazing.