

An Equal Opportunity Institution

SOLUTIONS

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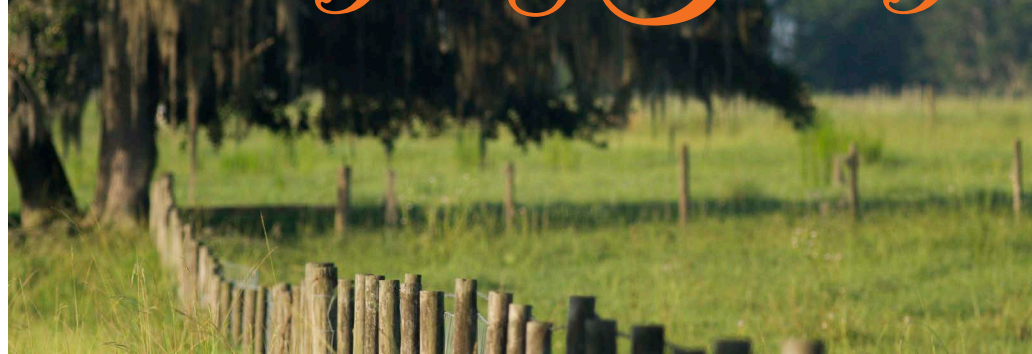


UF/IFAS Extension *Comings and Goings* is a monthly newsletter distributed by the Office of the Dean for Extension via e-mail and on the UF/IFAS Extension web site at <http://extadmin.ifas.ufl.edu>.

If you have any suggestions or would like to submit your own recognition or short article of interest, please send them to Valkyrie Shah.

Please feel free to also forward any questions or comments about this periodical to Valkyrie Shah at valkyrieshah@ufl.edu.

UF/IFAS Extension *Comings & Goings* FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN FOR EXTENSION



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Finding Common Ground in Fisheries Management (pg 10)

Betty Staughler—Florida Sea Grant recently facilitated a joint advisory panel of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council.

Nassau Extension Expanding Yulee Office (pg 10)

Rebecca Jordi—After years of persuasion, the UF/IFAS Extension Nassau County office in Yulee is finally getting some elbow room!

Helping Flagler County Farms Adapt to Long-term Survival (pg 11)

Mark Warren—Programming efforts and on-farm support from UF/IFAS Extension in Flagler County have been instrumental in helping many family farms transition from sod to other areas of production.

Florida 4-H Attends Presidential Inauguration (pg 11)

Jean Hink—Forty-four Florida 4-H youth joined more than 500 young people from across the country to learn about our political process in the nation's capital during the presidential inauguration.

MEET YOUR SPECIALIST



Ramdas Kanissery,
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I came to the University of Florida from EAG Laboratories in Easton, Maryland where I was working as a senior chemist in the environmental fate

division. My specialties are weed science, fate and transport of herbicides, and chromatographic analysis of herbicides. I also take special interest in environmental fate of contaminants and pesticide kinetics modeling.

I joined as a faculty member at UF/IFAS (SWFREC) in late October. I grew up in Kerala, a state in southern India known as a tropical paradise of waving palms and wide, sandy beaches— just like Florida. In 2014 I received my Ph.D. in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and subsequently pursued a post-doctoral position there.

My previous research programs explored the knowledge gap in the fate and degradation of herbicides in soils enduring different environmental conditions. In my research, I utilized such approaches as radiochromatography and kinetic evaluations to study the influence of soil factors such as aeration, soil amendments, mineralogy, etc. on the persistence/mobility of extensively used herbicides in corn-soybean rotations from the US Midwest.

At SWFREC, my research and extension programs will focus on the weed control and herbicide use associated with citrus and vegetable production in south Florida. I plan to elucidate the mechanisms involved in the functional efficacy, retention and transport of herbicides used in Florida's agriculture soils, with particular emphasis on excessively drained sandy soils and sandy soil textures in combination with high water tables.

I am so happy to be a part of the UF/IFAS team. I am very excited about the prospect of having multi-disciplinary collaboration opportunities with the faculty here, and also a productive association with the growers.



Carey Minter,
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I came to the University of Florida from the USDA-ARS Invasive Plant Research Laboratory in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. I was a post-doctoral

researcher working on the biological control of aquatic weeds in the greater Everglades ecosystem.

My specialties are biological control of invasive weeds and invasion biology/ecology. I also take special interest in remote sensing, geographic information systems, integrated pest management of invasive weeds, and increasing the accessibility of hands-on STEM education for school-aged children, especially for groups that are underrepresented in the sciences.

In 2012, I received my Ph.D. in Entomology from the University of Arkansas. I have been involved with the study of invasion biology and invasive plants since I started my master's program in 2004. After receiving my master's degree, I worked for the Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health at The University of Georgia, where I learned of the importance of cooperation across local, state, and federal agencies to successfully control widespread invasive species. In 2009, I returned to the University of Arkansas to pursue my true passion, studying the biological control of invasive weeds. I believe that biological control is one of the most effective tools to ameliorate the damage caused by invasive plants. Some of my goals as a researcher at the University of Florida are to investigate ways to increase the safety and effectiveness of biological control while educating the public about this important invasive weed control tactic.

MEET YOUR SPECIALIST



Julien Beuzelin, Assistant Professor
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I came to the University of Florida from the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, where I was a research and extension entomologist

for field crops grown in central Louisiana. My specialties are sugarcane insect pest management and applied ecology,

and I also take a special interest in rice, sweet corn, and leafy vegetable insect pest management. I received my Ph.D. in Entomology from Louisiana State University in 2011.

I have enjoyed being involved in various aspects of agricultural production since growing up on the family farm in Guadeloupe (French West Indies), where we produced sugarcane and pineapples. The goal of our research and extension program at UF/IFAS is to refine insect pest management in sugarcane, rice, sweet corn, and leafy vegetables produced in the Everglades Agricultural Area. This allows me to impact modern agriculture by attempting to increase crop yields, decrease production costs, and minimize impacts on public health and the environment while satisfying personal curiosity. I am looking forward to working with extension personnel, crop consultants, and growers in Florida.

HEARTLAND RANCHERS IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF FORAGE MANAGEMENT

Jonael Bosques, CED I, Hardee County

Hardee County has the 5th largest population of beef cattle in the state of Florida. This industry represents the second biggest economic driver in the county and provides employment for hundreds of citizens. Recently the price of beef has fallen due to a nationwide increase in cattle inventories to normal levels after an historic drought forced many farmers in other states to downsize their herds.

During the next five years, beef cattle producers will be faced with limited amounts of income, and the efficient use of resources will be essential to the viability of many ranches in Florida. This is why increasing the use of forages as the primary food source for cow-calf herds is critical for this audience. Forage production is the cheapest source of nutrition for beef cattle in Florida, and good management of pastures and soil fertility can greatly improve the bottom line of farm families that depend on livestock production as their source of income.

During the fall of 2016, UF/IFAS Extension agents in Highlands and Hardee counties developed the Heartland Forage Production Series, a program aimed at increasing the knowledge and options for forage producers and cow-calf managers in south Florida. The program consisted of four evening sessions discussing important topics such as forage physiology, weed management strategies, basic cow nutrition and livestock economic trends. The series had an attendance of 12 livestock producers from Hardee, Highlands, Desoto and Miami-Dade counties, representing a production area of 8,510 acres. Knowledge gain was evaluated at every meeting by means of pre/post-tests, and an evaluation was given at the end of the program to determine which practices producers would be most likely to adopt after attending the series.

Evaluation response rate was 58% (n=7). Nearly half of the attendees that filled out the evaluation were new clients of Extension (42%; n= 3).

Twenty-nine percent of participants reported that they would start soil testing their pastures, as well as incorporating cool-season forages to their management practices, testing their forage nutrition and improving their forage utilization by adopting practices such as adequate stocking rates, limit-grazing to recommended stubble height and pasture rotation. Furthermore, 57% (n= 4) of participants reported that they would contact their county extension agents for follow-up visits and further consultation.

Overall average group knowledge improved by 28% as evidenced from pre- and post-test scores. The group was comprised mostly of large- and medium-size producers, but there were several small producers in the group who benefited from the information received, networking and learning environment. They expressed further programmatic needs in the areas of pasture weed management, soil-plant dynamics and forage fertilization strategies.

PEANUT DISEASE RESEARCH PROVIDES AGENTS WITH HANDS-ON TRAINING

Keith Wynn, Ag/Nat Res EA I, Hamilton County



UF/IFAS Extension agents discussing small research plot layout to determine treatment application. Treatment replications are in a randomized order and are difficult to locate without assistance.

Peanuts have become an important production crop in the Suwannee Valley area. According to USDA Farm Service Agency records, the five counties surrounding the Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center (SVAEC) produced 33,500 acres of peanuts in 2016. The most common threats to peanut production in this area include late and early leaf spot (*Cercosporidium personatum* and *Cercospora arachidicola*, respectively), *Rhizoctonia* stem rot (*Rhizoctonia solani*), and white mold (*Sclerotium rolfsii*). Peanut producers are faced with the difficult task of determining the best fungicide spray program for disease management in peanuts. Keith Wynn (Hamilton County agriculture agent) and Dr. Nicholas Dufault (UF/IFAS plant pathologist) have been conducting on-farm peanut fungicide trials since 2012 with participating farmers in Hamilton County.

This research has encouraged local producers to adopt bi-weekly fungicide spray programs to protect their crops from disease. These on-farm trials have also led to current research work at the SVAEC in Live Oak, FL. Taking the lead in this effort, this agent collaborated with Dr. Nicholas Dufault and interested extension agents to replicate the peanut on-farm trials with small research plots at the center. During the past two years, three separate research trials have been developed to aid extension agents working with local peanut producers in reducing disease pressure. With assistance from SVAEC employees Ben Broughton and Mike Boyette, these trials consisted of: 1) a small fungicide plot that compared 8 different fungicide programs, 2) a three-acre nozzle trial that compared different nozzle types, and 3) a three-acre fungicide trial that compared chemical costs. Agents in surrounding counties were invited to participate in the bi-weekly fungicide applications of the small trial, which were administered with a backpack sprayer. Agents also participated at planting and during harvest of each of the trials listed above. These research trials have familiarized the participating agents with new fungicides and have provided hands-on training with fungicide application, disease identification, and disease rating procedures. Throughout the growing season, agents worked with Dr. Dufault in identifying and rating diseases using the Florida 1-to-10 intensity scale for leaf spot. Knowledge gained through hands-on experiences at the SVAEC instilled greater confidence in these agents' abilities to discuss peanut disease during consultations with local producers. The agents have developed skills by forming relationships with each other and with UF/IFAS plant pathologists, enabling them to become an impactful resource for local peanut producers.

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT WHILE MAXIMIZING FORAGE PRODUCTION

Tim Wilson, CED III, St. Johns County



Before (April 2016)



After (June 2016)

According to US Census data, in 2000 the population of St. Johns County, FL was 123,135; by 2016 the population had grown to 226,640, and forecasts indicate that it is expected to grow by another 100,000 people over the next 10 years. As the population grows, many farms and natural areas in St. Johns County will yield to development. For landowners who own horses and manage pastures that allow for grazing throughout the year, knowledge of pasture management practices that result in proper nutrient utilization and improved pastures is needed to prevent non-point source pollution coming from their land. In cooperation with UF/IFAS Extension specialists, the St. Johns County agent planned and implemented two pasture management workshops that included topics on weed identification, proper herbicide selection and use, soil sampling, nutrient management and pasture management. More than 100 participants from an estimated 63 different small farm landowners attended these workshops, which lead to 14 one-on-one site visits from the agent. All of these site visits incorporated the topics covered in the workshops. Clients were provided the knowledge they needed to collect soil samples on their pastures, identify and eliminate weeds appropriately, and apply nutrients to their pastures without polluting the environment. Of the 14 farm visits, the agent has followed-up with 10 of them to determine if they incorporated any management practices they learned. The landowners indicated that they had incorporated soil

testing, herbicide application and proper fertilizer application based on information they learned from the agent. One client commented that by using each step they learned, they have improved the amount of forage available for their livestock without over-applying nutrients such as fertilizer or spraying unnecessary herbicides. This client commented,

"I now feel like I have been empowered with the knowledge I need to successfully manage my pastures while protecting our water sources in St. Johns County. I have reduced costs, increased the productivity of my pastures and protected the environment."

DESOTO COUNTY 4-H AGEXPLORATIONS

Deanna Thompson, Interim CED I, DeSoto County

Utilizing Florida 4-H Agriculture Mini-Grant funding, DeSoto County 4-H has partnered with DeSoto Sr. FFA to host bi-weekly AgExplorations/AgAmbassadors meetings throughout the school year. Through this program,

18 DeSoto County youth were able to gain a better understanding of various aspects of Florida's agriculture industry. In addition, students gained knowledge and experience with careers by taking career surveys,

researching careers, and meeting with professionals working in various careers directly and indirectly related to agriculture. Throughout this program, youth not only gained knowledge and experience about careers, but they practiced their communication

skills, including their ability to prepare and present "elevator speeches" on specific topics as they become youth Ag-Ambassadors for Agriculture in our county, take notes while speakers are presenting, create and present lesson plans, and meet one-on-one with industry professionals. One student participant felt that "through this program, I have been able to observe the agricultural businesses and industries in our home town. By doing so, I have expanded my knowledge and have a newfound respect for those who farm, produce, breed etc. I have seen the labor that goes into their jobs but also how much they care about DeSoto County agriculture. Being exposed to agriculture through this program has sparked an immense amount of interest within me."



Youth learned about careers and the financial aspect of the agriculture industry through a meet and greet with local Farm Credit employees.

CULINARY CLASSES TEACH MULTIPLE SKILLS IN BREVARD COUNTY

Elizabeth Shephard, FCS EA III, Brevard County

It was during one of our afterschool culinary classes, and a parent had come to pick up her child. Usually, students can't wait to escape, but this child didn't want to leave. He didn't want to miss the cooking exercise, and the parent agreed to stay until the class was over. What was so exciting? Raw vegetables paired with a yogurt-based dip! As many parents will confirm, raw vegetables don't usually elicit such enthusiastic responses from their children. After the class, the parent expressed her excitement: "My son never eats vegetables! Please give me the recipe. I can't wait to tell his dad what I just saw."

This nutrition class is offered through the Family Nutrition Program at venues throughout Brevard County. This year we've partnered with afterschool programs at a number of schools. Once a week for seven weeks, students are able to learn about different foods and their benefits for the body. The recipes usually focus on a different food group each week. The best part for students is the ability to cook or prepare their own food. After six weeks of learning about and preparing food, students prepare a dish that includes all of the food groups, and share their dish with parents or caretakers. In addition to sharing the dish, families are asked to sit down and



Students making pita pockets.



Students making French toast.



Students trying their French toast creation.



Students picking out the foods to add to their pita pocket.



Students trying and showing off their funny face fruit and vegetable snack.

talk about food, with starter questions provided by instructors. Students are asked which recipe they liked most, what new skills they learned, how they could add these new foods to their “normal” foods at home, etc. The event allows for communication time for busy families, and gives them time to sit together and share.

At one of the parent nights, another of our students introduced her parent to the “cooking lady.” Her mother was happy to share some of the things her daughter had been saying about the culinary classes...especially about the new foods she had tried and liked, the sun butter and bell peppers (which she had always thought were hot) in particular. She explained that while she and her brother were both chefs, they never cooked with her daughter. Because her daughter talked about cooking constantly after the class, they have now started to cook together on the weekends. Mom gave an enthusiastic, “Thanks for introducing her to this program!”

During another lesson student shared that she had never tasted a fresh pineapple before. One lesson featured a demonstration on how to cut a fresh pineapple. She shared this with her mother, and during the Thanksgiving holiday, they cut a fresh pineapple together and used it to make stuffing for the turkey.

Everyone eats ... but feeding both the body and soul through food and spending time together strengthens families and improves health.

Another thing our students learn from cooking classes is life skills, such as:

- Math skills — counting, fractions, sequencing (order of events), measuring, and shapes
- Problem solving
- Chemistry and science (how food changes while cooking)
- Geography and where our food comes from
- Cultural lessons about diets of people in other parts of the world
- Creativity
- Health lessons, understanding nutrition and food groups, as well as appreciating the importance of safety and cleanliness
- Fine motor skills such as whisking, measuring, pouring, sifting, and rolling
- Social skills such as responsibility, cooperation, sharing, and self esteem

The stories never end, and it is evident that students are really learning about different foods. They love it primarily because they are going home and sharing with parents, but the classes are also catalyst for family lifestyle (food) choices.

A BETTER WAY TO GET THE WORD OUT

Mark Warren, Livestock/Nat Res EA II, Flagler/Putnam County

When most of us in Extension think of effective communication, we tend to focus on how well a message is presented. We consider the organization and sequence of material, how well visual aids support the written ingredients, the clarity and conviction of spoken words. But while delivery is important, effective communication is really less about the message *sent* than it is about the message *received*. What the individual leaves with matters more than what we provided them. This is why we use pre/post-tests to evaluate our programs.

A lot of times we think that we are communicating with our clientele when we send information via email, and sometimes we are effective. But our in-boxes are full of good information that we might miss as we skim through email in our down time. According to the clients that I work with, while many receive email and will at least attempt to sort through them, most would rather receive information in a different format, preferring a hand delivered, printed copy with a brief summary and the major points highlighted.

Our office still provides some print and postage deliveries, and I still make a lot of site visits, but budget and labor constraints limit the use of these approaches to deliver timely information. Direct phone calls sometimes work, but again labor and time

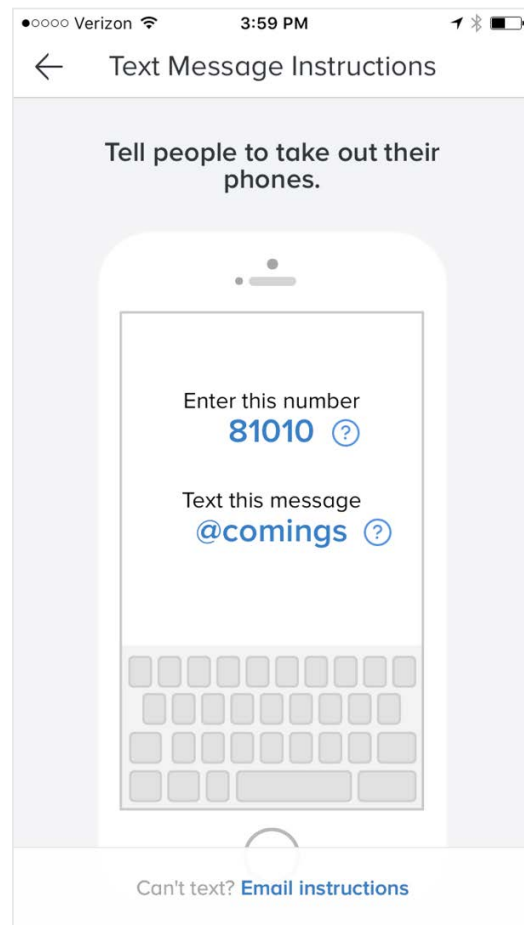
are an issue. In addition to these challenges, maintaining valid contact information is another task that I struggle to achieve.

A couple of years ago I came across a free mobile device application that was developed for school teachers to communicate with their students and parents via text messaging. This app offers some novel benefits that I think work well for Extension:

- Text messaging with the ability to add attachments— In addition to being able to send short program announcements or reminders, the app also allows you to provide links to web pages, PDFs, and even online program registrations.
- Lists for multiple program groups—We all work with different groups with different interests. I set up groups (“classes”) for my major program areas, advisory committees, special events, etc. I can then send a message to all groups or categorize information that is intended for a specific group. Subscribers can join as many groups as they choose.
- Self-subscribing distribution lists — While you can directly invite individuals to subscribe to the appropriate lists via contact lists or email invites, I like to provide class participants with the sign-up information and let them self-subscribe (see below).

- Secure personal contact information — When a participant subscribes to a list, they are asked to enter their name (it can be fictitious). That is the only information that I have for the individual. All of the personal contact numbers are stored on the company's secure website.
- Limited access — Only the class organizer can send messages to the group list. Authorized individuals can reply to the organizer, but there is no system for other participants to view individual conversations (the organizer can choose whether to allow individual conversations within the group or not).
- Mobile device or desktop management — For the organizer, most postings can be managed through a mobile device, but some activities are easier to accomplish from a desktop computer. The organizer has to subscribe to the service and download the application (if using a mobile device) but the clientele do not need to download or subscribe to the service. Everything that the client receives is delivered as a text message.

I am sure that all of you are now *dying to know* what the name of the app is...but as an extension educator I know that you all learn better experientially! Follow the simple instructions in the graphic to the right to join a temporary Comings and Goings class that I've created for this article and you will experience the app and receive instructions showing how you can use this tool with your own clientele. I may send an evaluation later to see how well you like it.



TRADITIONAL EXTENSION WORK IMPROVES THE PROFITABILITY OF FARM FAMILY

Jonael Bosques, CED I, Hardee County

Mr. Diego Palacios, a central Florida entrepreneur born in Colombia, contacted UF/IFAS Extension in Hardee County in October 2014. He needed help planning his Japanese quail enterprise. Mr. Palacios had extensive experience producing eggs from these domesticated birds in his native country, but needed help adjusting his perception of the business to the realities of central Florida and its market challenges.

The extension agent coordinated a farm visit and sat down with Mr. Palacios to inquire about his needs for success. He gave Mr. Palacios the contact of several entities that could help him with permits, financial assistance and business planning. After several months, Mr. Palacios started his quail business.

In May 2015, the extension agent paid Mr. Palacios a follow-up visit. To his surprise, Mr. Palacios was now producing 7,000 quail eggs per week and had plans for expanding his numbers to 17,000. He was also distributing quail production equipment, and all his eggs were sold

before they were laid. Mr. Palacios need help selling quail birds for meat, which is a secondary product of his enterprise. The agent provided him with some names of facilities and distributors in the area, and was pleased with the progress Mr. Palacios was making in a short period of time.

Jump ahead to fall 2016, and the agent was pleasantly surprised to find that Mr. Palacios had expanded his operations and now was distributing meat and eggs from other new quail producers in the area. He had doubled his egg supply and demand and was producing 2,000 birds for meat each week.

The agent was pleased that he could make a difference in one operation such as the Palacio's farm. By prompt response and effective delivery of information, UF/IFAS Extension provided the solutions, opened up the networks and broadened the horizons of one family-owned business that continues growing and giving back to the local economy.

YOUTH COUNCIL ESCAPING INTO LEADERSHIP

Kelsey Haupt, 4-H EA I, Duval County



Duval County 4-H Teen Leadership Council officers, agent, and volunteer advisor at the conclusion of the escape room challenge.

Last year the Duval County 4-H was brainstorming ways to revamp the youth county council. What new and unique teambuilding activity could develop leadership opportunities, build problem-solving skills, and provide a platform for the council to bond as a team? The answer: an escape room challenge!

An escape room is a physical adventure game in which players are “locked” in a room and have to use elements of the room to solve a series of puzzles and escape within a set time limit. Games are set in a variety of fictional locations, such as prison cells, dungeons, libraries and space stations. The idea was new, a popular fad, exciting, and had the added bonus of getting us all away from technology. The cost to produce an escape room challenge averages \$18.00-\$25.00 per person; our

Foundation sponsored the event as a tool to build an effective and productive youth county council.

On the day of the event, the council greeted this challenge with apprehension and bewilderment. They were faced with a challenge they had never experienced before. They had to work as a cohesive team, quickly learning to lean on the strengths of each council member to solve the problems. Members would rise and fall into leadership roles depending on the task they worked on and the strengths of the member. As the council progressed, the puzzles got more difficult and the idea of quitting was appealing, but they would cheer each other on and encourage each other to keep working and not give up.

Although the team did not successfully escape the room, the experiences along the way made for a complete success in the eyes of the council. The value was seen in the observations made of the council communicating, encouraging, and collaborating with each other in the escape room. Those skills have spilled over and been put into action during the meetings and program work of the council.

As a result of the pure enjoyment and positive benefit the council received going through the challenge, they decided to recreate the escape room challenges for the 4-H clubs in the county. The work is just beginning as the council develops and explores the opportunities to create ultimate escape room challenges as a day camp in summer 2017. This experience has planted a seed of innovation into the programming of the council, with a fun and exciting new method of fundraising and building their skills of leadership, team work, and group facilitation.

NORTH FLORIDA UF/IFAS EXTENSION SHOWCASE 2016

Marcus Boston, 4-H EA IV, Leon County



Les Harrison, CED in Wakulla County sharing Agriculture information with fair attendees.

It's been three years and the UF/IFAS Extension showcase at the North Florida Fair is going strong and picking up steam!

In 2014 the NW District made major

improvements to the agriculture building at the North Florida Fair in Tallahassee, which had housed “county booths” for over 40 years, oftentimes displaying the same material since its inception.

Duplicating the UF/IFAS exhibits at the Sunbelt Agriculture Expo held annually

in Moultrie, GA, the old county booths have been replaced with UF/IFAS hands-on displays designed to enhance and educate the fair attendees' experience as they walk through the building. The goal is to tell people who live and work in the Panhandle and surrounding areas who we are and how we can help them.

As a result of continued support from Mark Harvey, the North Florida Fair manager, the UF/IFAS Extension exhibit has grown larger each year. Mr. Harvey has even added Wi-Fi inside the building to encourage fair attendees to log onto our UF/IFAS website so they can locate their county offices and learn about the extension programs that may be taking place right in their community.

What really makes this event stand out from other fairs is that the extension faculty from each county office play an active role in assisting in the construction, setup, and management of the exhibit during the fair. This change has provided the opportunity to enhance and expand the presence and customer awareness of UF/IFAS Extension. During the 10-day period the fair was open in November of 2016, it is estimated that more than 4,500 people visited the UF/IFAS building, where they had the opportunity to speak to an agent about any questions or concerns they may have had. The UF/IFAS showcase also serves as a great reminder of the importance and the impact that can be made from the face-to-face transfer of information which is the hallmark of the UF/IFAS Extension experience.

GROWING THE FUTURE: 4-H TRI-COUNTY POTATO PROJECT

Crystal McCazzio, 4-H EA II, Putnam County



TCAA Potato Project.

Amber is a 12-year-old enrolled at a charter middle school in rural Putnam County, but she lives in a residential area. Amber enjoys fresh fruits and vegetables, but had never had a garden or truly experienced how to grow her own food. Then during the 2015-2016 school year, Amber's school began offering 4-H programs related to growing edible plants, and she was very excited about the opportunity. She learned how to plant, care for and harvest edibles in raised beds and containers. Amber's passion didn't stop there, as her school started an afterschool 4-H club which she quickly joined. Due to overwhelming interest in the club, they signed up for the Tri-County Potato Project. Amber not only learned how to grow her own food, but also but also experienced firsthand how food is produced in a commercial agricultural setting.

Amber took her knowledge and involved her parents in growing a garden at home to produce fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs for their family. When asked what was most impactful about the experience she gained, Amber responded, "I applied my knowledge so I can do it myself. My experience will definitely help me invest in the 4-H programs and be able to share my knowledge with others, and hopefully teach others with my experiences."

Amber is just one of many youth that participate in the 4-H Tri-County Potato Project offered each year.

UF/IFAS Extension 4-H, commercial agriculture, family and consumer sciences, and horticulture agents from Flagler, Putnam, and St. Johns counties partner with the UF/IFAS Hastings Agricultural Research Center and community stakeholders to provide this experiential, hands-on learning opportunity in commercial potato production. Through the 4-H Tri-County Potato Project, youth participate in field days, get materials and instruction on how to grow their own potato plant at home, and complete a 4-H potato project activity guide. The guide includes topics related to plant anatomy, growing potatoes, identifying skin diseases, harvesting and marketing potatoes, and potato nutrition and recipes. Through this project, youth are also able to gain knowledge and skill in entrepreneurship by creating a marketing plan and selling potatoes as a club fundraiser. Community service is another component as youth are responsible for donating a portion of the potatoes grown to organizations of their choice, which distribute them to people in need.

In 2015, 59 youth and their families participated and demonstrated a gain in knowledge, agricultural awareness, and community involvement. In 2016, the project has been expanded to include over 200 youth and their families and educational stations taught by community stakeholders and local growers. Participants surveyed reported an increase in awareness of community needs and how they can address those needs through their 4-H project (65%), understanding of the agricultural industry (79%), uses of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related to the agricultural industry (74%), and the ability to educate others about the agricultural industry (65%).

In our economy, there is a growing interest among consumers about food systems, sources of food, and food safety. At the same time, an annual report released by STEM Food and Ag Council states there is a shortage of youth agricultural professionals and a need for new professionals trained in STEM fields. According to the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development conducted by Tufts University, youth involved in 4-H projects such as the 4-H Tri-County Potato Project report better grades, higher levels of academic competence, and elevated engagement at school. In addition, 4-H youth are two times more likely to plan to go to college to pursue a degree in science, engineering, or computer technology. Additionally, studies have found 4-H youth in grade 11 are 3.3 times more likely to actively contribute to their communities when compared to youth not participating in the program (Lerner et al., 2012). Today's youth are tomorrow's citizens, consumers, parents and leaders. Through the 4-H Tri-County Potato Project we are putting youth on a trajectory to thrive and are equipping them to succeed in a rapidly changing society and global economy.

FINDING COMMON GROUND IN FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Betty Staugler, Florida Sea Grant EA III, Charlotte County

Florida Sea Grant recently facilitated a joint advisory panel of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. This regional council prepares management plans designed to manage fishery resources in the Gulf of Mexico, from where state waters end out to the 200-mile limit.

When reviewing potential rule changes, the council often draws upon the services of knowledgeable people from other state and federal agencies, universities and the public to serve on advisory panels and committees. Advisory panel members include recreational and commercial fishermen, charter boat operators, buyers, sellers and consumers with knowledge about a particular fishery.

The Florida Sea Grant agent was asked by council staff to assist them by facilitating two advisory panels on red snapper—one for headboats and one for charter vessels. Each panel had been working separately on developing management plans best suited to their unique needs, but council wanted the two groups work together to find a management plan that would work for both charter vessels and headboats.

The advisory panels had previously been operating under a traditional meeting structure with an elected chair and vice chair and a process that utilized Robert's Rules of Order. But for this joint meeting, council staff requested a facilitative process that would hopefully lead to consensus on several key issues.

Council staff also recognized that there were some distinct differences between the two groups that would need to be

addressed: for example, headboats have individual catch histories while charter boats don't, and headboats were hoping to develop a program for multiple reef fish while charter vessels were only considering red snapper management.

The Sea Grant agent worked with council staff to develop a facilitative process for the two-day meeting, which included developing a framework for working together, group norms, and a working definition of consensus. The process also incorporated several key staff presentations designed to provide panel members with the information they needed to make decisions.

Through our facilitated process, which evolved several times to meet the needs and challenges of the group, the joint advisory panel was able to reach consensus on a number of key topics, including a preferred management approach, preferred number of amendments, timing for implementation, prioritization of species to include, and preferred methods for apportioning quotas.

The success of this meeting can be summed up in one of the comments received by the council's Executive Director after the conclusion of the meeting: "I have never seen or been a part of a better, well thought-out and or executed meeting than this past CFH/HB joint AP.... Please thank them from my industry and all the guys in my port I was there to represent, a job well done! That's how government is supposed to work in solving tough problems."

NASSAU EXTENSION EXPANDING YULEE OFFICE

Rebecca Jordi, CED EA III, Nassau County



UF/IFAS Extension expanding Yulee office.

Until recently, UF/IFAS Extension Nassau County's satellite office in Yulee has housed two agents, a program assistant and Master Gardner volunteers—all in 900 square feet of space! The building is too small for our current needs, and for years we have been working on viable solutions to obtain a new site. Although we did have access to a 1,500-square-foot meeting room, it was shared with others in the community and available only on a first-come, first-served basis. This often caused conflicts and difficulties obtaining space to hold weekly training sessions and meetings. There were times when we've had to rent space in order to hold our public programs, which came directly out of our professional

development funds. In the summer of 2016, this agent met with two local community businessmen asking for their support of Extension obtaining land and funding to build a larger facility. They went directly to the local commissioners on our behalf since we, as agents, cannot contact the commissioners. Extension volunteers from all program areas called, sent e-mails and wrote to the Nassau County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) expounding on the value of Extension to the community and the need for the expansion. Several of these volunteers spoke at one of the summer BOCC public meetings, explaining how an expansion would benefit all residents in Nassau County. In the fall of 2016, the BOCC provided 8.63 acres of land valued at \$176,000 and \$325,000 in funding to purchase a 3,000-square-foot building which would include electrical and sewage hookups. Currently, the land has been surveyed, an engineer selected for the site plan and we are waiting for the property to be properly zoned before we start ground breaking. In addition, the agent submitted a \$509,000 FDACS building grant, which placed 10th by the selection committee and goes before the Florida Legislature in February of 2017. But, most importantly, the land has been given to UF/IFAS Extension for the purpose of expanding our operations and enlarging our outreach to the citizens of Nassau County.

HELPING FLAGLER COUNTY FARMS ADAPT TO LONG-TERM SURVIVAL

Mark Warren, Livestock/Nat Res EA II, Flagler/Putnam County



1st Annual CFLAG Hay Field Day

Programming efforts and on-farm support from UF/ IFAS Extension in Flagler County have been instrumental in helping many family farms transition from sod to other areas of production. For a few farms in the area, the transition from turf to forage has

been a natural fit. These efforts have resulted in several farms becoming both environmentally and economically more sustainable.

For example, three years ago UF/IFAS Extension Flagler County assisted one producer in securing cost-share funds to upgrade his irrigation pumping and pipeline. The \$150,000 grant increased irrigation efficiencies by approximately 20% and purchased a fertilizer injection system which has reduced fertilizer inputs and potential off-site movement of nutrients. In 2015 a second cost-share application was submitted and approved for \$240,000 to replace the existing linear irrigation system to a higher efficiency system.

In addition to continuing to expand his harvested forage options and capacity, this producer has also built an impressive beef herd and has diversified into five different forage species. Using his extensive experience and established infrastructure for producing grass, the producer now also has a growing custom planting business for several vegetatively propagated warm-season tropical pasture species.

Identifying and collaborating with early adopters and industry partners provides an effective method for disseminating Extension efforts. Often educational objectives are more readily accepted by other producers when they have the opportunity to experience them on a fellow producer's farm. This year, the client agreed to host a regional Hay Field Day organized by members of the Central Florida Livestock Agents Group and UF/ IFAS Extension specialists. The function was attended by 75 central and northeast Florida producers.

Attempting to evaluate the economic impact of these efforts is difficult. While the farm's gross annual sales are significantly lower than when the farm was 100% sod, the inputs, primarily labor and equipment, are also significantly lower. According to this producer, these changes have enabled him to keep a few of his full-time employees, his wife and two adult children employed on the farm.

FLORIDA 4-H ATTENDS PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

Jean Hink, 4-H EA IV, Pasco County

Forty-four Florida 4-H youth had the opportunity to join more than 500 young people from across the country to learn about our political process in the vibrant, living classroom of the nation's capital as part of 4-H Citizenship Washington (CWF) with the focus on the Presidential Inauguration. This intensive 4-H civic engagement program for high-school youth was held at the National 4-H Conference Center in Chevy Chase, MD.

This 4-H citizenship program for youth ages 14-19 is aimed at enriching young people's lives by broadening their knowledge and understanding of the Executive Branch of government, as well as developing their role in citizenship through service, civic education and engagement. Youth learned the meaning and importance of the democratic process, explored the history of the presidency, the election process, and the role of the press; they also discovered the intricacies of the Executive Branch of government and explored careers in politics. During the week, they visited memorials, historical sites and museums in Washington, D.C., and experienced the Inaugural Day events of the 45th President, including the Oath of Office, Presidential Address and Inauguration Parade, ending their day with a ball on a river boat cruise.

For more than 50 years, National 4-H Conference Center has invited thousands of young people from across the country to travel to Washington, D.C. and participate in civic workshops, committees and field trips before returning home to make positive changes in their own communities. CWF not only strengthens young people's understanding of the government's civic process, but it also boosts their leadership skills, communication skills and overall confidence.

ARRIVALS

We would like to welcome the following new faculty:

Ana Zangroniz, Sea Grant EA I, Miami-Dade County

Janes Yarborough, Ag/Nat Res EA I, Orange County

Kelsey Irvine, 4-H EA I, Nassau County

Juliana Shoup, FCS EA I, Jefferson County

Kate Rotindo, Urban Hort EA I, St. Lucie County

Alyssa Schortinghouse, 4-H/Ag EA I, Escambia County

Liliana Kolluri, Nat Res/Ag EA I, Nassau County

Sarah Davis, 4-H EA II, Sarasota County

Jane Griffin, Ag EA I, Suwannee County

DEPARTURES

We would like to wish the following agents the best of luck in their future endeavors:

Amanda Squitieri, 4-H EA I, Polk County

Shelley Swenson, FCS EA III, Wakulla County

Jack LeCroy, FFL EA I, Marion County

NEW POSITIONS

We would like to congratulate the following faculty members on their new position:

Nicholas Taylor, PREC SSA II from Asst. Investigator, PREC

Genevieve Mendoza Perez, 4-H EA II Levy County from Educational Program Asst., UF College of Veterinary Medicine

Ed Jennings, Ag CED IV Levy County from Pasco County

Stacy Strickland, Ag CED III Osceola County from Hernando/Sumter Counties

Kimber Sarver, 4-H EA I Miami-Dade County from 4-H Program Asst., Sumter County

Tyce Prevatt, 4-H CED II Glades County from Glades County



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