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Pasco Master Gardeners Hit the Road with a Mobile Plant Clinic (Pg 6)
Whitney Elmore - The UF/IFAS Pasco County Master Gardeners are proud to announce the addition of a Mobile Plant Clinic.

Letting Go For a Good Reason (Pg 7)
Stephanie Conner - Volunteers are a crucial part of Florida 4-H, and when we can turn a county program over to a qualified volunteer, we have been successful in our training and guidance.
4-H YOUTH AS ENGINEERS
Stacie Amolsch, 4-H YD EA I, Duval Cty

During the summer of 2015, youth at 4-H day camps in Duval County got to be the engineers and pilots of their own underwater remotely operated vehicles (ROVs). A grant from the SeaPerch Program provided kits and tools for youth to participate in this hands-on STEM program. During a four-day summer camp, 20 youth worked in groups to construct the main components of the SeaPerch ROV: the frame, the motor system and the control box. Youth tested the ROVs in a community pool and were challenged to redesign their constructions to accomplish specific tasks such as traveling quickly at the surface, retrieving rings from the bottom of the pool and navigating through suspended underwater hoops. At the Discover Florida day camp, 12 youth modified their ROVs as plankton-collecting devices to test water quality in a community pond. Youth who have participated in this program developed life skills such as teamwork, communication, wise use of resources, critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making. They also experienced and reflected upon the engineering process and learned various science skills such as measuring, data collection and observation. Parents responding to a post-survey noted that youth gained knowledge in robotics and critical thinking, science inquiry and working as a team member, and science inquiry, cooperation and conflict resolution. The SeaPerch program in Duval County 4-H has been able to continue into 2016 with a special interest club of eight youth who plan to compete locally in the spring.

GRANT RECEIVED TO PROMOTE AGRITOURISM
Jessica Sullivan, Sustainable Agriculture/Food Systems EA II, Osceola Cty

Agritourism is receiving a boost thanks to a grant to help UF/IFAS Extension promote U-pick farms, local wineries, corn mazes, farm tours and other agritourism opportunities. Extension Initiative 1-Priority Work Group 3 (Citizen Awareness of Food Systems and the Environment) was awarded funding for their project proposal, “Promoting specialty crops through agritourism: Producer professional development.” The $80,000 Specialty Crop Block Grant offered through the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will provide opportunities for Extension agents and specialty crop producers to gain a better understanding of how to implement successful agritourism ventures. Led by Dr. Joy Rumble, project activities will be conducted throughout 2016-2017.

The goals of the grant include:

• Understanding consumers’ awareness of and preferences for agritourism;
• Holding an in-service training for Extension faculty on assisting specialty crop producers involved or interested in agritourism ventures;
• Developing and disseminating agritourism outreach materials;
• Increasing specialty crop producer knowledge of and participation in agritourism opportunities/strategies; and
• Developing a comprehensive strategic plan to launch a statewide agritourism initiative for specialty crops, and incorporating the resulting agritourism strategic plan into programming.

Agritourism is a growing concept that can help producers promote their products and add additional revenue to their businesses. Moreover, with the growing interest among consumers in local food, agritourism is uniquely positioned to provide consumers with an opportunity to see where and how their food is produced. The general public is often unaware of or uninterested in problems facing agriculture, and agritourism offers an opportunity to re-connect consumers and producers.

In Florida, agritourism sites not only have the opportunity to reach local and state residents, but also the more than 97 million people that visit the state each year. Agritourism combines Florida’s two largest industries (tourism and agriculture) to offer benefit to not only the state’s economy, but also the owners of agritourism sites and those who visit them.
In our second year partnering with States’ 4-H International Exchange, Florida 4-H’ers will have an opportunity to host youth from Japan’s LABO exchange program and South Korea 4-H. States’ 4-H International is a global citizenship and cultural immersion program for youth. The program helps today’s youth benefit from learning about other cultures and how to accept and respect differences.

This year, Florida will host 12 youth from Japan with an adult chaperone and 8 youth from Korea with a chaperone. 4-H families will have preference, but with the large number participating this year, we would like to extend the hosting opportunities to our Extension family.

The youth will arrive in Orlando July 21, with host family pick-up July 23, and will depart August 18 or 19. Host families provide room, board and experience and participation in family activities, even chores!

Visit www.states4hexchange.com or our Florida 4-H: States’ 4-H Exchange Facebook page for pictures from last year’s exchange. Applications can be completed online through the States’ 4-H Exchange website – click “HOST A DELEGATE,” then select Florida.

Our goal is to match our delegates by May 1, you will have your delegates’ information and addresses. Matches depend on many factors, and an all applications may not be matched.

The 2016 Inbound States’ 4-H Coordinator is Shane Michael, Extension Agent Seminole County 4-H. Please contact him for more information.

smichael@seminolecountyfl.gov

**WAKULLA EXTENSION DIRECTOR TEACHES BUSINESS-PLAN DEVELOPMENT IN HAITI**

*Les Harrison, Ag Nat Res EA III, Wakulla Cty*

Les Harrison, Director for UF/IFAS Extension in Wakulla County, recently shared his expertise by teaching business-plan development to agricultural students at the Universite Caraibe in Haiti. While serving as part of a faculty team from FAMU funded by the U.S. AID program, Harrison worked with 53 students who were learning how to develop viable agriculture-based businesses.

The curriculum included classroom and field work at campuses in Port-au-Prince and Moutrous. Students were required to work in teams resembling the management structure of an enterprise. Beginning by identifying a market segment that could be effectively served, they developed a product and determined all the production cycle details, including how much of a crop they could produce and the time it would take to produce it. The budgets developed through the course brought out some of the strengths and weaknesses of their ideas, as each student understood they would have to make a net profit—not an easy challenge when closely examining the realities of production costs and potential returns.

“The students appeared to enjoy the assignments and appreciated the information,” Harrison said. “Each was brimming with energy and enthusiasm at the potential of bettering their life economically and the prospects of their country.”
4-H TECH WIZARDS HELPS PALM BEACH COUNTY YOUTH THRIVE

Jon Mayer, 4-H EA I, Palm Beach Cty

This is the story of Jessica and Jose, two students who joined the Palm Beach County 4-H Tech Wizards program in 2012.

Raised by a single, immigrant mother, Jessica and her sister grew up living in poverty. It was during high school that Jessica, born in Haiti, first learned she was not a United States citizen. Suddenly her future academic goals were shaken, as federal scholarships and loans disappeared from her grasp. That did not stop Jessica, however. Having graduated as valedictorian from her high school, she is now earning her Bachelor of Science degree in engineering at Florida Atlantic University on a $65,000 private scholarship. Jessica credits much of her success to the leadership skills, confidence and perseverance she developed through her 4-H Tech Wizards experiences. Not only did Jessica participate in the program as a mentee, she also served as a mentor, executive board member at the county and state levels, and donated nearly 2,000 hours of service to her community.

Not long ago, Jose emigrated from Honduras to Florida, accompanied only by his younger brother. Along the way they encountered many challenges, such as a night they were stranded alone in the desert without water. A reserved, intelligent young man, Jose thrived in the 4-H Tech Wizard program, designing, constructing and piloting drones, remotely operated vehicles and robots. Jose engaged in 4-H as a learner and is now sharing his knowledge and skills by teaching other 4-H youth, volunteers, staff and faculty through school programs and professional development opportunities. When asked to share with his peers what score he would rate 4-H out of one hundred percent. Jose promptly responds, “110 percent.” Today Jose is earning his Bachelor of Science degree in computer and software engineering at Palm Beach State College, and continues to serve as a volunteer and mentor in the Palm Beach County 4-H program. “I’m where I’m at today because of 4-H,” he says.

Four years ago, Jessica and Jose, like many of their peers, had not heard of 4-H. As teens living in inner-city communities, it was simply not on their radar. Through outreach programs like 4-H Tech Wizards at schools, nonprofit organizations and churches, awareness of 4-H among diverse audiences has increased dramatically. Yet, for families facing economic challenges, awareness of opportunities is not always enough. As a result, from 2012-2015 over $150,000.00 in grants and donations have been raised to support the engagement of diverse youth in Palm Beach County. These efforts have allowed many new youth to access 4-H. From 2012-2015, over 12,000 ethnically diverse youth have engaged in Palm Beach County 4-H for the first time.

Ongoing evaluations and interviews have shown that the impacts are not limited to rates of participation. One hundred percent of teens having participated for two or more years in the Palm Beach County 4-H Tech Wizards have demonstrated substantial increases in skills related to public speaking, leadership, critical thinking, civic engagement, and workforce preparation. During recent interviews conducted as part of a programmatic evaluation, one youth said it best: “My leadership skills have grown immensely. My communication skills are off the roof; I am able to see a positive outlook regardless if it has the slightest chance of happening. With that I am also able to motivate peers. I am capable of adapting to any situation and with simple critical and logical thinking I can come up with a solution.”

REDUCING INPUT COSTS ON PEANUTS IN THE SUWANNEE VALLEY AREA

Chris Vann, Ag EA II, Lafayette Cty

In 2015, over 70,000 acres of peanuts were planted in the Suwannee Valley area, with a farm gate value of approximately $53 million. But peanut prices have taken a significant drop over the last several years. In 2012, peanut contracts ranged from $600-$650 per ton. In 2015, the price received was around $400 per ton, and the outlook for 2016 is to be less than $400 per ton. Lower peanut prices can be attributed to several factors, including substantially higher yields, lower returns for other commodities, and changes in the 2014 Farm Bill, which makes peanuts more economically attractive in some situations.

Producers have virtually no control over prices offered or received, so controlling production costs is the only way to stay economically viable during periods of low prices.

With lowering input costs in mind, area agents, state specialists, and the staff of the Suwanee Valley Research and Education Center are searching for ways to help peanut producers who are caught in the squeeze between rising production costs and lowering market prices.

CONTROLLING PEANUT DISEASES

Trials were replicated three times with check plots included. Plots were visually evaluated four times for disease using the Florida 1-10 Intensity Scale for leaf spot and rust. After the plots were harvested, weighed, and graded, no significant difference in yield or grade was noted between the higher and lower cost spray programs. However, using the lower-cost fungicides led to a significant savings of $45 per acre.

In 2015,花生的种植面积达到70,000英亩，农场门市价值约为5.3亿美元。但花生的价格在过去的几年中有所下降。2012年，花生合同价格在$600-$650每吨之间。2015年，市场价格约为$400每吨，2016年的前景预计不会超过$400每吨。降低花生价格的原因包括实质性更高的产量，其他商品的较低回报，以及2014年农业法案的变化，这使得花生在一些情况下更具经济吸引力。

生产者几乎没有控制价格的权利，所以降低生产成本的唯一方式是保持经济上的可持续性。

控制花生疾病

试验被复制了三倍，并包括了对照试验。试验在四次视觉评估中进行了，使用了佛罗里达1-10强度尺度来评估叶斑和锈病。在试验被收获、称重和分级后，没有显著的产量或等级差异。然而，使用较低成本的杀菌剂使每英亩的节省达到了$45。
COMMUNICATION SKILLS HELP 4-H YOUTH ACHIEVE GOALS
Amy Warwick Hedstrom, 4-H YD EA I, Flagler Cty

One of the great things about Florida 4-H is how it encourages youth to develop new skills to achieve their goals. Take the story of Amanda: She lives in Flagler County with her parents, her sister, and many cherished animals. She’s also a 4-H equine club participant with dreams of competing in the State 4-H Horse Show. But for the past several years, Amanda has had a problem achieving this goal—although she competes in high-level dressage, there have not been enough area competitors to allow her to earn points to advance to the state show.

In 2015 Amanda achieved her goal, and even advanced on to the Southern Regional 4-H Horse Championship—not by riding her horse, but through her public speaking skills. “She has always wanted to make it to State Events,” Amanda’s mother commented, “but we did not know she could get there without her horse.”

A demonstration or illustrated talk is a “show-and-tell” presentation in a specific curriculum area, using posters and illustrated visual aids to demonstrate the steps of a project. Presentations can cover a multitude of topics, including pets, livestock, natural resources, healthy lifestyles and much more. A specific scoring rubric is utilized by a team of judges to evaluate each demonstration, and each is then awarded a first place blue, second place red, or third place white.

In March, Amanda took her learned horse knowledge and developed a demonstration titled “Choosing the Right Eventing Horse” to present at the county level, which earned her a blue ribbon. This qualified her for the District VI contest where she competed against youth from 6 different counties, earning her second blue ribbon. The 4-H state contest was held at the University of Florida and her demonstration qualified her to participate in the Southern Regional 4-H Horse Championship.

Amanda is one of 175 youth in Flagler County who last year had the opportunity to learn life skills through their involvement in 4-H community clubs. Ten 4-H clubs in Flagler County are led by 20 caring, adult volunteer organizational leaders who contributed 1,644 hours valued at over $35,000 in 2015. The investment of volunteer time and talent into the 4-H youth provides opportunity for development of knowledge and skills in STEM, citizenship and leadership, and workforce preparation.

PARTNERSHIP BENEFITS LOCAL FOOD DESERT
Kendra Zamojski, FCS CED III, Leon Cty

In 2015, the UF/IFAS Extension Leon County Family Nutrition Program (FNP) partnered with the Frenchtown Heritage Farmers’ Market Promotional project to deliver nutrition education to consumers. Through this partnership, Family Nutrition Program Assistant Chelsea Marshall-Hirvela educated 166 adults in four sites located in an area of Tallahassee identified as a food desert. The classes were designed to teach participants how to cook using fresh fruits and vegetables and to promote the use of double Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) dollars at the Frenchtown Farmers’ Market. Evaluations from the project showed that local residents were more likely to use double SNAP dollars if they had attended a Family Nutrition Program class. Participants in the nutrition education classes not only learned to prepare fresh produce using healthy cooking techniques, but the classes also resulted in the participants’ increased access to fresh foods and enabled them to stretch food dollars spent at the Frenchtown Heritage Farmers’ Market.
PASCO MASTER GARDENERS HIT THE ROAD WITH A MOBILE PLANT CLINIC

Whitney Elmore, Hort CED III, Pasco Cty

With a big grin and an excited fluttering of hands, the boy jumps from the car and runs to the pen. “Feed Hampshire,” he states in a very serious manner. He proceeds to walk to the feed bucket and carefully measure out just the right amount of food for Hampshire, the pig. You see, Hampshire is my buddy Sean’s 4-H project and show hog for the North Florida Livestock Show & Sale. Sean cares for him every day, making sure his pen is clean, he has enough food and water, and Hampshire is “walked” so that he’ll be in tip-top shape for show night. “C’mon Mecky (this is Sean’s name for me), walk my pig,” he calls out, determined that I will see him make Hampshire walk around the pen. This is pride. This is understanding that his job is important and he is capable of doing it. This is establishing potential career skill. These are life skills at work in their purest form. Because Sean is severely autistic and mostly nonverbal. But look at him grow! Filling the feed trough, getting clean water, grooming Hampshire, and making sure his four-legged friend knows just what to do when it’s showtime. Connection. Responsibility. Caring. Independence. Pride. Belonging.

Although Hampshire missed his weight requirement by 7 lbs, Sean still wanted to help take care of the other animals. He was seen walking the show barn with his friend Emma, who was also a first-time show participant, helping her take care of Wilbur, Hampshire’s pen mate. On Facebook, Sean’s mom shared her feelings regarding the project: “It’s a big moment and milestone for Sean, he has worked hard learning how to take care of his pig...” and added that she is confident he will have skills to belong in the adult world all because of his participation in 4-H.

Making weight in life-skills development proves to be the champ once again!

"Making Weight" was originally posted on the Madison 4-H blog at http://madisoncofl4-h.com/2016/02/16/making-weight/
LETTING GO FOR A GOOD REASON
Stephanie Conner, 4-H YD EA II, Clay Cty

Volunteers are a crucial part of Florida 4-H, and when we can turn a county program over to a qualified volunteer, we have been successful in our training and guidance. I was witness to this in 2015, when I was approached by a seasoned leader, Becky, who asked to take on the advisory role for the Teen Leadership Council (TLC). Becky was (and still is) a very capable volunteer and club leader, but had tired as the support from the parents in their 4-H club lessened. At the same time TLC, while doing ok, was needing a bit of a jump start as well. I had been the advisor for the council since it began, and it was time for a change. I thought this would be a great opportunity to provide the leader with a group that would be supportive and a new challenge for her, while also providing the group with leader who had fresh ideas and energy. The first two meetings were a difficult transition, not only for myself letting go of this council, but also for the youth and Becky as the new advisor. Over these two meetings, TLC membership decreased dramatically to six members.

I talked with Becky, encouraging her to give the kids time to adjust, reminding her about the importance of stepping out of my footprints with TLC, and talking with her about ways that she could make her own imprint on the council. In addition, I talked with the kids on the council about change and growth, reminding them of the skills they developed while on the council to help them cope with change. Also, I encouraged them to be open and adventurous. Month three was different; the leader walked in with new confidence and ownership, and more kids attended and actively participated in the meeting. Over the next several months youth began to embrace the change of leadership and re-energize. The leader and the members of TLC began to develop as a cohesive team, building their level of mutual trust and respect.

As agents we cannot do all things, and sometimes delegating or letting go of programs is hard. However, if we have trained and worked with our volunteers so much that they are willing to step into a leadership role, such as advisor to an active and sometimes stressful Teen Leadership Council, it is a good accomplishment. Change is also necessary—not only for the growth of a program and its volunteers, but also for the growth of the agent, the young people on the council and the 4-H program as a whole.