

EXTENSION

*Comings & Goings*

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN FOR EXTENSION

**Extension Calendar Wins Gold**

Congratulations to Tracy Bryant on receiving the Gold Award in Publishing from the Association for Communication Excellence.



This recognition acknowledges the exceptional work Tracy did on the 2011 Extension Calendar and Annual Report.

**Addressing a Devastating Sugarcane Disease**

Sugarcane orange rust (OR) was first discovered in Florida in 2006 and has been increasing in area and importance ever since. Unlike sugarcane brown rust, which predominantly occurs in the spring and is not an issue during the “Grand Growth” summer months, OR can proliferate greatly during hot weather. Some of the industry’s most common varieties have

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proven to be highly susceptible to OR and yield losses in excess of 40% have been seen in small plot trials. During the growing season of 2008, more than 6000 acres of sugarcane were treated with fungicide at a cost of approximately \$25 per acre for a total industry cost of more than \$150,000. Much of the data showed that early spraying, before OR inoculum built up, was effective in reducing late season pressure; however due to the multiple freezes in the winter of 2010, combined with a cool spring, OR disease pressure was very low and in early summer infected plants were difficult to find. Information taught to 128 participants through the “Living With and Managing Orange Rust” workshop and the “Orange Rust Field Day” showed that early season applications were not needed this year because of the low disease pressure. Due to this timely information, fewer than 700 acres of sugarcane were treated with fungicide sprays during the 2010 growing season at a total cost of \$17,500, resulting in an industry savings of more than \$132,000 ( $\$150,000 - \$17,500 = \$132,500$ ). (Contact Les Baucum – [lbaucum@ufl.edu](mailto:lbaucum@ufl.edu)).

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## Multiple Benefits of the Highlands County Florida Friendly Plant Fair

There are three ways to raise money for three yearly youth scholarships and scholarships for continuing education for volunteers: a plant fair, pH testing for homeowners, and rain barrel sales. This year, Master Gardener volunteers took a different approach to educate the public about Florida-Friendly Landscapes. Since the horticulture agent writes articles every week on Florida-Friendly plants and started a mobile irrigation lab to save water, the Master Gardener volunteers propagated approximately 60% of the plant material sold at the annual plant fair to introduce “Florida-Friendly” plants and nectar and host plants for butterfly gardens.

During educational opportunities like the help desk, community booths, and field consultations, Florida-Friendly landscapes, water management, and soil pH were emphasized.

These changes generated \$7,636 of revenue. The money generated through the plant sale stayed the same as last year, but with an important difference. There was 30% less plant material compared with last year, and 60% of the plant material was generated by Master Gardeners.

There was a 14% increase in the number of residential homeowners who attended the fair, and a 9% increase in educational materials handed out. Residential homeowners know they can return to ask for specific Master Gardeners because of the service and knowledge provided by these volunteers. Other homeowners came back to ask more questions or buy plant material from these Master Gardener Volunteers.

This year, soil pH tests increased by 57% compared with last year in spite of construction of our building for 10 months. Since more residents are testing their soil, this will decrease the amount of pesticide and fertilizer being wasted in the landscape. The rain barrel sales (37 total) impacted water savings by 240,000 gallons per year. This estimate is based on 52” of rain per year that would mean a total of 720,000 gallons of water recaptured in a 3-year period. Secondly, 59 lbs of N are saved from storm water runoff, and \$9,054 is saved by homeowners by saving potable water and N. This information is based on the following criteria: homeowners using 25% of the recaptured water of a 55-gal rain barrel per week during a 20-year period of time. (Contact Dee Dee Jacobson – [dddilger@ufl.edu](mailto:dddilger@ufl.edu)).

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## Restoring Mangroves in Miami-Dade

An estimated 75% of game fish and 90% of the commercial species in south Florida depend on the mangrove ecosystem at some point in their life history. Mangrove branches also serve as rookeries for a diversity of diving and wading birds. In addition to providing essential habitat for coastal species, mangrove ecosystems also provide coastal protection from erosion and storms. Between 1943 and 1970, nearly 500,000 acres of mangroves were removed in the state of Florida and the Miami-Dade County coastline is

now primarily armored. Removal of these coastal trees can increase coastal erosion, change waterfront runoff patterns, and impact biodiversity, resulting in large economic impacts. The Miami-Dade Sea Grant Extension Program has partnered with The Reclamation Project to help teach K-12 students about the importance of mangrove ecosystems. Trained volunteers have collected, grown, and replanted thousands of red mangrove seedlings in restoration sites within Miami-Dade County. Economic assessments of mangrove habitats estimate their value at approximately \$18,000 per acre due to their roles in coastal storm protection and as critical habitat for commercial fisheries species. This project is estimated to bring in approximately \$75,000 worth of coastal improvements and 5 acres of mangrove reforestation. (contact Lisa Krimsky – [lkrimsky@ufl.edu](mailto:lkrimsky@ufl.edu)).

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## Professional Development Mini-Grant Experience: Elaine Courtney

The opportunity provided by this mini-grant was amazing! Dr. Michael Gutter, Selena Garrison (lecturer, Florida Master Money Mentor Coordinator) and I were invited to visit Turkey in October 2010, as the guests of Hattcapette University in Ankara. We were met at the airport by Dr. Copur and spent the next five days learning, listening and sharing. I, along with Dr. Gutter, gave seminars at Hattcapette University on Oct. 6, 2010 to 78 faculty and graduate students. The topic of my seminar was “Extending Research to Local Communities.” Slides were translated in advance into Turkish, which were shown simultaneously with the English version. A translator was also provided by the University.

The Hattcapette University faculty of Economics & Administrative Sciences held a luncheon honoring us and gave us the opportunity to visit with faculty, administrators and graduate students. We spent one day in the Department of Family & Consumer Sciences in informal conversations with students and faculty members. This interaction allowed for free exchange of ideas and

implications for Extension in Florida, as well as outreach and research in Turkey.

The experience enhanced my understanding of economic factors on a global stage, which in turn influences economic conditions in Florida and the US. It is imperative that Extension continues to gain new understanding of how economic education can be presented. While we shared research and programs from Florida, we also had unique experiences in learning about new outreach techniques used in other countries. These ideas can then be evaluated and possibly implemented in Florida. This experience allowed me the opportunity to discuss outreach education and learn new techniques and research-based information that will help make my FCS Financial Management programs more effective.

Plans were made for Dr. Zeynep Copur and others to visit Florida to observe local programs in 2011 and collaborations for a return trip to Turkey in 2011-12.

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## Master Gardener Lends a Hand to Firefighters

“We want to do this right and save water” said Brett Pollock, Deputy Chief of the West Manatee Fire and Rescue District (WMFRD), referring to the landscape at the WMFRD’s new administration building that has received quite a makeover. Master Gardener Christie Callahan led the project to create a Florida-Friendly design. Following Brett’s wishes and the FFL principles, the first step was to remove invasive species. Christine carefully chose plants for the design that were suited for the site conditions. Newspaper was placed between installed plants prior to applying mulch to serve as a weed suppressor. A good layer of mulch was installed to retain moisture. Rain barrels will collect water to be used for irrigating plants. Then came the fire fighters who worked hard to install more than 350 plants and loads of mulch. Community volunteers worked along side the fire fighters to help give back a little to those who give so much, and in one



Saturday afternoon phase one the project was completed. Manatee County Extension provided several rain barrels. Additional rain barrels were received from the Manatee County Utilities – Water Conservation office. A total of 12 rain barrels will be used to collect stormwater runoff. King Middle School art students will be painting barrels with fire department themes. [Contact: Michele Atkinson, Manatee Co., [michelleatkinson@ufl.edu](mailto:michelleatkinson@ufl.edu)]

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## Partners for Prosperity

Hillsborough County Extension is a strong partner in the United Way of Tampa Bay's Prosperity Campaign. The goal of the campaign is to enable Tampa Bay residents to achieve financial self-sufficiency. Outreach efforts include financial education, free tax preparation, financial mentoring, and affordable summer care for working parents. Prosperity Campaign Partners include the IRS, Children's Board of Hillsborough County, National Disability Institute, and financial institutions. Hillsborough County Extension's contributions include providing financial education classes, training financial mentors, and tax return preparation. This tax season, thanks to the work of the Prosperity Campaign, 9,374 residents received free tax filing preparation services. A consumer pays an average cost of \$150 to use the services of a commercial tax preparer. So, the campaign saved low-income Hillsborough

County residents approximately \$1,406,100. In addition, 1,853 of the residents received an Earned Income Tax Credit refund for a cumulative total of \$10,836,372. This result means that the Prosperity Campaign partnership helped to ensure that millions of dollars stayed in the Tampa Bay Area. Thanks to financial education efforts, residents have a better understanding of how to use those dollars to increase their financial stability. Additionally, Extension is chairing the campaign's Financial Stability Savings Committee. This committee is working to helping low-income residents increase their assets and learn how to connect with banks and credit unions in order to avoid expensive alternative services (such as expensive check cashing outlets). [Contact: Lisa Leslie, Hillsborough County, [lmleslie@ufl.edu](mailto:lmleslie@ufl.edu)]

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## Working Together for Healthier Workforce

Manatee County Extension and Employee Health Benefits have teamed up to encourage Manatee County Government employees to get healthy. Through the new "Know Your Numbers" campaign, employees can gain points by participating in various health-related classes and activities. Accumulating 225 points earns the employee extra health bucks that they can use to help offset various medical costs. The Family & Consumer Sciences agent provides two classes for the Know Your Numbers campaign: "Cooking with Herbs," and "Keeping the Pressure Down." Since February 2011, these classes have proven to be extremely popular. More than 180 people have participated in Cooking with Herbs, while the 4-week Keeping the Pressure Down class has had nearly 30 participants. Both classes focus on ways to improve your health through behavioral changes such as preparing fresh foods, using less salt, and eating a healthy, balanced diet. Because of demand, more classes have been scheduled

through October 2011. [Contact: Samatha Kennedy, Manatee County, [skennedy@ufl.edu](mailto:skennedy@ufl.edu)]

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## Hillsborough County Residents Enriched and Richer After Attending Triple Workshops

2010 Compost, Water-Wise, and Rain Barrel Workshop attendees surveyed at year's end reported dollar savings after installing their compost bins, microirrigation kits, and rain barrels. Eighty-five percent of the Compost Workshop survey respondents estimated \$129 to \$336 annual savings from homemade compost compared with purchasing commercial products. Thirty-three percent of the Water-Wise survey respondents saved between 240 and 348 gallons and up to \$108 per year by utilizing microirrigation as opposed to in-ground irrigation systems. Sixty percent of the Rain Barrel survey respondents saved 660 to 1,800 gallons and up to \$660 per year by harvesting rainwater instead of using potable water for landscape irrigation. [For more intensive survey results contact: Lynn Barber, Hillsborough Co., [lbarber@ufl.edu](mailto:lbarber@ufl.edu)]

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## Eating in Can Save You \$6,000, Too!

Managing in Tough Times was one of the classes requested for the Florida Recreation and Park Association Southwest Region Spring meeting. Fifteen members from Lee and Sarasota counties attended the session. A survey was sent to attendees asking if they had made any changes in their spending habits. The questions and participant's answers follow:

Did you make any behavior change related to eating out or grocery shopping? If so, what did you do and what savings did you see? - Yes - I realized I am spending about \$500 a month eating out & buying convenience packaging/convenient

shopping. I have curbed that and have been bringing stuff to work, and making the effort to prepare food.

Did you check your credit report at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com)? - Yes, and that of my partner. Both were excellent.

Did you set any personal money goals? - Yes. We have an 8-year-old car that we use daily for short trips. We were considering trading it in and taking on a 2nd car payment. Instead, we fixed everything that was wrong with it - about \$600, and plan to keep driving it at least 24 more months until the other car has been paid off for a full year and have 12 months savings toward replacing the old one.

Examples of responses to surveys are shared in future classes to assure participants they too can make changes that will improve their current financial situation. [Contact: Celia Hill, Lee County, [hillcb@leegov.com](mailto:hillcb@leegov.com)]

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## Snap-Crunch-Munch: Filling Up on Fresh Fruits and Veggies!

Six Family Nutrition Program (FNP) Assistants and 875 teachers/volunteers joined forces this year to increase consumption of fruits and veggies and fight childhood obesity. Several programs were featured that used materials developed by UF and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). “**Florida Fresh 2-U**” (August 2010-May 2011) reached 859 elementary students from 33 schools, providing students the opportunity to taste seasonal produce; FNP’s “**Healthy Celebrations**” and “**Fruits & Veggies: More Matters**” (October 2010-January 2011) reached approximately 7,546 elementary students from 40 schools. These two combined programs resulted in a national **Produce for Better Health 2011 Role Model award**. Teachers reported in the end-of-year survey that of the five FNP campaigns, their students learned the most from the “Healthy

Celebrations” (using fruits & vegetables) and “Fruits & Veggies: More Matters.” When asked what impacted the students most positively and aided their learning, they indicated that food sampling/taste-testing of new foods was tops! Teachers added the following comments: *“My students have made comments about new foods that they have never tried before or even knew about. They love the worksheets and food samples!”*; *“I witnessed my students selecting healthier choices in the school cafeteria during breakfast and lunch, and for class parties they have been bringing in fruits, nuts, and juice instead of soda!”*; and *“During lunch, I notice the students discussing fruits, vegetables, and the food pyramid. They ask each other how many fruits and vegetables they have eaten that day.”* [Contact: Betsy Crisp, [mecrisp@ufl.edu](mailto:mecrisp@ufl.edu)]



An Enchilada Day Camp participant learns how to make Chorizo sausage.

their own homemade salsa and then canned it, complete with their own custom printed jar label.

Day two of the Enchilada Day Camp provided youth the opportunity to visit the University of Florida. Camp members met with student ambassadors from the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs), who introduced the many opportunities that CALs has to offer. Participants walked away with new knowledge about college majors, scholarships, and potential careers. After lunch, youth had the opportunity to meet with the Gator Salsa Club who gave a brief demonstration of salsa dancing. Participants learned simple salsa dance steps and practiced them throughout the rest of the camp. Youth then went to the UF Meat Processing Center where they made chorizo sausage and participated in a taste panel.

On the final day of the Enchilada Day Camp, participants visited a Latin grocery store in Live Oak to see how tortillas are made. Youth returned to the Extension Office to learn about nutrition and healthy living. For lunch, campers were treated to an authentic enchilada lunch complete with salsa made at the camp. In the afternoon, youth learned about the heat levels of different peppers and planted their own bell pepper plants and banana pepper seedlings.

Enchilada Day Camp participants learned about

## 4-H Enchilada Day Camp



The 4-H Enchilada Day Camp was held on June 13-15 and gave young people the opportunity to learn about and take part in the production of Latin foods from farm to family. The 3-day camp had attendees from Suwannee and Gilchrist Counties, with 20 participants each day. On the first day of the camp, youth visited the North Florida Research and Education Center-Suwannee Valley in Live Oak to view corn and tomato production. After the farm tour, youth created

the production of Latin foods from farm to family and experienced the 4-H motto of “Learn by Doing.” The hands-on approach was supplemented by expertise from UF-IFAS Extension Agents, UF faculty and staff, and volunteers. They increased their knowledge about where their food comes from, and increased communication, decision making, teamwork, problem solving, and healthy lifestyle choice life skills by 73% based on student evaluations after attending the Enchilada Day Camp. The Enchilada Day Camp video can be found at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EaML\\_vqZNps](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EaML_vqZNps).

[Brian Estevez, 4-H/Youth Development, Suwannee County, [bestez@ufl.edu](mailto:bestez@ufl.edu)]

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## New Faculty

Please welcome the following new faculty:

Rachel Fautsch ([r.fautsch@ufl.edu](mailto:r.fautsch@ufl.edu)), 4-H Courtesy EA I, Marion County, 05/09/11

Kevin Lewis ([kevin1.lewis@ufl.edu](mailto:kevin1.lewis@ufl.edu)), Ag/4-H FAMU, Suwannee County, 05/09/11

Please also welcome Marina D’Abreau ([mdabreau@ufl.edu](mailto:mdabreau@ufl.edu)) into her new position as County Extension Director in Manatee County (6/20/09).

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## Resignation

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

Renee Gore, 4-H Youth Development EA I, Marion County, 05/20/11

David Cletzer, 4-H Youth Development EA I, Indian River County, 05/28/11

Ryan Atwood, Citrus/Food Crops M/C EA II, Lake County, 06/01/11

Rebecca Harris, 4-H Youth Development EA II, Orange County, 06/25/11

Deborah Duke, Courtesy 4-H Youth Development EA I, Highlands County, 07/02/11

Nola Wilson, Small Farms EA I, Marion County, 07/09/11

William Hill, 4-H Youth Development EA II, Polk County, 07/16/11

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## Retirement

Best wishes for an enjoyable retirement to:

Charles Brasher, Courtesy EA III, FAMU/Ag, Jackson County, 06/29/11

Gerald Edmondson, CED Ag/Livestock EA IV, Okaloosa County, 07/01/11

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