

EXTENSION

Comings & Goings

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN FOR EXTENSION

AEC to Offer Certificate in Teaching & Learning

The Department of Agricultural Education and Communication has created the *Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Extension* that will be launched in January 2012. The program is designed to assist Extension faculty, at both the county and state levels, to develop and enhance their teaching skills. Participants will complete a series of 12 modules; once all are completed a certificate will be awarded by the Department. No academic transcript credit will be awarded.

Each module is equivalent to approximately 1 hour of instruction including activities, additional materials, and an assessment. The certificate program is delivered completely through online instruction, thus participants can complete each module according to their own time schedules. Participants can complete the modules in any order they desire. The program is designed to advance teaching in the Extension system; it is not a teaching evaluation system.

There will be a registration fee to enroll in the program, but during at least the first year (2012), Florida Cooperative Extension Service will cover the cost of participation by University of Florida faculty who have an Extension appointment, including Courtesy Agents. Online registration information will be emailed to potential Florida participants in January. Interested persons who do not have a FCES appointment (including out-of-state) will be able to enroll later in 2012.

Contact: Dr. Kirby Barrick (kbarrick@ufl.edu), Agricultural Education and Communication

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County climate change efforts lead to opportunities for new Extension leadership

Municipalities across the country are developing climate action plans. In Monroe County, the challenge of sustainability and climate change needed multidisciplinary approaches, but due to budget issues the county was struggling to address them. The Extension Service as part of the Land-Grant Institution has been the most cost-effective and efficient way to provide outreach leadership and educational programming to the county. Through a network of county agents and specialists, Monroe County Extension agents formed a link between the research community and administration to develop local adaptation and mitigation strategies for responding to climate change. Development of local and regional climate action plans provided multidisciplinary opportunities for Extension programs. This effort lead the agents to coordinate development of a sustainability vision statement with 55 specific recommendations to conduct a greenhouse gas emissions audit, and collaborate to develop new policies related to climate change.

The impact of these new opportunities includes seven new climate related resolutions brought to the county Commissioners by Extension, immediate financial savings of more than 37,000 dollars per year through Extension auditing, a grant award of \$2.6 million to improve efficiency in county buildings and provide energy education, and more cost-effective services for county constituents while reducing its environmental impacts.

Contact: Alicia Bradigan-Betancourt (Betancourt-Alicia@monroecounty-fl.gov), Community Development Agent, Monroe County Extension

Mastergardener@broward.org Helps Residents Save Money, Conserve Water, and Reduce Pesticide Use

The Florida Master Gardeners of Broward County now number more than 200 strong. These volunteers receive more than 120 hours of intensive lecture, lab, and field training to assist residents in carrying out Florida-Friendly Landscaping (FFL) principles. FFL protects natural resources through water conservation, waste and pollution reduction, erosion prevention, and creation of wildlife-sustaining habitats. These volunteers work closely with Local Master Gardener Coordinators in 30 cities to answer more than 26,000 client inquiries through mastergardener@broward.org, through their participation in answering queries by phone and walk-ins, and through public presentations, assisting the Urban Horticulture staff in serving more than 82,000 clients annually.

Four hundred of the 26,000 clients served by e-mail last year were surveyed to determine (1) if their problem was solved by solutions given by Master Gardeners; (2) if the client changed practices in managing their landscape to conform to recommended FLL principles; (3) if reductions were noted in pesticide, water, and fertilizer use; and (4) if the client could estimate how much money was saved and, if so, how much, calculated on an annual basis.

Of the 400 clients who were surveyed, 104 responded. Ninety-five percent of respondents felt their query was completely answered, with the same percentage indicating they had changed their landscaping practices as a result of the new information provided by Master Gardeners. More than 68% reported using fewer pesticides (many carried out the work rather than having a pest-control operator do the work), while 38% documented significant reductions in water use. Forty-nine percent indicated that they had noticeably decreased fertilizer use as a result of the advice provided by Master Gardeners and the University of Florida-IFAS literature that was e-

mailed to them. Much of that fertilizer decrease was due to their learning to put the “right plant” in the “right place,” one of the Nine Principles. Finally, the combined cost savings indicated by survey respondents totaled \$52,705 in annual savings, averaging approximately \$507 per respondent.

We are pleased to report the progress of our Master Gardeners, and are actively recruiting for the next Master Gardener Training Class, to begin on March 8 and end on June 14, 2012. If you are interested in joining this group that is so important in conserving our natural resources, visit www.broward.org/parks, click on the “Extension Education” link on the left side of the page, and then follow the “Master Gardener Program” link at the bottom of the left-hand menu.

Contact: John Pipoly (jpipoly@ufl.edu), Urban

Food Safety in Treasure Coast

Treasure Coast area citrus growers, harvesters, packers, and processors need employee Personal Hygiene and Food Safety training to fulfill various domestic and international food safety requirements, e.g., GLOBALGAP, BRC (British Retail Consortium), or SQF (Safe Quality Food) standards, and audit criteria to ship their products to domestic and international overseas markets. From 2008-2010, St. Lucie County Extension collaborated with UF/IFAS/IRREC to provide Personal Hygiene for Citrus Produce Handlers (Workplace Health and Seasonal Flu and WPS) workshops and programs to area citrus companies and workers. By 2010, 60+ citrus companies attended, with 83.3% of Indian River Citrus League packinghouse member companies participating (up from 59% in 2009). An employee approached this agent and shared that he had taken what he had learned to heart and gone home and taught his young children the proper way to wash their hands. They now stand at the sink and

he hears them sing the “happy birthday” song, which approximates the 20 seconds needed to wash hands properly. For a 2nd year, a principal in a large company of four packinghouses told this agent that he had received positive feedback from supervisors and workers regarding the programs. He shared that both the employees and the employers appreciated the effort to connect shared models of work and home environments. The employees enjoyed participating in the trainings, and the lessons learned carried over into the workplace by an observed increase in effort and more positive attitudes toward hand washing by staff.

Because of the programs provided by this agent (2010 training value \$154,500 = 3,090 trained @ \$50/attendee/2010, \$159,050/2009 and \$78,450/2008), citrus growers, packers and processors continue to fulfill Global Gap’s internal standards and audit criteria, and ship their products overseas. Additionally, the programs also facilitate citrus workers’ knowledge and awareness of the important role they play within their industry and the entire food sector as it relates to food safety.

Contact: Karla Lenfesty (lenfesty@ifas.ufl.edu), FCS Agent, St. Lucie County Extension

Florida Extension Agent Gains Global Award

University of Florida Extension Horticulture Agent Dan Culbert was recently named the Southern Region recipient of the International Service Award by Epsilon Sigma Phi, the National Honorary Fraternity of Extension Professionals.

The recognition was part of the organization’s annual conference, held in Syracuse NY. Culbert is the Horticulture Agent in Okeechobee County, FL, and is the second consecutive Florida Extension Agent to earn this national recognition. (Bay County Horticulture Agent Ken Rudisill was the

2010 ESP International Service winner.)



During the conference, Culbert also presented a seminar on his involvement in an International Extension Program that taught 47 Costa Rican landscape horticulture professionals in 2008. He was part of a team of seven agents that worked with EARTH University (Costa Rica) faculty to address landscape conservation and natural resource issues at LaFlor in the northwest region of that Central American country. He will return there in 2012 to conduct a program impact evaluation.

Culbert also serves as a member of the National ESP Global Relations Committee that helps build the capacity of Extension faculty that are involved in International programs across the US. He is also secretary of the UF/IFAS International Programs Advisory Team, an advisory group that helps coordinate the many academic, research, and extension programs conducted by UF's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

"Why spend time with international education where there is so much to do locally?" This common concern was addressed at the conference by members of ESP. Culbert reports that as a result of his international work, he has been better able to relate distant concepts of landscape horticulture to local citizens, he has improved his ability to communicate with Hispanic audiences locally, and he has gained valuable contacts with persons who are working in horticultural

industries across the globe that have the same kinds of needs as those who live and work in Florida.

Hillsborough County Family Consumer Science Agent Mary Keith also attended the Conference. She serves on the National ESP Awards committee and brought back a Distinguished Service Award for Osceola County Extension Director Mary Beth Salisbury. The DSA is provided to Extension Agents that have provided a lifetime of dedication to the profession.

The Florida Chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi was also presented with two Platinum Awards, one for achievement in chapter membership and a second "Chapter of Merit" award for overall work in meeting the professional development needs of Extension agents and Specialists. Under the leadership of last year's President, Dr. Joan Bradshaw of Citrus County, and this year's President, Dr. Ray Mobley, who is the Dean for Extension programs at Florida A&M University, the "Alpha Delta" Chapter is one of the more active US EPS Chapters.

Contact: Dan Culbert (indianco@ufl.edu),
Environmental Horticulture Agent, Okeechobee
County Extension

New Faculty

Please welcome the following new faculty:

Rina LaRosa (rlarosa@ufl.edu), 4-H Youth
Development EA I, Broward County, 11/07/2011

Ashley Fluke (afluke@ufl.edu), Livestock/Forage
EA I, Osceola County, 11/15/2011

Please also welcome Les Harrison
(harrisog@ufl.edu) into his new position as
County Extension Director in Wakulla County
(10/31/2011) .

Retirement

We took a big hit this month! After many years of service and dedication Daniel Mullins (Santa Rosa County Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent IV) ,



Jo Shuford-Law (Leon County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program Extension Agent IV) ,

Betty Miller (Leon County Extension Director and Community Resource Development Extension Agent IV) ,



and Mary Beth Salisbury (Osceola County Extension Director and Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent IV) have all retired.

We want to thank them for all of their contributions to UF/IFAS Extension.



Happy Holidays!

On behalf of the Extension Administration, we wish all of you a cheerful Holiday Season!



Extension Comings and Goings is a monthly newsletter of the Office of the Dean for Extension via e-mail and on the 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 Liz Rossen at lizann@ufl.edu.