

UF/IFAS EXTENSION & ST. JOHNS COUNTY

WORKING TOGETHER

July, August, September 2019

The St. Johns County Board of Commissioners and UF/IFAS Extension work in a cooperative effort to provide relevant programming to citizens throughout the County. During the third quarter of 2019, Extension Agents and Staff recorded approximately **7112 contacts** with clientele that included emails, phone calls, office visits and field calls. Agents conducted **71 on-site visits** (Agriculture, Horticulture, Schools, Livestock, and Forages) to assist residents one-on-one in St. Johns County. Below are a few examples of impacts reported by our Agents during this quarter.



- **A feral hog mitigation plan was developed** for the 50-acre St. Johns County Ag Center, by our Production Agriculture Agent, that was successful in removing 6 hogs. Damage from these hogs occurred from May 23rd thru August 4th which resulted in turf, flower and herb gardens being destroyed. Since their removal, UF/IFAS Master Garden Volunteers have been able to repair all damage.
- **The Hastings Plant Pathology Triage Lab**, led by our Commercial Ag Agent, diagnosed 8 fungal diseases, 4 non-biotic stressors and processed 12 soil samples for a cost savings of \$560 for TCAA growers.
- 4-H youth that participated in a two day “**A Sweet Story of Sugar 4-H Camp**”, led by our 4-H Agent, gained knowledge related to sugar cane and sugar beets. Campers harvested and pressed sugarcane, cooked cane juice to syrup, and conducted a variety of sugar experiments and crafts. As a result of this camp, youth learned where sugar comes from, how it benefits the baking process, reasons to limit our sugar intake and where most of Florida’s sugarcane is grown.
- By attending a workshop related to health, taught by our Family and Consumer Science Agent, 26 participants gained **knowledge about keeping hydrated in hot environments**. They also learned the symptoms, prevention and course of action to take with dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- The St. Johns County Horticulture Department provided consultations via site visits, office visits, plant clinics, e-mail and phone calls to 380 residents. Consultations provided **education and diagnostics on Florida Landscaping**; turf, palm, citrus, vegetable and ornamental plant diseases; soil pH test results; plant identification and other horticulture-related topics.
- A **thornless blackberry variety trial** (1/2 acre), led by our Commercial Ag Agent, was installed at Ben Wells Produce in St. Augustine with the objective of getting fresh fruits into local restaurants and farmer’s markets.
- Our Production Agriculture Agent assisted the St. Johns County Agriculture Hall of Fame Committee by facilitating meetings that resulted in the re-commemoration of the **St. Johns County Agriculture Hall of Fame** that was established in 1998.
- As a result of educational programming, provided by our Family and Consumer Science Agent, 94 participants learned about **food safety in their home kitchen**. Seventy-four percent learned the proper temperature of a refrigerator and freezer and 37 percent learned about how to properly sanitize the kitchen sink, disposal and strainer.
- Our Horticulture Department **provided Green Industry Best Management Practices (GI-BMP) trainings** to 9 green industry professionals. This training provided each with a GI-BMP certificate which enabled them to apply to FDACS to obtain their Limited Commercial Fertilizer Applicator Certificate, which is required by state statute to legally apply pesticides in the state of Florida.



- Our Commercial Agriculture Agent provided Ag Awareness programs at the Night Market (St. Augustine Amp Farmer's Market) and St. Johns Beekeeper's meetings for a total of 115 educated clients. **Clients were educated about local produce and when it is in season.**
- The UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County Family Nutrition Program secured a donation of **3 handicap garden beds for ESE students** at 1 middle and 2 elementary school St. Johns County schools from the Putnam/St. Johns County Farm Bureau.
- Fifty-three participants **improved their knowledge on disease prevention** of arthritis, obesity and osteoporosis by learning to modify their diets by attending educational programming provided by our Family and Consumer Science Agent.
- Thirty-six participants gained knowledge related to **beef cattle palpation, pregnancy evaluation, artificial insemination and cattle handling practices**, from our Production Agriculture Agent, by attending the 2019 Beef Cattle Reproduction and Artificial Insemination School held at the Deseret Ranch in Deer Park, FL.

- By attending cooking workshops provided by our Family and Consumer Science Agent, 17 participants gained knowledge about the **different cooking oils and the chemical composition** of each oil. Included in the workshop was a breakdown of the monounsaturated, polyunsaturated and saturated fats and the health benefits of each. 100% of the participants learned the difference of each cooking oil and its health benefits.
- As a result of incorporating public speaking and fine arts into the 4-H experience at the club, county, district and state level, seven St. Johns County 4-H youth competed at the state level with either their 4-H demonstration or their talent. **Four of the seven youth received top honors at the state level.**
- Our Commercial Ag Agent participated in the **Farm Bureau Appreciation Dinner** with fellow UF/IFAS Extension agents at Austin Cary Memorial Forest. Dinner was prepared for Farm Bureau members as a thank you for their continuous support to UF/IFAS.
- Eighteen participants that attended the "**Living on a Few Acres**" Workshop, led by our Production Agriculture Agent, gained knowledge related to pasture management, soil sampling, variety selection and rotational grazing.
- To remain proactive related to potential disaster assistance, **20 commercial row crop farmers were contacted pre/post Hurricane Dorian**, by our Commercial Ag Agent, for preparation assistance and disaster assessments. Fortunately, there were no disaster impacts to report related to agriculture in St. Johns County due to this storm.

For more information, visit the UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County Website at <http://stjohns.ifas.ufl.edu> or contact us at **904-209-0430**.