

# UF/IFAS EXTENSION & ST. JOHNS COUNTY

## WORKING TOGETHER

January, February, March 2022

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 first quarter of 2022, Extension Agents and Staff recorded approximately **9,290 contacts** with clientele that included emails, phone calls, office visits and field calls. Agents conducted **88 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.



- One hundred and seventy (170) fourth graders and thirty (30) teachers and parents participated in the **St. Johns County 4-H Ag EdVenture Days** held at the St. Johns County Fairgrounds. Participants gained knowledge about agriculture topics including beef, vermiculture, potatoes, poultry, and healthy Florida drinks that were taught by UF/IFAS Extension Agents, Foresters, and volunteers from the Putnam-St. Johns County Farm Bureau and St. Johns County Horse Council.
- Thirty-three (33) participants that attended a **“Healthy for Life®” series** of six workshops (total of 67 duplicated for all sessions), led by our FCS/Food Systems Agent, increased their knowledge of behaviors to **improve overall health** such as physical activity recommendations and eating fruits and vegetables.
- **25 crates of artichokes, grown in Hastings, were donated**, and delivered by our St. Johns County Commercial Ag Agent to local restaurants, farmers markets and produce stands in the Tri County Agricultural Area for community feedback on artichoke palatability. Comments have been overwhelmingly positive.
- Master Gardener Volunteer program distributed 900 native tree seedlings to St. Johns County residents at our annual **Arbor Day Tree Giveaway**.
- Our Production Agriculture Agent taught one virtual and one in-person Drone class to 22 participants that planned to take the **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Part 107 Exam**. By passing this exam, participants can use this certification to obtain employment opportunities in the agriculture, construction, and real estate sectors.
- **The UF/IFAS, St. Johns County 4-H Public Speaking Contest** was held for the first time since COVID-19 pandemic disrupted in-person activities. Fifteen youth had an opportunity to present their demonstrations to judges and compete for first prize.
- The St. Johns County **Family and Nutrition Program provided 56 educational programs** at 13 sites and reached more than 790 clients. Participants ranged in age from ages from under 5 years (11%), 5–17 years (44%), 18–59 years (33%), and 60+ years (12%).
- The St. Johns County **Commercial Ag Extension Agent won the state and regional FACAA/NACAA “Feature Story” award** for her Edible Magazine article on growing artichokes in Florida. Currently it is a national finalist, the National Winner will be selected this summer at the National Meeting in West Palm Beach.
- Our 4-H Department held their **4-H Barn Dance**, which had been cancelled since 2020, and over 100 youth and families attended. A homemade chili contest was held along with games and activities for everyone to enjoy.
- **The Hastings Triage Lab provided diagnostics for 31 crop and soil samples** during the first quarter, including soil sniffing for fumigants.

- Thirty-three (33) participants who attended a **“Healthy for Life®” series** of six workshops (total of 67 duplicated for all sessions), taught by our FCS/Food Systems Agent, **increased their confidence in applying heart healthy strategies** such as eating produce in season and removing barriers to physical activity. 89% (25/28) intend to implement heart healthy practice such as preparing meals with fruits and vegetables.
- To assist producers in the overuse of dewormers in small ruminants (sheep and goats), our Production Agriculture Agent participated in specialized training to learn the **FAMACHA technique**. FAMACHA is an evaluation of the ocular membrane that is compared to a color chart to determine if the animal is anemic. Once producers identify animals that are anemic, they can treat those animals rather than the whole herd.
- **Our St. Johns County Horticulture Agent taught 9 programs to 233 individuals** on topics including gardening for health and well-being, landscape design, plant selection, stormwater pond plantings, and botany.
- One thousand eight hundred eighteen (1,818) students and thirty-four 34 teachers from six (6) schools conducted the **SJC 4-H chicken embryology projects**. Teachers who participated in the project reported that students gained a deeper understanding of the life cycle and needs of a developing embryo, increased skills in observation and recording data, and increased their love of science.
- Twenty-two (22) participants, both youth and adults, earned their **Florida Hunter Safety Certification** by attending a class hosted by our Production Agriculture Agent. This certification trains participants in firearm safety and handling techniques, life skills they will be able to use regardless of how old they are. Participants indicated they planned to hunt locally with their family.
- Horticulture department taught **GI-BMP to 48 green industry personnel**, enabling 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.
- The Commercial Ag Agent and Ag Center Staff proctored **37 pesticide exams** on the 2nd and 4th Friday, and 4th Wednesday of each month in the first quarter of 2022.
- **The St. Johns County 4-H Horse Judging & Hippology Teams placed in the top three at the State 4-H Horse Judging & Hippology Contest.** Youth who participated in this project developed their knowledge of equine science and sharpened their decision making and public speaking skills.
- **Sixteen (16) 4-H volunteer club leaders were trained** by our 4-H Agent in positive youth development practices. These techniques will be used when leading a 4-H club to provide life skill development opportunities for participants.
- Forty (40) participants at a **St. Johns County Horse Council** meeting gained knowledge about the St. Johns County Extension Office and what we do to serve the public by listening to a presentation by our Production Agriculture Agent.
- Eleven (11) participants gained **first-hand knowledge of cool season forage production coupled with planned permanent pasture planting strategies** by attending a forage plot walk program designed by our Production Agriculture Agent. Clientele gained knowledge on forage variety selection, field preparation, and fertilizer rates.
- **Our 4-H Agent trained and certified 18 volunteers as 4-H Level I Archery Instructors.** To lead a 4-H Archery Club, volunteers must have this certification.
- Our Commercial Ag Extension Agent attended the **International IPM Conference in Denver, CO** in March to present a poster alongside Bonnie Wells on crop diagnostics.
- Our FCS/Food Systems **Agent taught 4 in-service training to 317 participants** that included:
  - » Cancer: The Science of Prevention and Survival a 2-part multi-state series,
  - » Cooperative Extension Strategies for Advancing Equity: Using a Systems Level Framework to Promote Collaborative Programming, Telehealth,
  - » Bone Health Curriculum,
  - » The 4-H Food Challenge Training



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**.