

UF/IFAS EXTENSION & ST. JOHNS COUNTY

WORKING TOGETHER

October, November, December 2021

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. Covid-19 impacts has impacted many businesses around the world beginning in April 2020; however, our facility has remained open to serve our clientele. During the fourth quarter of 2021, Extension Agents and Staff recorded approximately **6,361 contacts** with clientele that included emails, phone calls, office visits and field calls. Agents conducted **67 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.



- The SJC Horticulture Department hosted **Gardenfest**, in collaboration with the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, to train 131 participants on topics of Stormwater Pond Plantings, Edibles in the Home Landscape, Garden Survivors, and Native Plants.
- Fifty-Eight (58) attendees took part in the St. Johns County **4-H Holiday Craft Teaching Night** where youth and adult volunteers partnered in teaching a variety of crafts. This event required the craft teachers to use their communication and public speaking skills and the learners to utilize their problem solving, creativity and decision-making skills.
- Twenty-four (24) youth attended a **Food, Fun and Fitness Series**, co-taught by our Family and Consumer Sciences Agent and 4-H Youth Development Agent, where 92% (22 of 24) have taken a positive action step to support a healthy lifestyle and 53% (15 of 24) have taken at least 4 positive action steps to support a healthy lifestyle.
- The Commercial Ag Agent and SJC Extension Center Staff **proctored 19 pesticide exams** on the 2nd and 4th Friday, and 4th Wednesday of each month in the fourth quarter.
- Twenty-seven (27) participants gained **hands-on experience evaluating the beef cattle** pregnancy by attending a class provided by our Production Ag Agent.
- Our Production Ag Agent assisted the State-wide **Livestock Education and Certification for Agriculture Law Enforcement Program (LECALE)** by providing educational materials related to body condition scoring and Animal Handling to 25 Agriculture Deputies from 19 Florida Sheriff's Departments.
- **The Hastings Triage Lab**, managed by our Commercial Ag Agent provided diagnostics for 13 crop and soil samples during the fourth quarter, including soil sniffing for fumigants and processing Brassica samples.
- Five (5) senior aged youth participated in the **4-H Pumpkin Project**. This project educated youth about harvesting, agribusiness, entrepreneurship, food safety and culinary arts. Throughout the fall season, 4-H members furthered their knowledge of the pumpkin industry at three hands-on learning opportunities led by Extension agents from St. Johns and Flagler counties. In addition to the hands-on opportunities to learn about farm safety, harvesting techniques, grading, and pumpkin varieties; youth hosted a pumpkin stand for the public and learned how to prepare their pumpkins for eating and turn them into delicious treats.
- The Commercial Ag Extension Agent attended the **SunBelt Ag Expo** in Moultrie, GA to create a display on Florida grasses for the educational exhibit which she staffed.



- 100% (n=5 / 5 of 5) youth that attended at **4-H Pumpkin Project Food Systems Class**, taught by our Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, reported knowledge gain in at least one method to using pumpkins after harvest (selecting, preparing, using in a recipe, and/or preserving) and food safety practices when preparing a pumpkin recipe.
- For its fifth year, the **4-H Gingerbread House Challenge**, thirty-five (35) youth participated with twenty-three (23) gingerbread house entries. This Challenge enables youth to gain valuable skills in teamwork, engineering, problem-solving, and creativity.
- Our SJC Horticulture Department judged and provided landscape consultation for a **Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ contest** for “Seaview” neighborhood and awarding 2 silver and 1 gold level FFL recognition to homeowners.
- The Commercial Ag Agent established a **half-acre plot of artichokes** to begin phosphorus rate work for BMP research. This plot will also be a collaboration with beekeepers and florists for the cut flower industry this spring.
- Our Production Ag Agent **established a two-acre cool-season forage demonstration plot** at a horse farm in St. Johns County. This project was divided into three groups, TRT 1, rye/oats, 60lbs of nitrogen; TRT 2 rye/oats, 30lbs of nitrogen; TRT 3, rye/oats/red clover, 30lbs of nitrogen. This demonstration will provide an opportunity for landowners to see firsthand how cool-season forages can be incorporated into their farms.
- **Nine (9) Master Gardener Volunteers (MGV) were trained** on proper protocol for MGV help desk and soil testing procedures. This will enable our Horticulture Department to better serve St. Johns County residents with their lawn and landscape issues.
- A 4-H Horse club parent utilized her experiences to start a **4-H Fishing Club**. Since she started, she has recruited a co-leader, secured a meeting site at a marina with a fishing boat captain as subject matter expert, received training from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission on youth and fishing, and co-wrote and received a \$1,000 grant for fishing equipment from Bass Pro Shops. Her club has gone on to be the largest in the county.
- The Commercial Ag and Food Systems Extension Agents took the **4-H Pumpkin Project** youth to the St. Augustine Amphitheater’s Farmer’s Market on October 30th. The youth acquired survey data, from more than 200 participants, on the public’s most eye-catching pumpkin variety grown by HAEC. From this data we learned that the ‘Porcelain Doll’ variety was the fan favorite.
- After a year of virtual training, 35 youth participated in an **in-person 4-H officer training** session in October. Youth learned procedures and skills for their specific officer positions along with engaging in leadership activities as a group. 100% of officers either agreed or strongly agreed that they would use what they learned, understood their job, and felt prepared to help their club leader. The County Council President helped lead the club president lesson.

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**.