2020 Just Keeps on Giving!
I don’t know about you but 2020 could not end too soon for me. This has been the strangest year that I have ever experienced. I think a lot of us are feeling the same way – no matter who you are, we all have been experiencing a time that we probably will never forget. If there was ever a time when we needed to put our differences aside and try and work together, it would be now as the year is not done with us yet. And it is not likely to change quickly in 2021 either, so we need to buckle down and make it through this together. No one is immune to what is happening today, and our differences seem more divisive than ever, but we are better than that. I would like to challenge each one of you to put them aside and help each other through this rough time. Reach out and see what your neighbor needs, offer to buy groceries for someone that is homebound or nervous to go out, call that family member that you stopped talking to years ago, get out and enjoy the fresh air.

I also challenge you to be better informed, to not take things at face value on social media and partisan news outlets but to really find out what is best for you and your family based upon factual information. There is a lot of confusing and misleading data out there and it might be hard to make an informed decision. I hope that you will turn to research-based information from a reliable institution to help you make your decisions. We at the IRC Extension office strive to offer the best information available to help solve your problems and we hope to hear from you soon.

Christine

What is with this weather? It’s a Full House of Weather Wild Cards!
Shortened from an article in Growing Produce by Paul Rusnak 9-18-20
According to NOAA’s latest climate report, not only was last month the second-warmest August on record, but June through August 2020 was the Northern Hemisphere’s hottest on record. And speaking of heat, Europe, Asia, and the Caribbean experienced their hottest January through August period on record. South America’s YTD average temperature ranked as 2nd-hottest ever recorded.

But it’s 2020 and weather can be a roller-coaster ride. Just last week, the Colorado Climate Center in Fort Collins measured 0.3 inches of snow, that was only three days after reporting a record high of 99°F and 100°F the day before! And there’s more ... A couple months ago, the National Weather Service issued a La Niña Watch. The call for caution turned out warranted as the climate phase is officially here now. La Niña is defined as a natural ocean-atmospheric phenomenon marked by cooler-than-average sea surface temperatures across the central and eastern Pacific Ocean near the equator.

Above-average tropical activity in the Atlantic basin is typical of a La Niña year. Active is an understatement when it comes to describing 2020. As of this post’s update, the record-setting Atlantic hurricane season has completely run out of names for storms and is now borrowing from the Greek alphabet. The only other time on record that this happened was in 2005. The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season tally so far: 22 named storms; 8 hurricanes, two of those reaching major category status (Laura and Teddy). Hurricane Sally is the latest to make landfall and delivered historic rainfall to the Gulf Coast and Southeast.

During the winter, La Niña typically brings above-average precipitation and colder-than-average temperatures along the northern tier of the U.S., along with below-average precipitation and above-average temperatures across the South.

“Well, there goes my hope for some cooler days in Central Florida!” says our director.
Importance of Forage Quality by Karla Hernandez, UF IFAS Extension DeSoto County, with forward from Christine Kelly-B.

Forward

Early fall is when I usually get calls about winter forages or overseeding bahiagrass with cool-season legumes or grains. Unfortunately, due to several factors, very few forage growers have much success with cool-season legumes or grains except for rye or ryegrass in our area. One of the main problems is a lack of consistent rainfall leaving one dependent upon irrigation, which can be costly and labor-intensive. Another challenge is the lack of cool-season legumes that will grow well in our area consistently. For the novice forage grower, or one that just does not have much time to worry about their winter forage, overseeding with rye or ryegrass can be advantageous but it is not without its challenges. In order to get a good stand up and going, you will need water for the seeds to germinate and to grow to a point where they might become a little drought tolerant. It is also important to keep animals off the pasture, or keep the stocking rate extremely low, until the grass is mature enough to withstand grazing. Rye needs to be at least 8-12” before grazing and annual ryegrass should be at least 6-12” and can be grazed down to 3-4” before animals need to be removed for regrowth. In South Florida it is recommended to plant from November 1-December 15. For more information see Ryegrass, Small Grains, and Tall Fescue [https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag175].

Small farms that have horses and a few cattle are going to be largely dependent upon hay and silage for their winter feeding due to cost and convenience. But even these farm owners need to have some knowledge about forage quality and so I recommend reading the short article below from my colleague in DeSoto County.

Introduction

Livestock production depends largely on the feeding program; and what you should feed your animals will depend on an analysis of the forage quality. So, what is forage quality? It is the potential of forage to produce the desired animal response. It is measured by six main components: (1) palatability, (2) intake, (3) digestibility, (4) nutrient content, (5) anti-quality factors, and (6) animal performance. As procedures for analyzing forages have improved, knowledge of how to use test results to increase animal efficiency and performance has also improved. Despite these advances, many livestock producers do not recognize the full value of forage quality testing as a management tool.

Why should I test forages for quality? Many scientific studies have shown that the quality of forages fed can have a significant impact on net profit. For example, dairy producers who estimate the crude protein content of their haylage to be 3 percent units lower than it is, and the crude protein content of their corn silage 2 percent units lower than it is, end up feeding more supplemental protein than necessary. Knowing the quality of the forages you are selling or buying is economically wise as well and should been taken in consideration.

How do I collect a forage sample for quality testing?

Samples of Baled Hay: Take a separate sample from each field and cutting. Always sample with a bale core, otherwise, it is impossible to get representative samples. Insert the sampler full depth into the end of each bale. This will insure an accurate sample. Take at least 20 samples cored from each lot. Mix the 20 cores in a clean bucket and place in a plastic bag. Label each bag with your name, location, date, address, forage mixture, stage of maturity and date harvested. Send your samples to a laboratory that analyses forage quality.

Samples of Haylage and Silage at Harvest: Take a sample of the silage, collecting from three to five handfuls of silage or haylage from the first load of the day in a plastic bag, and place in refrigerator or freezer immediately. Follow the same procedure for several loads of forage throughout the day and proceed to combine samples by mixing well, until you obtain a representative sample. Repeat this process for each field if more than one field is harvested in one day. Label the plastic bag with your name, address, sample number, forage mixture, stage of maturity, and date of harvested. Send your samples to a laboratory that analyses forage quality.

Preparing and Storing Collected Samples: Keep hay samples in a cool place and keep the haylage and silage samples frozen. Then proceed to mail them or bring them to a laboratory early in the week, to prevent bacterial decay that might alter the results. The results will depend on the amount of sample taken as well as if it was collected randomly but with a good representation.

Summary

Proper sampling ensures that the forage analyses accurately reflect the hay, silage, or pasture being sampled. Generally, the better the growing conditions, the higher the forage quality. It is important to follow the steps to obtain a sample of forage in hay or silage, or else inadequate sampling will result in less accurate forage quality data analysis.

For more information about forage testing and where to send your samples to see:
Forage Testing [https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/aa192]
Florida Forage Handbook [https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag170]
Factors Affecting Forage Quality [https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag161]
Local Farmer Focus by Christine Kelly-B.

A few years ago, I went out to Fellsmere to visit a farm whose owners had been to one of my classes recently. I remember feeling lost as I turned onto a dirt road with no street or farm signs. I was also vaguely annoyed with myself because I had not gotten proper directions from the owners because I had my trusty GPS on my cell phone that was no help what-so-ever. I decided to follow what looked like a worn path and I am glad that I did. Ecotone Farm and their owners, Jerry and Tamara Renick, were inviting and open. Their mission is to produce high quality and nutritious produce that has little to no impact on the natural environment is pesticide-free and non-GMO. They use sustainable practices with a responsible integrity to protect the environment.

You can tell by talking with them that Ecotone is a labor of love and hard work. Jerry and Tamara are a good fit for each other and for the farm. Jerry is an environmental scientist with a Master’s in environmental horticulture. Tamara was a florist in Chicago before they met through mutual friends from Vero Beach. The farm was started in 2012 and has expanded to produce over 20,000 heads of hydroponic lettuce in containerized shade house and hoop house as well as open production of tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and recently added seasonal crops such as zucchini, squash, okra, and eggplant. Fruit trees and blueberries also adorn the farm with edible flowers rounding out the colorful mixtures in a gift basket or CSA (community supported agriculture) box.

Usually, farms in our area slow down over the summer and take a breather but not Ecotone Farm. In their climate-controlled greenhouses, which let them grow well into the hot and humid summer months, they produce lettuce and other leafy greens. And with their farm market opening on Saturday, October 17th they will need all the produce they can grow quickly and efficiently to meet the growing demand for fresh, healthy, and local fruits and vegetables.

The Renicks are looking to the future as they plan for Farm-to-Table dinners, farm tours, hosting special events and increasing their deliveries to local restaurants, country clubs and grocers. They also want to diversify their produce selection by adding ornamental plants and cut flowers. Tamara would like to provide ready-made salads and healthy meals to customers and there might even be ecolodges in the farm’s future, where clients can come and destress while enjoying the fresh air, educational seminars, and good company.

The Renicks do not shy away from social and community involvement either and find time to contribute back. Jerry is a councilmember for Fellsmere and is on the Agriculture Advisory Committee for Indian River County. They also contribute produce to local charity events and to the Treasure Coast Food Bank.

Purchasing their products is easy, even during the pandemic—just call Tamara (772-713-9276) and she will provide “fence-side” pickup, every day. You can also visit their website www.ecotonefarm.net or send them an email at ecotonefarm@gmail.com.

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Pesticide License Exams at Indian River County Extension

Pesticide exams are administered at the Indian River County Extension Office with strict social distancing rules in place. Exams are given every Thursday in two shifts: 12:30-2:30pm and 3:00- 5:00pm, until further notice. There are no paper tests, computers only. Computers and testing accessories are sanitized between test takers per CDC guidelines. Masks must be worn which cover nose and mouth with no holes or gaps. Temperatures are taken before entering testing room. Hand sanitizer is available. Social distancing guidelines will be strictly followed, limiting the number of people admitted for testing. Appy for your license and exam at FDACS https://aesecomm.freshfromflorida.com/Default.aspx. After applying for the license, schedule your exam at https://pesticideexam.ifas.ufl.edu/. If you have any questions, contact Christine Kelly-B.
Grow Your Own Tea? by Dr. Juanita Popenoe

Tea is made from the plant *Camellia sinensis*, which was carefully guarded in China for centuries. Seeds were smuggled into India by the British in 1836 to break the Chinese tea monopoly. We can grow that plant here in Florida and UF/IFAS is researching cultivars for adaptation to our conditions. However, why not go native and use the only North American caffeine-producing plant that grows wild here – Yaupon holly. Yaupon holly is an evergreen holly with small green leaves on stiff branches. Selected cultivars are used as hedges (a compact, shrub form resembles boxwood) and small trees, including a weeping form. Males and females are separate plants, so if you want berries be sure to purchase a female.

The plant is an excellent choice for organic production because, as a native plant, it is adapted to Florida conditions and requires very few inputs. It is great for an edible landscape because it is ornamental and useful for tea. Leave the berries for the birds though. The scientific name, *Ilex vomitoria*, refers to the Native American use of the plant for purification ceremonies where strong teas were drunk in excess to induce vomiting. Early botanists noted this and looked no further for a name. When brewed properly and consumed in moderation, the tea is perfectly safe and was used by Amerindians and European immigrants for daily consumption.

The University of Florida researched making Yaupon holly tea from various cultivars and wild plants. Researchers found the ornamental ‘Nana’ cultivar had caffeine levels similar to Asian green tea, as well as antioxidant levels similar to blueberries. The cultivar ‘Pendula’ had the highest caffeine concentrations of the cultivars tested. Wild yaupon holly caffeine levels vary and may provide genetics for breeding a better tea-producing plant. There are many types of hollies and plants that look similar to yaupon hollies, so use caution to be sure you are using the correct plant. Other plants may not be safe to eat, and as always when trying a new food, go slowly to make sure you are not allergic.

To make tea, one recipe recommends selecting and pruning the new, light green growth – leaves and small twigs. Roast the cuttings for 8 minutes at 300°F or until they start to turn brown. Alternatively, you can heat them in a skillet until they start to turn brown.

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**OCTOBER**
- **Avocados**
- **Bell Peppers**
- **Caromela**
- **Cucumbers**
- **Grapefruit**

**NOVEMBER**
- **Avocados**
- **Grapefruit**
- **Passion Fruit**
- **Squash**
- **Strawberry Melon**

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**What’s in Season Now?**

Look for these “Fresh From Florida” items in your grocery store during

Support Florida Farmers and buy local!
Two months ago, the Master Gardeners started a Vegetable Gardening Project. During the last week of June, we used the Vegetable Gardening in Florida publication to select plants and start seeds for plants that would transplant very well in August/September. In late August, volunteers collected tomato, bell pepper, cabbage, and many others for their fall gardens. If you have not already planted your vegetable garden in August, September is a great month to get it going. Consult the publication for other things that will do well throughout the rest of Fall/Winter if started now.

Susan T. will be doing her vegetable gardening this fall using various containers. She had a series of stylish 10-inch-deep raised beds installed and she is experimenting with growing bags and pots of different sizes depending on what will be grown in them (Picture 1). These containers are all located near her front door and the watering hose (Picture 2). We will provide progress pictures on our Extension blog and Facebook pages.

Julia D. is also growing her veggies in containers. She decided to vary lightweight plastic pots for her gardening efforts (Picture 3). She is currently growing tomatoes, basil, kale, cucumbers, and mint. These pots are out in the open receiving lots of sunlight and the recent rain. Julia reports that it is often difficult to determine if her seedlings have received enough or too much water. We discussed placing a rain gauge in the middle of her pots so she will know how much water they are receiving. She is also considering purchasing larger tomato plants if the ones she currently has do not start showing more rapid growth. (Check out our Extension blog to see what she ends up doing.)

Karen V. takes a ‘survival of the fittest’ approach to her container gardening efforts. She is growing tomatoes, bell peppers, and rosemary in containers filled with half mulch and half mushroom compost (Picture 4). The bell peppers have doubled in size since she planted them three weeks ago and the tomatoes have been caged. She only waters them in the mornings if they look a little wilted.

Last Thursday my little starts were finally installed in the raised bed on the western side of my landscape. They are all still alive. This week I will be sowing seeds for radish and other crops that do not transplant very well. Pictures of my own efforts will be shared on the Extension blog and on the Master Gardeners of Indian River County Facebook page.

Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide- [https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/VH/VH02100.pdf](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/VH/VH02100.pdf)
Vegetable Gardening in Florida [https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening)
South Florida Gardening Calendar [https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep452](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep452)

Master Gardeners are trained volunteers that assist the horticulture agent, Nickie Munroe, educate homeowners and the public about Florida-Friendly Landscaping and environmentally sustainable lawn maintenance. If you are interested in learning more about the Florida Master Gardener program in general, please visit the Florida Master Gardener website at [http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/](http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/). If you are interested in training to become one of our illustrious volunteers in Indian River County, contact Nickie Munroe at [lnmunroe@ufl.edu](mailto:lnmunroe@ufl.edu) or (772) 226-4318.
Via ZOOM webinar
Download ZOOM for free at https://zoom.us/signup and then register for the MG Growing Series by emailing ircmg1@gmail.com for the Eventbrite links.

Master Gardeners’ Growing Series
Learn Florida Friendly Landscaping (FFL) management techniques & other exciting GARDENING topics – FREE seminars offered via Zoom:
Fridays 11:00 am to 1:00 pm
More information: ircmg1@gmail.com

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OCTOBER

Central
- Beets, Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Strawberries

South
- Beets, Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplants, Endive/Escarole, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peppers, Strawberries, Tomatoes

November

Central
- Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplants, Endive/Escarole, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peppers, Strawberries, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes

South
- Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplants, Endive/Escarole, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peppers, Strawberries, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes

Carrots, Celery, Mustard, Potatoes, Spinach

OCTOBER

Central
- Carrots, Celery, Mustard, Potatoes, Spinach

South
- Carrots, Celery, Mustard, Potatoes, Spinach

November

Central
- Onions (greens, shallots), Peas (English), Radish, Turnips

South
- Beans (bush, pole, lima), Corn (sweet), Cucumbers, Onions (greens, shallots), Peas (English, southern), Radish, Squash (summer, winter), Turnips

What to Plant in Your Vegetable Garden
N**kie’s Native Nook** by Nickie Munroe

Plants selected this quarter are for the fall planting season. Many people will be refreshing their garden beds, dividing bulbs, and planting various things for the fall/winter entertaining season. Here are some suggestions for plants that will allow you to add natives to your fall garden selections. As with all Florida-Friendly Landscaping suggestions, these plants will need very little, if any, watering assistance after they are established.

**Ground cover, border:**
Spider lily- *Hymenocallis latifolia* this gorgeous salt-tolerant plant has long dark green leaves and produces bright white flowers. These 2-3” tall plants will grow in full-sun (can be found on dunes) and can thrive in partly shaded areas as well (mine are under a Live oak tree). If you have seen this plant at a friend or neighbor’s house, this might be your opportunity to obtain some of their extras when they divide them. Picture 1 to the right is spider lily growing on the beach in Key Largo along with railroad vine and other plants in full sun. The 2nd image is spider lily growing under a Live oak with bromeliads and begonia left to survive on rainwater after establishment.

**Bedding:**
Red salvia- *Salvia coccinea* is an outstanding bedding plant. This plant grows two to four feet tall and sports a spike of fiery red flowers. These flowers provide nectar for hummingbirds and butterflies. It prefers full sun conditions but has done very well in part shade in my landscape. This plant will reseed and fill in an area if it is allowed. It is very drought tolerant once established and will add a pop of color that is pleasing to the eye (Picture 3).

**Shrub:**
Beautyberry- *Callicarpa americana* is a lovely plant that prefers partly shaded conditions. It is often found in thick stands of vegetation in natural or disturbed areas. This small shrub grows between 3 to 8 feet tall and 4 to 8 feet wide. The leaves and flowers are unremarkable. The shiny, bright purple-magenta-colored clusters of fruit can be found on the plants around September (Picture 4). They will remain on the stem for several weeks if they are not eaten by birds. Beautyberry can be planted during any time of the year. It is drought tolerant once established. In cooler weather, the plant will drop its leaves until the weather warms up. For more information, see the documents below:

Spider lily- [https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/spider-lily.html](https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/spider-lily.html)
Red salvia- [https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/scarlet-salvia.html](https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/scarlet-salvia.html)
Beautyberry- [https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/shrubs/beautyberry.html](https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/shrubs/beautyberry.html)
Pollinators’ Problems with People

I used to have a small flower bed next to the back door of a home in Vero Beach that I would generally neglect. When the mood for new flowers struck, I would weed it out and invariably I was beset by a very indignant small bright metallic green insect that refused to give ground. I was amused by its tiny fury and wondered why it would not try to sting me or better, just go away. After some research I was humbled to find out that I was the horrible human aggressor disrupting a nesting site of a little pollinator in the Halictidae family known as sweat bees. When pollinators defend themselves against people (some in a very spectacular way) they are perceived as nuisance critters subject to removal or eradication. With the knowledge of what triggers defensive reactions, we can learn to avoid many of the pollinator’s people problems.

The most common concern in Florida is with the Africanized honeybee, Apis mellifera scutellata Lepeletier. African bees were originally brought to Brazil in 1956 to breed a strain that would be more productive under tropical conditions. Some of them escaped and the African bee successfully hybridized with the European bees, spreading throughout South and Central America. These Africanized honeybees now have expanded to the southernmost states of North America.

It is difficult to distinguish a hybrid “Africanized” bee from European bees purely by sight. Behavioral differences in nesting and defending are more easily determined, but even this can be deceiving. Ironically, it is the human contact with the different bees that have bred the lack of, or enhanced, defensiveness. In Europe, honeybees have been managed for centuries and bred for gentleness. In Africa, the hives are subject to “honey hunting” with the destruction of the nest as a result.

At the Extension Office, we get inquiries of how to deal with “problem” bees, whether they are nesting, swarming, or sting. Here are some facts and resources for Indian River County residents:

- **Indian River County** does not remove bees from resident’s property.
- **The Treasure Coast Beekeepers’ Association** does have members who may volunteer to do live removals on a case by case basis – their website is: [http://www.tcbeekeepers.org/](http://www.tcbeekeepers.org/), click on the “Bee Removal” tab and fill out a request form. Note: this is not necessarily a free service.
- **The State of Florida** has a list of certified bee removal companies. Their website is: [https://www.fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/Health-and-Safety/Africanized-Honey-Bees](https://www.fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/Health-and-Safety/Africanized-Honey-Bees), click on the link “Bee Removal Contact List” on the right hand side menu. **This website also has a concise list of safety tips.**
- **University of Florida’s** Honey Bee Research & Extension Laboratory’s website on African Bees can be found at: [http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/honey-bee/beekeeper-resources/african-bees/](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/honey-bee/beekeeper-resources/african-bees/)
- **UF’s Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS)** has a topic page with many publications and links for homeowners and professionals at: [https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_africanized_honey_bee](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_africanized_honey_bee)

With knowledge of the different pollinators needs and reactive behaviors (example: Africanized bees are drawn to darker colors over lighter) and the resources available in Florida and Indian River County, you can decide what steps to take to keep yourself and the local pollinators safer and harmonious. My little sweat bee, if female, could have stung me, but chose scare tactics instead of swooping back and forth and darting at my intrusive hands. I eventually wised up and made a sandy spot behind the flowers so that we could coexist happily. As weather turns cooler, people will be outside more often enjoying the fall temperatures. In my next article I will do a follow up on other types of pollinators often misunderstood or worse, misidentified as harmful.

### What’s Blooming for Pollinators in our Area

**October**

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<tr>
<th>Brazilian Pepper</th>
<th>Smart Weed</th>
<th>Spanish Needle</th>
<th>Spotted Mint</th>
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**November**

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**December**

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Navigating 4-H Enrollment as a New Member by Olivia Zugay

Whether you are new to 4-H or a returning member, the process of enrolling can be a daunting and confusing task. Don’t fear! We are here to explain it all and provide some tips to make your enrollment a piece of cake!

So, what is 4-H and why is it beneficial for you or your child to get involved? 4-H is a global youth development program that teaches children life skills and provides the opportunity for them to make lifelong friends and work with experienced adult mentors. “But don’t kids just participate in the county fair and play with animals?” you ask confused, with a scrunched-up face. That can be a part of 4-H, but through that experience and the numerous other opportunities provided by 4-H, your child can learn an unlimited amount of information on topics ranging from goats and sewing to archery and public speaking. The benefits of 4-H are incredible and will aid your child in life as they grow into adolescence and later, successful adults.

Amazing! Now that you want to join (YAY!) who can enroll in 4-H?

Any youth ages 5-18 as of September 1 of the year they are enrolling can join. Keep in mind that some projects, such as large animals and shooting sports require members to be 8 years old. Does that mean the 5-7-year-olds will not have fun? NO!! The Cloverbuds (ages 5-7) can participate in many projects that are specifically tailored for their success and enjoyment.

We’re ready to enroll, now what? The enrollment process is similar in all counties but remember that they can have specific differences. The following information is for enrollments in Indian River County. Enrollment began August 24, 2020 and will continue until September 30th for returning members and remains open for new members. As a new or returning member, you will need to find a club, which will become your 4-H family for the year or a lifetime. Once you have chosen a club to participate in 4-H with, you will sign up on 4-H Online and begin meeting with your fellow club members! It is truly as easy as that, but for detailed instructions and tips, look below.

We hope you have a great year in 4-H! For any questions or concerns, please contact the Indian River County Extension office, Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 5 pm by phone: (772) 226-4330 or email: indian@ifas.ufl.edu. And connect with us on Facebook to see the latest in IRC 4-H news.

How to enroll in 4-H:

- Take a look at the clubs and projects available in Indian River County at the following link: https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/indian-river/irc-4-h/irc-4-h-club-resources/.
- Once you have a club or project in mind, contact the club leader(s) to get more information and the time and date for their next meeting.
- When you have decided on your club, it’s time to enroll in 4-H Online. If you need help, take a look at these handy instructions.
- The online enrollment system will ask for payment of the $25 state membership fee for youth ages 8-18 (ages 5-7 will give their $15 to their club leader to send to the IRC Extension office.)
- After you have signed up on 4-H Online and paid your membership fee, you will receive a confirmation of payment and await enrollment approval from the IRC Extension office.

Tips to make your enrollment a breeze:

- When in doubt, contact the Extension office and ask for your 4-H agent.
- Contact a club leader or the 4-H office before enrolling in 4-H on 4-H Online. Club leaders will need to know they
Virtual Ice Breakers for 4-H Meetings by Olivia Zugay

For seasoned club leaders and newbie volunteers coming up with new ice breakers for each meeting can be overwhelming. On top of that, we are living in a time where tasks and activities need to be virtually friendly. No stress! We’re here for you with virtual activities that can also apply to in-person meetings in the future.

Ice breakers are important activities to get your kids and parents moving, talking, and getting to know each other. As a volunteer, it also gives you time to assess your group; see how they work together, and which ones might need your help getting comfortable with everyone.

These ice breakers will be kid-centered, but with everything in 4-H, parents are encouraged to participate. Each activity’s instructions will also be specifically made for the use of Zoom. Here are instructions for one example:

4-H Have You Ever
Items you will need:
- Zoom meeting capabilities

It is always fun to reminisce over 4-H memories. This is a group activity that will get your club laughing and remembering fun 4-H times! It will also get your members more familiar with the features of Zoom and comfortable with one another. You are free to come up with different “Have You Ever” statements or simply use the ones provided.

Instructions
- Once you have your meeting started, let your club know they will be playing a fun ice breaker to talk about 4-H and get comfortable with Zoom.
- Tell your club that you will be playing 4-H Have You Ever.
- Explain that the game works by:
  - Everyone turning off their camera feature.
  - The club leader will ask a question and when the member has done the activity described, they will turn their camera back on for everyone to see who has said yes.
  - After those that have said yes to the question have their cameras on, tell them to turn the camera back off so everyone can be ready for the next question.
  - This cycle will continue until you are out of questions.
  - For members new to 4-H, make sure to include some non-4-H related questions.
- Example questions include:
  - Have you ever spilled something on your record book right before you turned it in?
  - Have you ever cleaned up your project animal for show and had them get messed up right before you were ready to enter the ring or while you were in it?
  - Have you ever slept in a stall with your project animal?
  - Have you ever been late for school?
  - Have you ever eaten green eggs and ham?
  - Have you ever climbed a mountain?
  - Have you ever built a fort?
  - Have you ever forgotten your show clothes the day you had to show your project animal?
  - Have you ever completed more than three 4-H projects in one year?
  - Have you ever met your best friend because of 4-H?
Effect of Gardening on Children’s Performance and Behavior
by Dr. Amir Rezazadeh

“Nature is the best school ever”. Many of you have probably heard this statement before. Nature can teach empathy, compassion, sharing, and patience to children and the only thing you need to do is to promote a love of nature in them and see how they will become a responsible and grateful individual.

One of the best ways to involve kids in gardening is to add gardening activities in school. It has been proven that school gardens increase academic performance and dietary outcomes in children. Gardening-based activities can positively impact academic performance and promote healthy diets by eating fresh fruits and vegetables. In four studies, researchers investigated academic outcomes in schools with garden-based activities that included students from first to six grades. Academic outcomes were measured by taking tests in reading, science and math. They observed significantly higher science and math scores compared with non-gardeners. Also, teachers involved in these studies reported that gardening was a great teaching tool. Therefore, an indirect positive effect on children’s social development was observed following these gardening studies.

A new study published in Journal of Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics found that college students who used to do gardening when they were kid had healthier diets and ate more fruits and vegetables. Students who do gardening (38%) or learn to do gardening when they were child (30%) ate 2.9 cups of fruits and vegetables per day. On the other hand, students who never gardened, ate 2.4 cups of fruits and vegetable daily. But only having a vegetable garden in backyard is not enough to positively impact health behaviors in children. Parents need to involve children in hands-on gardening experiences to promote eating fruits and vegetables e in the future.

The result of these studies can be valuable for parents trying to find hobbies and programs to occupy their children during the social isolation we find ourselves in during the pandemic.

Take-home message for parents wishing to garden with their children:
• Select vegetables that are easy to grow to boost kids’ confidence
• Start with unfamiliar vegetables to give them more motivation and pique their curiosity
• Keep a calendar for gardening activities to allow kids to highlight important days and to track progress and measurements

For more information go to:
School Gardens Enhance Academic Performance and Dietary Outcomes in Children
https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/josh.12278?casa_token=HUQAH4pyLVUAAAAA3Am8MhpF7D0ChCN6nj2nYYq3xSltvo09WVq9yrYjocmeMC-Iv6zD08FdAIJXBrbXe08e05800W94Ly
A Garden Pilot Project Enhances Fruit and Vegetable Consumption among Children
https://jandonline.org/article/S0002-8223(09)00458-1/fulltext

We are happy to announce that Ms. Olivia Zugay has joined our extension team as a part-time 4-H program assistant. Olivia was born and raised in Indian River County but left in 2013 to pursue a degree in Animal Sciences at the University of Florida. In 2015, Olivia began interning in our office and returned every summer and winter break, even after she graduated in 2016 from UF. From these experiences, she fell in love with 4-H and pursued a career in Extension. She soon joined the Marion County extension team as a 4-H program assistant. Within a short time, she became the 4-H agent and managed a large program with over 40 clubs and a 4-H farm. But Olivia missed her family and friends in IRC and moved back to work in the IRC school district as a substitute teacher. Given the pandemic, opportunity with the school district became limited and Olivia began working at the public library in Sebastian and has loved it, especially working in the children's department. After some discussion with our extension director, Ms. Zugay has happily agreed to share her skills and knowledge with our 4-H program. Olivia will be assisting Mr. Cole in several activities, including blogging for the website, writing newsletter articles, monitoring Facebook entries, and assisting with program management.

WELCOME BACK, OLIVIA!
Due to the pandemic, we were unable to congratulate in person our IRC 4-H members who had won awards at the 2020 Indian River County Youth Livestock & Horticulture Assoc Show and Auction during the IRC Fire Fighters’ Fair. We know that it was a trying time for most of our 4-H family and friends, and we sincerely appreciate all of the hard work that the IRCYLHA did to adjust to the fair closing and still have the children show and auction their projects. We also would like to thank all the 4-H leaders, volunteers and parents who helped make this event a success in the face of such adversity for their children, thank you!

**Congratulations to all the 4-H exhibitors; you all did such a GREAT job!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2020 WINNERS</th>
<th>GRAND CHAMPION</th>
<th>RESERVE G. C.</th>
<th>SHOWMANSHIP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOAT DOE</td>
<td>Heather Wooten</td>
<td>Mackenzie Elmore</td>
<td>Sr. Show – Mackenzie Elmore</td>
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<td>Int. Show – Heather Wooten</td>
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<td>Jr. Show – Ryleigh Flood</td>
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<td>GOAT BUCK</td>
<td>Payton Nottage</td>
<td>Jaden Kinzalmen</td>
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<td>GOAT MEAT</td>
<td>Drew Baierl</td>
<td>James Elmore</td>
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<td>John-Levi Mace</td>
<td>Ansley Whigham</td>
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<td>SWINE</td>
<td>Reina Chesser</td>
<td>Weston Lee</td>
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<td>SLEEP EWE</td>
<td>Joseph Semprevivo</td>
<td>Giovani Semprevivo</td>
<td>Sr. Show – Bo Russell</td>
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<td>Int. Show – Joseph Semprevivo</td>
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<td>Jr. Show – Giovani Semprevivo</td>
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<td>SLEEP MEAT</td>
<td>Austin Pastor</td>
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<td>Sophie Chisholm</td>
<td>Kenleigh Flynt</td>
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<td>Int. Show – Kylah Flynt</td>
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<td>RABBIT FRYER</td>
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<td>Drew Baierl</td>
<td>Madison Coker</td>
<td>Sr. Show – Emma Bender</td>
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<td>Int. Show – Madison Coker</td>
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<td>Jr. Show – Logan Shepard</td>
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<td>POULTRY</td>
<td>Blake Arce</td>
<td>Zachary Stambaugh</td>
<td>Sr. Show – Ryan Rosenberg</td>
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<td>Jr. Show – Addison Howard</td>
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<td>BEEF BREED FEMALE</td>
<td>Reina Chesser</td>
<td>Hannah Flood</td>
<td>Sr. Show – Mackenzie Elmore</td>
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<td>Callie Rhoades</td>
<td>Brenden Warren</td>
<td>Sr. Show - Abigail Bunch-Wright</td>
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<td>Int. Show - Lacy Campbell</td>
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<td>Jr. Show - Callie Rhoades</td>
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Prescribed burns are needed to protect forest health by Dr. Jack Payne, UF IFAS Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources (Ret.) (Originally published in the Tallahassee Democrat on 12/28/19)

Smokey Bear turned 75 last year and the problem is that he has done his job too well. His three quarters of a century of warnings have fed a belief that all fire is bad. That is not the case. There are times we need someone to start a forest fire. I agree with Smokey that this someone should not be campers or hikers. Trained professionals should decide when, where and how to wield a torch — and have a team ready to contain the resulting blaze. It is called a prescribed burn and it serves dual purposes. It promotes regeneration and regrowth like natural fires do. It also clears out fuel for wildfires, which gives firefighters a greater chance of containing them. If you do not think this is important, ask California.

The Florida Forest Service runs the nation’s largest prescribed burn program on more than 2 million acres of forest and grasslands each year. Prescribed burns have a long history in Florida. Much of its plant life evolved with regularly occurring fire, and now must have it to thrive. And with prescribed burns, we get to set the terms of the fire. If we fail to do that, we leave fire to chance. Regardless of whether a fire starts with a professional’s torch or Mother Nature’s touch, we realize fire can frighten. Florida has many people from the Northeast and other regions with little experience with prescribed burns, so we place a great deal of importance on educating Floridians new and old.

Our agencies partner to raise awareness of the benefits of prescribed burns. We need your help, though, to spread the word when folks complain about occasional ash and smoke that reach neighborhoods. It is a tough business, managing millions of acres with just the right amount of fire. It got a lot tougher after Hurricane Michael. The felled trees on the Panhandle now represent a serious fire threat. Experts say we could use 4,000 miles of firebreaks into these piles of fuel. The firebreaks could also give firefighters access to fires that break out far from roads.

It could be that prescribed burns will play a role in reducing the threat from all that fuel. It is one way to contain damage from Michael more than a year after it passed through the Panhandle. Florida firefighters have traveled many times to fight wildfires in states that do not take the preventive measures we do. We’d rather have other states come to our aid in the aftermath of hurricanes, not because of a tragedy we had the power to prevent.
Please, protect yourself and others by always wearing an approved face mask or covering properly in public places when you cannot socially distance. Be safe and to avoid COVID19 wash your hands frequently and use hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.
In consideration for everyone’s health and safety due to COVID-19, most in-person trainings and activities are being transferred to virtual and on-line mediums. Refer to our website and Facebook page for up-to-date information.

September
1st 4-H New Year enrollment starts. Contact 4-H Agent Darren Cole for more information.
3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th Pesticide License testing. Contact Christine Kelly for more info.
21st – 12/11/20 Sign-up for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program payments www.farmers.gov/cfap

October
1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th Pesticide License testing. Contact Christine Kelly for more info.
9th IRREC Millennium Block Citrus Variety Trial Drive-thru Field Day
19th & 20th Florida State Horticulture Society Meetings
22nd 3rd Annual Nutrition for Beef Females Nutrition for Beef Females (flyer).
4th, 5th, 6th, 10th Florida Museum of Natural History’s virtual gardening workshops as part of the Museum’s October Pollinator Palooza series https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/events/blog/pollinator-palooza-2020/

November
5th, 12, 19th Pesticide License testing. Contact Christine Kelly for more info.
26th & 27th Thanksgiving Holiday

Cool Apps, Interesting Websites and New Factsheets

Agriculture:
- UF Weather Alert Website for Farms https://fawn.ifas.ufl.edu/
- UF IFAS Range Cattle REC Newsletter and other important info on cattle, pasture, weeds, etc in South Florida https://rrrec-ona.ifas.ufl.edu/
- Visit the UF-IFAS Citrus Website: https://citrusresearch.ifas.ufl.edu/ Sign-up for the newsletter at the top right corner.
- Farmers and ranchers can receive notifications from their USDA Farm Service Agency. Producers will receive text messages regarding program deadlines, reporting requirements, events, and updates. Text “Florida” to FSANOW (372-669) for alerts from the state office, and “FLIndianRiver” to FSANOW for messages from a county office.
- Florida Automated Weather Network www.fawn.ifas.ufl.edu

Green Industry Professionals:
- Interested in edible gardening, backyard chickens, snake friends or foes? https://gardensolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/get-growing/
- Florida Gardening Calendar gives gardeners a monthly guide for care and planting of landscapes and gardens, allows for selections between North, Central and South Florida. http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn_and_garden/calendar/

Homeowners:
- Interested in edible gardening, backyard chickens, snake friends or foes? https://gardensolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/get-growing/
- Florida Gardening Calendar gives gardeners a monthly guide for care and planting of landscapes and gardens, allows for selections between North, Central and South Florida. http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/lawn_and_garden/calendar/

Special Interest:
- The Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (SCCAHS) has curated a large list of resources about COVID-19 specific to agricultural health and safety http://www.sccahs.org/index.php/covid-19/
- All You Need to Know About Masks... and More! https://wellness.phhp.ufl.edu/all-you-need-to-know-about-masks-and-more/?utm_source=UF+at+Work-July&utm_campaign=744b20a7c6-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_03_19_08_19_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_73a6c44127-744b20a7c6-409124597
Indian River County Extension Agents and Staff

“Who Ya Gonna Call?”

The Indian River County Extension agents are here for you! Extension agents are your direct link to science-based research straight from the University of Florida. For more information on Extension, or topics ranging from chickens to chinch bugs, send them an email or give them a call. Walk-ins welcome as well!

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County Extension Director
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4-H & Youth Development Agent
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Environmental Horticulture Agent
Master Gardener Coordinator
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Directions to IRC Extension

From U.S. 1 (coming from the north)
Heading on U.S. 1 south, turn right (west) at the light at 26th Street, follow to 19th Ave. and turn right (north) at entrance of IRC Administration complex. Turn right (East) at stop sign in parking area and continue through the roundabout. Building B is on the left just past the roundabout.

From U.S. 1 (coming from the south)
Heading on U.S. 1 north, turn left (west) at the light at 26th Street. Follow to 19th Ave. and turn right (north) at entrance of IRC Administration complex, continue with first instructions to Bldg. B.

From Interstate 95
Take Exit #147 onto Route 60 eastbound (20th Street) to Vero Beach. In approximately 6 miles turn left (north) at the light at 27th Ave. Turn right (east) at the next stop sign at Atlantic Blvd., follow to 19th Ave. and turn left (north) at the entrance of IRC Administration complex, continue with first instructions to Bldg. B.

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