



The Mayo Clover Leaf



March 2025 Lafayette County Extension, Ag and 4-H News Vol 7 Num 3

Up-Coming Events

Monday March 3, Homeschool 4-H Club Meeting, 10:00 AM 4-H Classroom

Monday March 3, Clover Buds, Community Club Meeting, 3:00 PM 4-H Classroom

Tuesday March 7: Brushes and Bites, Youth and parents 10-14

Tuesday March 11, Culinary Club. 3:00 PM 4-H Classroom

Tuesday March 18, Anglers Club Meeting. Alton Lake Contact Extension office for details.

March 24-March 28 SVYLSS

Wednesday March 26, 4-H Senior Commodity Pickup 1:30-4:30

See you at the Suwannee Valley Youth Livestock Show and Sale

The Suwannee Valley Youth Livestock Show and Sale (SVYLSS) in Live Oak is set for March 24-28. Make plans to attend and show your support for the youth of Lafayette and surrounding counties.

Record Book Due March 17, 2025 by 5:00 pm (at Extension Office)
Record Books only apply to Market Animals

Swine Weigh-In
Swine Showmanship
Steer/Heifer Weigh-in
Swine Show
Sheep Check-In
Steer/Heifer Show
Sheep Show
Sale

March 24, 2025 at 8:00-10:00 am

March 24, 2025 at 6:30 pm

March 25, 2025 at 9:00-11:00 am

March 25, 2025 at 6:30 pm

March 26, 2025 at 9:00-10:00 am

March 26, 2025 at 6:30 pm

March 27, 2025 at 6:30 pm

March 28, 2025 at 9:00 am

Buyer's Dinner will be held at the Sale

Weather and Agriculture Report

Emily Beach

Rainfall was pretty average in February along with the temperatures. With the warming days it seems like spring is very close or even here which always encourages people to get out and start lawncare and gardening. I might would agree but I always want to throw caution that there is typically a frost before Easter so keep that in mind when you are thinking about planting and pruning. For planting, March is a

good time to get warm-season vegetables in the ground (see guide below) but if we have a frost you will need to take some precautions if you know a frost is coming up. A good idea is to stagger planting so that you have some early production and then other plants that will produce later and longer into summer. This also prevents putting "all your eggs in one basket" in case we do get a later frost. For pruning, for plants that have a spring bloom you want to hold off on that spring bloom is over. If you prune too early, your plants will be susceptible to that cold weather and it will cause damage.

February Rainfall Totals (in)			
	2025	2024	2023
Cooks Hammock	2.48	2.15	4.31
Mallory Swamp	2.23	2.09	4.25
Midway Tower	2.18	2.26	3.56

North Florida Spring Gardening Guide

Credit: Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide, EDIS Publication #SP103

Crop	Planting Range	Plants Per 10ft	Days to Harvest*	Plant Spacing	Row Spacing	Seed Depth (In)	Transplant Ability**	Family***
Beans, bush	Mar-Apr	30-60	45-60	2-4	18	1-1½	III	(Bean) Fabaceae
Beans, pole	Mar-Apr	24-40	50-70	3-5	36	1-1½	III	(Bean) Fabaceae
Beans, lima	Mar-Apr	20-40	60-80	3-6	18	1-1½	III	(Bean) Fabaceae
Cantaloupes	Feb-Apr	4-6	85-110 (70-90)	20-36	60	½-1	III	(Squash) Cucurbitaceae
Corn, sweet	Feb-Apr	15-20	65-90	6-8	28	1-1½	III	(Grass) Poaceae
Cucumbers	Feb-Apr	10-20	40-65	6-12	48	½-¾	III	(Squash) Cucurbitaceae
Eggplant	Feb-Mar	3-7	90-115 (70-90)	18-40	36	½-¾	I	(Tomato) Solanaceae
Okra	Mar-June	12-30	60-70	4-10	36	½-1	III	(Hibiscus) Malvaceae
Peas, southern	Mar-July	20-60	75-90	2-6	12	1-1½	III	(Bean) Fabaceae
Peppers	Feb-Mar	8-13	90-100 (65-75)	9-15	15	¼-½	I	(Tomato) Solanaceae
Potatoes, sweet	Mar-Jun	10-12	85-130	10-12	36	—	I	(Morning Glory) Convolvulaceae
Squash, summer	Feb-Apr	5-10	40-50	12-24	36	1-1½	III	(Squash) Cucurbitaceae
Tomatoes (supported)	Feb-Apr	4-7	90-110 (70-90)	18-32	48	¼- ½	I	(Tomato) Solanaceae
Watermelon	Feb-Apr	3-5	80-100 (60-90)	24-48	60	1½-2	III	(Squash) Cucurbitaceae

*Seed to harvest (transplants to harvest)

**I= easily survives II= survives with care III= only plant seeds or containerized transplants with developed root systems

***Rotate plant families for soil health and disease suppression



Strengthening Families 10-14

The "Strengthening Families Program" designed for parents and youth aged 10-14, developed by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, is considered one of the most effective programs globally for enhancing communication and strengthening relationships between parents and children, backed by over 20 years of research and implementation. Join local families in this life changing journey!

Begins Tuesday, March 18.

Contact Lafayette County Extension to register

386-294-1279

Watermelon Season Well Underway!

Emily Beach

If you have driven along the landscape of our county you have probably noticed fields that have rows with of black and then taller plants alternating, those are watermelon fields. The black is the mulch that covers the bed which will produce the watermelons and the plants that you see in between is usually rye that serves as a windbreak to protect the young watermelon plants. A couple of months ago, watermelon producers began preparing the land that will be used. Watermelons typically are not grown on the same land consecutively to prevent the build-up of soilborne diseases like Fusarium wilt. Raised beds are used to provide plenty of depth for their large root systems and then a drip tape irrigation system is laid on top of the bed then covered with the mulch which is secured by a machine that uses the soil on the sides as an anchor. This provides an ideal semi-controlled environment for the watermelons as the beds provide a warmer temperature, proper drainage, and the irrigation is controlled along with fertilizer necessary for adequate growth. The use of the mulch also contributes to weed suppression, temperature regulation, as well as irrigation and fertilizer efficiency. Watermelon transplants are being planted now that come from greenhouses to give the plants time to germinate and start the growth cycle. The plants then begin a vigorous growing process that is monitored closely by growers that are constantly scouting for disease, weed, and pest pressure along with ensuring that the long stretches of rows are receiving irrigation adequately. Pollinizer varieties and bees are strategically placed throughout the field to ensure sufficient pollination for fruit development to occur. As the plants grow, strong vines develop that produce the flowers that need to be pollinated which then set fruit and produce those delicious watermelons that we all love to enjoy. As you drive by those fields and enjoy a juicy slice this summer, remember all of the hard work that went into its production!



Lafayette County Peanut Production Meeting Held

Emily Beach

On February 24, 2025 peanut producers gathered at the Mayo Community Center to hear from Specialists from the UF/IFAS about improving management practices and therefore profitability this peanut season. The afternoon started with a pesticide education class to help Restricted Use Pesticide license holders earn Continuing Education Units which are needed to maintain the license. The talk focused on understanding the pesticide label and taking notice of important updates regarding environmental concerns like protecting threatened and endangered species. The group then had a delicious meal provided by Wroten and Debbie Land that was sponsored by Mayo Ag Services. The later portion of the night was spent hearing from experts about nematode management by Dr. Zane Grabau, disease management from Dr. Nicholas Dufault, and pest management from Dr. Isaac Esquivel and then a market outlook and budgeting talk ended the night from Dr. Kevin Athearn.



Raymon Land inducted into the National Watermelon Association Hall of Fame

Emily Beach

On Friday, February 21 Mr. Raymon Land was recognized at the National Watermelon Association Convention in Austin, Texas as an inductee to the NWA Hall of Fame with his family by his side. He is a well-deserved recipient of this honor as he has been a leader in the watermelon industry for over 50 years. Not only has he been a leader in the watermelon industry at the local, state and national level but he has been an involved community leader and supporter of youth.

“Raymon J. Land, Sr. was instrumental in establishing the Florida Watermelon Association (FWA) and has had a tremendous influence on the association and the industry for many years,” says NWA President George Szczepanski. “He is a respected industry leader, well deserving of this special recognition for the tremendous amount of time, energy and expertise he has given to the Association throughout his esteemed career.”



Lafayette County 4-H Public Speaking Contest Showcases Young Leaders

Shawn Jackson

On February 20, ten of Lafayette County's top young public speakers took the stage to compete in the annual Lafayette County 4-H Public Speaking Contest, sponsored by Florida Power and Light. These fourth and fifth-grade students had previously won their classroom competitions, earning the right to represent their peers in the final countywide event. Five outstanding speakers from each grade advanced to the final round, showcasing their ability to communicate with confidence and clarity.

At the conclusion of the contest, the top winners were announced: Keelan Lamb secured 1st place, Tatum Hart earned 2nd place, and Caylin Floyd took 3rd place. Each participant demonstrated impressive public speaking skills, proving their ability to organize thoughts, engage an audience, and present their ideas effectively.

The 4-H Public Speaking Contest is more than just a competition—it provides valuable life skills that will benefit participants far beyond the event. Through preparation and practice, students develop critical abilities such as clear communication, self-confidence, and persuasive speaking. These skills are essential for future academic success, career readiness, and leadership roles in their communities.

Public speaking is often cited as one of the most valuable skills for personal and professional growth. By participating in this contest, Lafayette County youth are gaining early exposure to these competencies, setting them up for future success in school, job interviews, and leadership opportunities. The ability to speak confidently in front of an audience fosters self-assurance and prepares students to express their ideas effectively in any setting.

Lafayette County 4-H continues to provide youth with opportunities to learn and grow through hands-on experiences. Events like the Public Speaking Contest highlight the importance of communication skills while empowering young people to become strong leaders in their community. Congratulations to all participants for their hard work and dedication!



Far left back row: Reece Walker, Libby Morgan, Rylie Creel, Caylin Floyd, Tatum Hart. Bottom row: Keelan Lamb Lexie Riley, Greg Prine, Eeve Gresham.

Photo left: 1st place Keelan Lamb, 2nd place Tatum Hart, 3rd place Caylin Floyd.

Lafayette 4-H Archery Club Sharpens Skills and Builds Leadership

Shawn Jackson

The Lafayette 4-H Archery Club had an exciting and skill-building February meeting, where members honed their archery techniques and even tested their accuracy with hatchet throwing. The hands-on activities provided not only fun but also valuable lessons in problem-solving, respect for others, and perseverance.

The meeting began with pledges to the American and 4-H flags, reinforcing the values of leadership and responsibility. Archery is just one of the many outdoor activities that teach youth important life skills, including following rules, focusing on goals, and working through challenges. Through programs like the Archery Club, Lafayette 4-H continues to offer engaging opportunities for youth to develop confidence, discipline, and teamwork while enjoying outdoor recreation.





END EAVORS
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ft. Community Agencies and Partners

**GUEST
SPEAKERS**
RACHEL RALL GELWICKS
Three Rivers Legal Services, Attorney
SARABINE MILIEN
Endeavors, Disaster Case Manager

TOPICS
✓ Disaster Preparedness
✓ Heir Property
✓ Navigating your case manager

**MARCH 6,
2025**


LAFAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
**120 NE CRAWFORD ST,
MAYO, FL 32066**

3PM- 5PM

LAFAYETTE COUNTY
RSVP: Text 448-229-2073, jmcgray@endeavors.org

Brushes & Bites
PARENTS AND YOUTH ARE INVITED TO A NIGHT OF
PAINTING AND FINGER FOODS



TUESDAY, MARCH 11TH AT 6:00 PM
LAFAYETTE COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE
FOR PARENTS AND YOUTH AGES 10-14

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE A 4H MEMBER TO ATTEND
THIS EVENT IS FREE, BUT SPACE IS LIMITED
CONTACT THE EXTENSION OFFICE AT (386)294-1279 TO SIGN UP

Changes if February Fishing Club, Fun still had

Shawn Jackson

The February Anglers Club meeting was changed, and the planned trip to the UF Hatchery and fishing ponds was rescheduled to fit the schedules of 4-H members. The club wanted to make sure as many members as possible could attend, so the new date will be shared soon. This trip was an exciting opportunity to learn about fish and fishing, and everyone is looking forward to it when the new date arrives.

In addition to the rescheduled trip, a 4-H meeting was held at WC, where Jana Hart led the group in a fun and informative session. The meeting was a great chance for members to come together, learn new things, and enjoy hands-on activities. Jana Hart shared valuable information, and everyone enjoyed the time spent with fellow club members.

The Anglers Club also offers great opportunities for parents and volunteers to get involved. Parents and volunteers can mentor the kids, sharing their fishing knowledge and teaching them skills that will last a lifetime. These adult mentors play an important role in guiding the kids, helping them learn and grow while having fun. It's a wonderful way for the whole family to be involved in the club and for the kids to gain confidence and new experiences with the support of trusted adults.



Hamlin Auto Supply
***Proud Supporter of Lafayette 4-H
Anglers Club!***

718 East Main Street, (386) 294-1114

Spreading Kindness: 4-H Members Create Valentine's Day Gifts

Shawn Jackson

The February 4-H Community Club meeting focused on showing care for others and our community. The meeting started with everyone pledging to the American flag and the 4-H flag. More than 30 youth members and leaders attended the meeting, where they talked about the importance of helping in the community and showing kindness to others. A big part of the meeting was making Valentine's Day cards for the residents of Home Wood Health Care Facility. The kids were very creative in how they decorated their cards, with some even making 3D and pop-up cards that were especially unique and fun. In addition to making cards, the members also used paint pens to decorate wooden hearts, turning them into beautiful and colorful gifts. After all the hard work, everyone got to enjoy snacks, including chips, cookies, soda, and water. To finish the meeting, the kids played games like tag and hide-and-seek, having a great time together. This meeting was a wonderful way for the youth to practice kindness and creativity while making a positive impact on others in their community.



4-H Culinary Club Celebrates Valentine's Day with Homemade Treats

Shawn Jackson

The February 4-H Culinary Club meeting was full of fun and sweet treats. The meeting started with the traditional pledges to the American and 4-H flags, setting a positive mood for the day. This month, the club learned how easy it is to make delicious chocolates and candies for Valentine's Day.

The members had a great time dipping fresh strawberries into smooth, melted chocolate. This classic treat was a big hit, and everyone enjoyed making them. They also made chocolate-covered peanuts, which turned out to be a crunchy and tasty snack. Another fun creation was chocolate-covered pretzels, which the kids dipped in colorful sprinkles, adding a bright and festive touch to their treats.



At the end of the meeting, the members got to enjoy the candies and snacks they had made. They also packaged some of their creations to take home and share with their special valentines. It was a fun and creative way for the members to celebrate Valentine's Day while learning new skills and spreading kindness with their handmade sweets.

Teen 4-H participate in Career Exploration at Extension Office

Shawn Jackson

High school students in Lafayette 4-H recently had the opportunity to attend a three-day career workshop, hosted by Lafayette 4-H with the help of CareerSource North Florida. This workshop was designed to help the youth explore different career paths and discover what types of jobs they might enjoy.

The workshop began with each student completing an interest survey to help identify their strengths and preferences. The survey results were then used to plan personalized virtual reality (VR) experiences tailored to each student's career interests. These VR experiences allowed the students to step into a virtual world where they could get a realistic feel for different careers, from healthcare and engineering to technology and business.

Throughout the workshop, the students learned about various industries, participated in interactive activities, and got to ask questions about their future career options. The VR experiences were a highlight, giving the students an immersive and engaging way to explore potential careers that they may have never considered before.

The workshop was a huge success, providing the students with valuable insight into their future options and helping them think more clearly about their career goals. Thanks to the collaboration between Lafayette 4-H and CareerSource North Florida, the students walked away with new knowledge and inspiration about the many career possibilities ahead of them.



Steven Godfrey of Career Source North Florida speaks to teens participating in the career exploration workshop.



Deborah Cohn of Career Source speaks to teens at week 1 work shop about the opportunities available through Career Source. She also led the participants in a interest survey which would be used to determine the inter-
es of youth and possible direction for their career choices.



With the help of AI goggles, youth were able to experience working in a field that may be interesting them based on their survey results.

FILE FOR FREE THIS YEAR

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EXTENSION OFFICE

2 Appointments REQUIRED

- Tax information intake
- Completion of taxes

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UF IFAS Extension
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Suwannee Valley



AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY INSTITUTION. THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO ALL OF OUR EVENTS. FOR DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS SUCH AS ALTERNATE FORMATS OF WRITTEN MATERIAL, PLEASE CONTACT HCOBETT@UFL.EDU AT LEAST TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE.

Schedule Free Tax Return Assistance at Extension Office

It's not too late to get assistance completing your income taxes. UF IFAS has teamed with the United Way of Suwannee Valley to offer local citizens assistance through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. Call The 386-752-5384 to schedule an appointment at your local extension office. Below, Tammy Corbin, community member and 4-H Volunteer receives assistance from VITA representative.



Lafayette 4-H Senior Commodities



<u>Day</u>	Date	Time
<u>Wednesday</u>	March 26, 2025	1:00pm – 4:00pm
<u>Wednesday</u>	April 30, 2025	1:00pm – 4:00pm
<u>Wednesday</u>	May 28, 2025	1:00pm – 4:00pm
<u>Wednesday</u>	June 25, 2025	1:00pm – 4:00pm

Program for Lafayette County seniors 60+ Call 386-294-1279 for registration and details.

IFAS Extension is an equal opportunity Institution. We encourage all races, religions and ethnicities to attend our summer programs. There are scholarships available for minority and underprivileged children. Please contact our office for more information.

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UF IFAS Extension Lafayette County 4-H.