St. Johns County Cooperative Extension 2017Annual Report

Note From the Director

As we reflect on our successes in 2017, I would like to thank you for your continued support. Agents, support staff and volunteers in our office have the education, training and the experience necessary to provided unbiased, scientifically sound educational information for the citizens of St. Johns County. When you have questions, we will help you find the answers. Please feel free to stop by, call, email or visit us on the web at http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/stjohns/ Inside this Annual Report, you will find selected economic impacts, awards and programmatic highlights that benefited St. Johns County.

Timothy W. Wilson, Director
St. Johns County Cooperative Extension

Selected Economic Impacts

- Received more than $**246,333 in grants** to support programming.
- Agents working through collaborating partners received **in-kind/monetary donations** with a value of **$209,120**.
- **Volunteers donated 20,803 hours** to St. Johns County residents to assist programming. This is equivalent to **$472,228** of value (based on 2016 Independent Sector data; $22.70/hr.) or **10 full-time employees for 1 year**.
- Agents developed **279 unbiased, scientifically sound, educational pieces** for the public related to their subject matter.

Awards/Honors

- All American Selections (AAS) - **Honorable Mention for - Best at Overcoming Obstacles** AAS Display Garden Category II (T. Freeman, St. Johns County Master Gardener Program)
- **University of Florida Provost Term Professorship** (Dr. M. McGuire)
- National Association of County Agricultural Agents - **3rd Place - Applied Research Poster -** Team (Dr. B. Wells)
- Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals - Outstanding Team Award - **Florida Microplastic Awareness Project** (Dr. M. McGuire)
- National Association of Extension 4-H Agents - **Excellence in Communication and Expressive Arts Award -** Regional Team Award (G. Sachs)
- **UF/IFAS Extension Art Hornsby Distinguished Extension Professional and Enhancement Award** (Dr. M. McGuire)

Meet our Extension Agents

Tim Wilson	*Director, Production Ag Agent*
Dr. Bonnie Wells	*Commercial Ag Agent*
Geralyn Sachs	*4-H Youth Development Agent*
Julia Kelly	*4-H Youth Development Agent*
Joanne Cooper	*Family & Consumer Science Agent*
Dr. Maia McGuire	*Multi-County Sea Grant Agent*
Terra Freeman	*Commercial/Residential Horticulture Agent*

Selected 2017 Programmatic Highlights

- A research project involving an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), commonly called a **drone** was started by our Regional Specialized Water Agent to evaluate **water and nutrient distribution** over a sod field in St. Johns County. This work will be combined with additional sites to determine efficacy of this **precision agriculture tool.**

- The St. Johns County 4-H Youth Development Agent taught the **chicken embryology** project in 10 schools, involving 49 teachers and over 1,367 youth. This agricultural, science based, hands-on learning experience engages students in the life cycle and needs of a developing chicken embryo. The embryology project also develops the student's skills in observation, problem solving and recording data, and increases their love of science.

- Fifty people attended the Sea Grant Agent's **World Oceans Day** event where they learned about microplastics, plankton, manatees and whales. Partners (UF Sea Turtle Hospital at the Whitney Lab, Whitney Lab Traveling Zoo and St. Johns River Water Management District) also provided exhibits and hands-on activities.

- At the 2017 4-H AgEdVentures program, 561 elementary students, their teachers and volunteers participated in **27 agricultural educational stations** that introduced them to the many areas of agriculture.

- The **Hastings Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab** pilot project was initiated with the support of commercial growers from the Tri-County Agricultural Area, the Hastings Agricultural Extension Center, the director of UF Plant Diagnostic Center and a St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners to provide disease diagnostic. This lab will be led by our Commercial Agriculture Agent.

- Approximately 3,000 participants attended the 2017 **Datil Pepper Fall Festival**. This year's event, led by our Family and Consumer Science Agent, included 8 restaurants competing for a Professional and People's Choice Awards by serving an appetizer and an entrée that included datil peppers.

- At the EPIC **Flower and Garden Expo**, the **St. Johns County Horticulture Department educated 468 participants** on topics including vegetable gardening, rain gardens, native plants, plant propagation, irrigation, rain barrels and Florida Friendly Landscaping.

- The UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns/ Putnam County **4-H Meats Judging Team** was established; this team trained and competed in the State Meats Judging Contest at the UF Meats Lab in Gainesville.

- The UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County Family Nutrition Program, led by our Nutrition Educator, **harvested kale and lettuce from a school garden** at Osceola Elementary School. Of the 18 students that participated, 5 had never eaten salad; after trying salad, 4 of these 5 said they loved it!

- An Associated Press story featuring the Sea Grant Agent's **Florida Microplastic Awareness Project** was carried by over 330 news outlets in the US and 2 dozen overseas media.

- Thirty-two (32) landscape professionals in St Johns County became **certified to spray pesticides** safely and correctly after taking a course and passing a state certification exam led by our Commercial Agriculture Agent.

- The St. Johns County Horticulture Agent certified 6 landscapes for the Housing Finance Authority of St. Johns County (HFA) with the FloridaFriendly Landscaping™ Silver Level Recognition. Having energy saving features, such as the **Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ certification, helped the HFA receive $5,000,000 in CWHIP funds** from the State to put towards workforce housing. These funds allow each homebuyer to receive $42,857.00 in purchase assistance.

- The **2017 4-H/Tropicana Public Speaking Contest** included more than **5,525 students** from 4th, 5th and 6th grades from 33 St. Johns County schools.

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An Equal Opportunity Institution. UF/IFAS Extension, University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Nick T. Place, dean for UF/IFAS Extension. Single copies of UF/IFAS Extension publications (excluding 4-H and youth publications) are available free to Florida residents from county UF/IFAS Extension offices.