

UF/IFAS EXTENSION & ST. JOHNS COUNTY WORKING TOGETHER

April, May, June 2025

The St. Johns County Board of Commissioners and UF/IFAS Extension work cooperatively to provide relevant programming to citizens throughout the County. During the second quarter of 2025, Extension Agents and Staff recorded approximately **7,456 contacts** with clientele, including emails, phone calls, office visits, and field calls. Agents conducted **18 site visits** to assist residents one-on-one and taught **72 group teaching events**. Below are a few examples of impacts reported by our Agents during this quarter.



Rhylie Hayes with her horse Blue



Bartram Living History Festival – Cattle Display



FONTAGRO Tour – Blue Sky Farms – Danny Johns



FONTAGRO Tour – Cracker Swamp Cattle Company – Jody Counts

- This is the inaugural year of the **Diane M. Dunn Legacy Trades Scholarship**. It is the result of the generous donation by Mr. Sandy Dunn to start a large endowment so that Diane's memory will live on. The endowment will fund a **\$2,000 scholarship to a youth attending a trade or vocational school**. This year's scholarship winner is Rhylie Hayes, who plans to work in the equine industry by attending farrier school in Idaho.
- Our Master Gardener Coordinator led our **4-H gARTening Camp**, and 12 youth completed 13 plant crafts, including making cyanotypes, flower pounding bandanas, pressing flowers, and painting with watercolors made from produce. These kids have a new sense of **environmental stewardship**, a better understanding of pollinators, their importance to the environment, our local food chain, and seeing beauty in their local landscapes.
- The St. Johns County Extension Office teamed up with the St. Johns County Parks and Recreation Department to provide a **live cattle display at the Bartram Living History Festival**. Approximately **800 participants** gained knowledge of the cattle and how ranching in the United States began in Florida.
- Our Master Gardener Volunteers saw a **record-breaking plant sale this spring** as their newly appointed Coordinator took charge of the event for the first time. The St. Johns County community has locally grown Florida-Friendly plants they can use in their own gardens. They are now hoping to have an even better sale this coming fall in October.
- Our Florida-Friendly Landscaping and Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent conducted **Green Industries Best Management Practices and Limited Commercial Landscape Maintenance training** for forty-six (46) employees and students in the commercial horticulture sector. Twelve (12) exams were proctored for the Green Industries Best Management Practices (GI-BMP) certification, of which **92% passed**, enabling them to apply for their Limited Urban Commercial Fertilizer Applicator Certification with FDACS.
- Our 4-H Agent worked with volunteers to empower them to lead our **4-H Sewing Program**. As a result, the volunteers co-planned the beginning sewing camp, **successfully teaching twelve (12) youth how to sew** aprons and service projects and 8 youth how to quilt.
- Thirty (30) participants from **FONTAGRO**, a group of agricultural scientists **representing 15 Latin American and Caribbean countries**, **toured St. Johns County** with our Production Agriculture Agent. Tour stops included a **beef cattle ranch, a potato farm, a research facility, and downtown St. Augustine**. Participants were able to interact with owners and managers of these facilities to gain a better understanding of successful agricultural systems.



4-H Grilling Camp – Checking meat temperature



2025 – 2026 Teen Leadership Council Officers



Ornamental and Turf Pesticide Class

- Thirty-two (32) participants attended the **Raised Bed Vegetable Gardening Class**, led by our Master Gardener Coordinator. Participants can now establish their own raised beds in their backyards and grow their own homegrown veggies.
- Our Florida-Friendly Landscaping and Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent taught 4 programs to 50 residents on topics including **Your Florida-Friendly Landscaping, Growing a Backyard Food Forest, and Rain Gardens**.
- Six (6) participants attended the **2025 St. Johns County 4-H Grilling Camp** and gained experience preparing hot dogs, pork loins, chicken, and steak. At the conclusion of our camp, participants competed in our first grilling contest, where they prepared chicken, steak, potatoes, and salad. They presented their food to a judge and answered questions about grilling techniques. Based on program evaluations, **67% of participants increased their knowledge related to meat selection, food, grill and fire safety, preventing cross-contamination, and thermometer use**.
- **The St. Johns County 4-H Fashion Revue** was revamped to allow participants one garment per category, the ability to submit incomplete quilts, and was aligned with state guidelines for all garments. These updates produced a **216% increase in participation for this contest**.
- Seven (7) youth attended the **4-H Farmers Camp**, taught by our Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator. They learned the basics of growing vegetables, how to reuse kitchen scraps to make a new plant, and even tried new vegetables for the first time.
- Three (3) St. Johns County participants took part in an **Online Drone Test Prep class**, co-taught by our Production Agriculture Agent, and they successfully passed the FAA Part 107 General Knowledge Exam. **71% (5) of the 7 participants have reported a passing score** and are now legally qualified to use their drones for commercial purposes.
- Through the **St. Johns 4-H Teen Leadership Council**, led by our 4-H Agent, participants have become inspired to pursue state leadership roles. Since the inception of the Teen Leadership Council, three members ran and were elected to the 4-H State Council, and two additional youth were part of the State Executive Board. One-third (1/3) of the members of this council voluntarily pursued state leadership opportunities as a result of the leadership skills they gained by participating in this club.
- Our Agriculture Program Assistant **proctored thirty-six (36) pesticide exams** on the 2nd and 4th Friday and 4th Wednesday of each month in the second quarter. Participants who pass this exam can apply for the Restricted Use Pesticide License through the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). Once they receive their license, they can legally apply restricted-use pesticides.
- Three (3) residential landscapes in St. Johns County were evaluated by our Florida-Friendly Landscaping and Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent; two (2) received **Florida-Friendly Landscaping Recognition** for their sustainable landscaping practices. Thanks to those who participate in gaining these recognitions, local native plants can thrive once again.
- Ten (10) industry professionals participated in an **Ornamental and Turf Pesticide Prep and Exam workshop**. Participants gained knowledge on pesticide safety and use to take their Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services pesticide exam and secure their restricted-use pesticide license.
- Thirteen (13) 4-H Youth flexed their artistic muscles in the **Little O'Keeffes and Mini Morans 4-H Camp** by water coloring. These youths got to express their love of nature through their canvas while learning about artists who gained their fame doing the very same thing. On top of that, they were also taught about the importance of our beautiful local landscapes as they painted them.

For more information, visit the UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County website at stjohns.ifas.ufl.edu or contact us at **904-209-0430**.