UF/IFAS EXTENSION & ST. JOHNS COUNTY

WORKING TOGETHER

January, February, March 2018

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. During the first quarter of 2018, Extension Agents and Staff recorded approximately **14,635 contacts** with clientele that included emails, phone calls, office visits and field calls. Agents conducted **53 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.

- Four-hundred and twenty-three **(423) fourth graders and 86 teachers and parents** participated in the **St. Johns County 4-H Ag EdVenture Days** held at the St. Johns County Fairgrounds. Participants gained **knowledge about agriculture** topics including bees, beef, aquaculture, potatoes, farm animals, garbage gardening, fruit and vegetables, and sugarcane that were taught by UF/IFAS Extension Agents, 4-H and Master Gardener volunteers, Foresters, and local farmers.
- Beginning in February, the Production Agriculture Agent began assisting a research project that uses precision agriculture – **aerial photography from unmanned aerial systems (drones), to evaluate a commercial sod field for water distribution and soil and tissue samples to evaluate nutrient movement**. This project will continue until November 2018.
- **One-hundred and forty-three (143) participants attended 10 Florida-Friendly Landscaping workshops** taught by our Horticulture Department. Participants learned how to select the right plant for the right place, apply fertilizer and irrigation appropriately, control yard pests and attract wildlife to their landscape.
- Twenty-two (22) St. Johns County youth in 5th through 8th grades meet weekly at the WE Harris Center to learn how **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)** relates to agriculture. This educational effort conducted by our 4-H Agent was made possible by a new grant, promoting STEM Educational Equity for Rural Minority Youth through Experiential Learning and Mentoring Opportunities program that is funded by NIFA from their **Women and Minorities in STEM Initiative (WAMS)**. In their first project, **students built a raised-bed garden** at the Harris Center **to grow their own vegetables** while **learning the science behind crop production**.
- **Twenty-one golf course employees** in St. Johns County are **certified to spray pesticides safely and correctly** after taking a course taught by the Commercial Agriculture Agent at TPC Sawgrass Marriot.
- **Ten participants** attended a canning workshop, led by our Family and Consumer Science Agent, and **learned proper methods for both water bath and pressure canning**. 100% of the participants learned about botulism prevention.
- The Sea Grant agent presented a poster about the Florida Microplastic Awareness Project at the **6th International Marine Debris Conference** in San Diego, CA. The conference was attended by more than 700 participants from over 50 countries.

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- Thirty-nine participants from St. Johns County attended **4-H Day at the Capitol** in February. Participants gained knowledge on Florida history by touring the old and new state capitol buildings and **observing our State legislators in action**. This delegation enjoyed meeting with officials that represent St. Johns County Representative Cyndi Stevenson and Senator Travis Hutson.
- Sixty-nine percent of the 141 participants at the **2018 Spring Ranchers Forum** indicated they found information they learned from the **chute side, hands-on presentation** by the St. John County Production Agriculture Agent as very useful. 78% of these participants indicated they owned and raised cattle, and based off survey results, they indicated they were able to **save $2,012 per ranch** using information they learned at the previous 2017 Spring Ranchers Forum.
- One-hundred and one (101) participants were taught, by our Family and Consumer Science Agent, **how to clean and sanitize their kitchen with household products**.
- **Six-hundred and ninety-eight (698) students from 5 schools** conducted **chicken embryology projects** led by our 4-H Agent. The 4-H Agent conducted trainings for classroom teachers and students, provided equipment, supplies and educational materials, and acquired eggs and homes for chicks once they were born. This science based, hands-on learning experience develops the student's skills in observation, problem solving and recording data, and increases their love of science.
- **1,500 trees and fact sheets on tree care were disseminated to over 180 individuals** by the UF/IFAS St. Johns County Extension Horticulture Department at 5 Florida Arbor Day tree give-away events throughout the county.
- The Clever Clovers 4-H Club provided 450 new and used books, 30 games, a standalone air hockey/pool table, a book shelf, snack bars, salad greens, fresh fruit, and fresh vegetables to Port in the Storm, a youth shelter, through their Community Pride Grant. **This community service project makes a positive impact** not only to the recipients but also to the youth that participate.
- Two youth from the **newly developed St. Johns County 4-H Insect Project**, led by our Commercial Agriculture Agent, competed at the **UF Insectathon** in the skill-a-thon, art and collection contests at the University of Florida.
- Fourteen youth that attended the **4-H Bread Baking Workshop** learned how to bake, the origin of ingredients, proper measuring techniques, and how to evaluate bread quality. Youth will apply these life skills they learned with their entries for the April bread baking contest.
- **Our Sea Grant Agent taught 865 K-12 youth** about microplastics, sea turtles, manatees or aquaculture. Providing education about these topics at a young age enables youth to make informed choices in the future.