



Panhandle Agriculture

Solutions For Your Farm!

Provided By Your County Extension Agents in Northwest Florida

January-February 2010, Volume 2, Issue 1

In This Issue



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Livestock, Pasture Management, El Nino, and more...

Welcome to a new year of Panhandle Agriculture news-

letter! Thank you for taking time in your busy day to look through this newsletter. If there is one thing we wish you take from the following pages, it is the address and phone of your local County Extension Agent. University of Florida IFAS Extension Agents can find answers to your questions on almost any topic. This issue of Panhandle Agriculture has articles on livestock, vegetable production, and pasture management. Speaking of pastures, rainfall from this year's El Nino weather pattern has had serious impacts on winter crops. Rainfall data from the National Weather Service show panhandle Florida received at and above normal precipitation this fall and winter. This prevented and/or delayed commercial wheat planting in much of the region. Dr. Ann Blount and Dr. David Wright are State Agricultural Specialists from the University of Florida, North Florida Research and Education Center in Quincy, Florida. Below are their comments about planting wheat this fall.

Dr. Ann Blount: *"The wet conditions this fall made fall harvests delayed or unable to be harvested. We typically plant all small grains grown for grain from Nov. 15-Dec. 15 and we are now well out of that window. It is too late to really safely recoup your costs if you are planting a commercial field."*

Dr. David Wright: *"Many people were late harvesting crops and are still harvesting. Conditions were too wet most of the fall to plant small grain. We had near record rainfall amounts during the recommended planting window. Our normal recommended period for wheat planting is Nov. 15 to Dec. 15. Anything planted later than this is usually not profitable."*

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Florida: December, 2009 Monthly Observed Precipitation
Valid at 1/1/2010 1200 UTC- Created 1/1/10 23:44 UTC

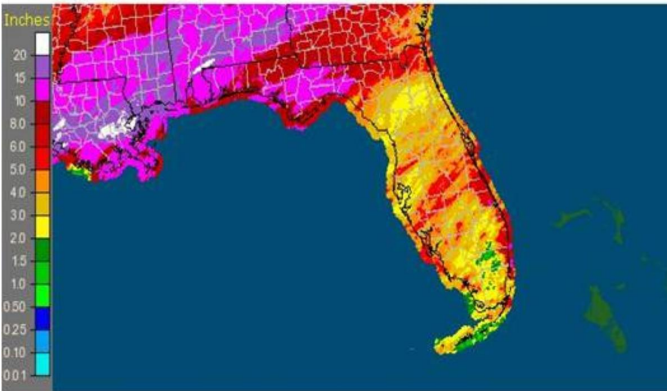


Photo Credits: The National Weather Service

For more information on the impacts of weather patterns (such as El Nino/La Nina) and the weather outlook for 2010 agriculture, please visit the following websites. http://agroclimate.org/forecasts/current_climate_outlook.php, <http://fawn.ifas.ufl.edu/climate.php>. The website below provides pasture management recommendations such as fertilizing frequencies, grazing intensity, etc. during wet, dry, and normal rainfall seasons. http://agroclimate.org/forage_livestock/pasture_hay.php

We hope you enjoy this issue of Panhandle Agriculture and, as always, we welcome any comments or suggestions you have. If you have any questions, please contact the County Extension Agents listed in the back of this issue.

Increasing the Value of Your Calves at Weaning



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The last few years were very difficult for southeastern cattle producers. Drought, increasing input costs and declining markets created profitability challenges. While

cattle producers have limited control over their input costs, there are management practices to improve the value of calves sold at weaning. The weight, health and quality of calves can significantly boost the price buyers are willing to pay. Age, nutrition, management, and genetics are four factors affecting the weaning weight of a calf. The following paragraphs describe ways producers can increase their calves' weaning-weight by sale day.



Calves ready for sale.

Photo Credits: Doug Mayo

Age

Weaning weights are affected by the cow's age. Young heifers and older cows tend to wean lighter weight calves. Typically producers only keep annual calving records, but this makes it tough to evaluate a cows' production history. Keep a record sheet for each cow, culling older animals when their production drops well below the herd average. Accurate documentation makes a comparison of calving dates and weaning weights much simpler. An example cow record sheet is available at: http://jackson.ifas.ufl.edu/ag/livestock_ranch_record.shtml

Calf age is the simplest method to manage the value at sale. For example, if a local producer sold a fall born steer calf weighing 325 pounds in April 2009, it would

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have returned \$377 at the market price of \$1.16 per pound. However, if this calf stayed on the cow it could have weighed 500 pounds in July, selling for \$495 or \$0.99 per pound. The question to consider is: can 175 pounds of gain be added to a calf for less than \$118? In most years it pays to wait and sell older calves because the bulk of this gain occurs when pastures are in peak production. Historically calf prices peak in spring of the year, but commonly hold strong throughout the summer months.

Selling Fall born Steers in April versus July			
Market Time	Steer Weight	Price Per pound	Total Value
4/10/09	325	\$1.16	\$377
7/10/09	500	\$0.99	\$495
Difference	175 (1.9/day)	\$-0.17	\$118

Based on USDA AL Weekly Market Report MG LS145

Nutrition

Another factor affecting calf weights is nutrition. High quality grazing helps the cow produce more milk, but also provides additional nutrients to the calf's diet as they grow. Pasture grasses' quality peaks in spring and early summer, especially when fertilizer has been properly applied. However, there is a period in mid-to-late summer when forage quality declines and calves benefit from protein supplementation. This practice, commonly called creep feeding, can provide a boost to weaning weights. Dr. Bill Kunkle and several county agents conducted a research study on seven Florida ranches confirming the value of creep feeding calves. The goal of the study was to measure weight gain of calves consuming one pound/head/day of cottonseed meal during the last 60 days prior to weaning. Salt was used to limit consumption of the creep feeder (92% CSM, 8% salt). During the six year study one group of calves consumed an average of 0.64 pounds of cottonseed meal/head/day. These gained an extra 0.27 lbs per day more than calves not fed the ration. On average creep fed

calves in this study gained an extra 16 pounds while consuming less than 40 pounds of cottonseed meal.

Management

Three management tools with the potential to increase calves' weight are implants, de-worming, and avoiding shrinkage. Growth implants can add 15-20 pounds of extra weight at weaning for around \$1.25 per implant. In today's market that provides a return of \$14 for every \$1 spent on implants, but proper application is critical. A study of seven feedlots with over 2500 head found almost 1/3 of the implants not being used correctly. Ear infections were the primary problem in this study followed by improperly inserted implants. Complications dropped below ten percent after the work crews were re-trained to cleanly insert the implants in the right location. Implants can add 17 pounds at weaning to calves treated at 3-4 months of age.

Controlling internal parasites, particularly stomach worms, can add weight to calves at weaning. A University of Florida study of 537 head in three locations, showed de-worming calves provided a \$6 return for every dollar invested. De-worming added 8.7 pounds to each calf in a 90 day period.

The final management tool is shrinkage or weight loss due to stress. Often overlooked, traumatized calves start losing weight upon separation from their mothers. Calves lose 1% of their body weight per hour for the first four hours, then 0.25% per hour for the next 8-10 hours. A study in North Dakota shows the difference in heifer calves weaned and sold on the same day versus those weaned the day before the sale.

If the price was \$0.85/pound then the heifers weaned and the day of the sale would be worth \$509 while those weaned and sold the day following weaning \$497. Other weight loss related to stress can include overcrowding on a trailer, limited access to water, rough handling, and working in the excessive heat. Quick and calm transportation from the pasture to the stockyard

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scale will minimize losses to stress.

2005 UF Study 567 head 3 locations			
90 day study	Control	De-wormed	Difference
Gain	122 lbs	131 lbs	8.7 lbs
ADG	1.36	1.46	0.1 lb/day
Added Cost		-\$1.57/hd	
Net/calf		+\$9.57 /hd	

North Dakota Study (11/15/89)		
40 Heifers	Weaned & Sold Sale Day	Weaned Day Before Sale
Average wt/hd when sold	599 lbs	585 lbs
Hours @ Market	4.75 hours	25.5 hours
Shrink % after weaning	1.9 %	5.62 %

Quality

Genetic quality is the final factor influencing weaning weights and ultimately the sale value of calves. A herd sire is the primary influence, and in the past bulls were evaluated by their appearance and performance. With the development of expected progeny differences (EPD's), cattlemen have a national index to evaluate the performance of an individual bull and his entire pedigree. With EPD's, cattlemen have an index system to accurately predict future performance of a bull's offspring. For example an Angus bull with a weaning weight EPD of +45 would be expected to sire calves ten pounds heavier at weaning than one with a +35 EPD.

It is simple to compare one animal to another. The challenge can be deciding if certain bulls can improve a herds' performance. EPD's indexes vary between breeds so some study is required to understand the potential influence. From the example above, the +45 bull is average for the breed in 2010. An Angus bull with a weaning weight EPD of +55 would be an elite sire in the

top ten percent of its breed, but the +35 bull is in the bottom ten percent for weaning weight. Below is a small sample of the information provided in the American Angus 2010 Non-parent Bull EPD Percentile Breakdown.

More information on registered bulls is now available than ever before, but thorough examination is prudent before making a purchase. Most breeds have a sire summary on their web site, so comparing the performance of individual bulls is a simple matter.

Calves are sold by the pound. Managing to increase their sale weight adds value and farm revenue.

2010 Angus Non-parent Bull Percentile Breakdown				
Top %	BW	WW	YW	Milk
3%	-1.2	60	107	30
10%	0	55	99	27
50% (avg)	2.1	45	83	21
90%	4.2	34	64	15

Winter Livestock Tips



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With winter conditions upon us, livestock owners need to be alert to the needs of their livestock. Water can become an issue, especially with freezing conditions most nights. Water is the cheapest and most important nutrient in any animal's life. It is essential for hydration and good health, especially when animals are under stress. The effect of cold stress can usually be minimized by providing adequate feed, water and wind protection. Salt and minerals are also important for proper hydration. Be sure to feed high-magnesium minerals free-choice if lactating cows have ryegrass or small grains

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available for grazing. This will prevent grass tetany.

Parasites can often become a problem when livestock are nutritionally challenged. Therefore, producers should observe their animals for signs of parasite activity. Internal parasites, such as worms will often cause the animal to develop diarrhea or watery stool. Cattle infected with worms will appear to have a baggy or distended throat area behind their jaw. External parasites such as lice will cause the animal to itch and want to scratch or rub on trees, fences, posts or gates. They may begin losing hair in patches. Both internal and external parasites will cause animals to lose weight and body condition. So it is important not to delay in treating these animals as soon as you observe symptoms.



Photo Credits: Judy Ludlow

Most producers will be turning bulls out soon for the breeding season. Bulls should have had breeding soundness evaluations performed by your veterinarian and vaccinated before turning them out with the breeding herd. Brood cows should also be vaccinated prior to the breeding season for **leptospirosis** and **vibriosis**, two common reproductive diseases in the area that can cause abortion and economic losses to the cattleman.

“Protected Agriculture” Another Option for Fresh Market Vegetable Producers



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We want our vegetables fresh and available during any time of year. That’s a pretty tall order, but so far farmers have been able to fill the bill. We are in fact, spoiled in this respect. Having fresh vegetables available to consumers during any season requires effort just short of a miracle in scheduling, specialized production, distribution and marketing.

Florida ranks second in total vegetable production and sales. Vegetables are grown on almost three hundred thousand acres of land and the resulting sales are approximately 1.6 billion dollars annually.



One of five new high tunnel structures ready for planting at Mississippi State University’s South Research Farm.

Photo Credits: Dan Mullins

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Though successful in making fresh produce available in the past and present, the U.S. vegetable industry faces some major challenges in the future. Among these are: increased urbanization and the loss of some of the more desirable production land, increased regulation of water, fertilizer and pesticide inputs, the loss of methyl bromide, a major soil fumigant, increased problems associated with regional and global market competition and extreme weather including rain, wind and freezes.

The next big step in commercial vegetable production could be what is termed “protected agriculture”. This is the latest buzz phrase among horticulturists, Extension agents and producers. This system, using greenhouse structures to protect the crop from weather extremes and to reduce pests, also allows for off- season and more intensive production.

“Protected agriculture” is a broad term, which includes traditional greenhouse production and plasticulture with soilless crop production. The latest move is toward lower input methods such as shade house and high tunnel production. The latter two methods are quickly gaining interest as they appear more feasible for small farmers.

Shade house vegetable production research and production has been underway for several years, with the University of Florida having demonstrations available at several sites. This production method is used to extend the season into hot weather by providing shade of a predetermined percentage. The percent shade can be altered through the season for maximum production.

Vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers are well adapted to house shade house production. In this system they are produced in large nursery containers or in bags containing a special substrate such as perlite, vermiculite, peat, pine bark or coconut fiber. They are then placed on the ground which is covered with a special weed barrier type woven fabric. Irrigation and nutrients are delivered through a micro-irrigation system.



Bell peppers and tomatoes in a shade house at the IFAS West Florida Research and Education Center-Jay
Photo Credits: Dan Mullins

The “high tunnel”, sometimes called the hoophouse, is another system and one that is currently causing a lot of excitement. This system utilizes polyethylene covered structures with no electrical, ventilation or heating system. These covered structures moderate cold temperatures in winter, allowing for vegetables to be grown and sold to consumers during the off season.

High tunnel production differs from conventional greenhouse production in several ways. It is somewhat less complicated and less expensive in that there is no artificial heating or cooling. And, plants are grown in the ground, rather than in containers as is done in the shade house.

Several Land Grant Universities have available and are working to produce more information for shade house and high tunnel producers. Mississippi State University for example, has just finished erecting five large high tunnel structures for research on vegetable and cut flower production.

The interest in high tunnel production is so great that the USDA’s Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is launching a national high tunnel pilot study through their Equip program. There will be opportunit-

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ies for assistance in establishing these structures and producing on some farms that qualify. Anyone who is interested in participating in this pilot study should contact the local NRCS office.

Further information related to this topic can be obtained by contacting the local Cooperative Extension office or the IFAS Small Farms website at <http://smallfarms.ifas.ufl.edu/>. Other Land Grant University web sites with information about protected agriculture include Mississippi State, Penn State, Rutgers, Cornell and North Carolina State.

Chamberbitter – A Pasture Weed, Born Pregnant



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Introduction

Chamberbitter: It has the justified reputation of producing viable seeds ready to infest new territory from almost the moment it pops up from the soil. More than one frustrated landowner has been convinced the reviled

exotic is born pregnant. *Phyllanthus urinaria*, Chamberbitter's scientific name, is a native of tropical southeast Asia, but is adapting well to life in the United States. The USDA's Plant Profile site (<http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=PHUR>) indicates this pest has spread as far north as Illinois and Virginia, and west to Texas. All the southeastern states report significant plant populations. Initially it was considered an ornamental horticulture issue, but has become a real irritant for pasture managers.

Ecology

Chamberbitter requires warm soil to germinate and prefers damp conditions. Once the plant is established, its highly efficient root system will handle drought conditions. It grows well in full sun, but will also flourish in spots receiving sun for limited hours daily.

Early detection is critical to control. The plants are in their most vulnerable condition with tender leaves and immature root systems, and (hopefully) the population is still small. Unfortunately, to the casual observer this annual blends effortlessly into the green background of warm season foliage.

If it is spotted early, its appearance frequently has this weed misidentified as a seedling mimosa, another undesirable exotic that was once considered an attractive ornamental flowering tree. Closer examination reveals an even more not-so-welcome revelation. Though only three inches above the soil, multiple tiny fruit are already set under each branch with seed enclosed. The quantity of seed multiplies as Chamberbitter climbs towards its two foot height potential adding seed laden branches as it goes. Seed production per plant quickly reaches into the hundreds.

The economic and environmental threat this plant portends is not as easily recognized as so many other well known noxious exotics. The ability to produce abundant seed in a variety of conditions is the key to its prolific territorial conquest and recognition as a known prob-

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lem plant. Distribution begins when seed eaters discover the plentiful supply, but fail to digest the meal or are just messy scattering the surplus bounty. Environmental factors, a stiff wind or a washing rain, can contribute to the dispersal.

Management

Human interaction can be equally detrimental, if not worse, to maintaining control of this insidious invader. To many, the initial reaction is to mow the affected area, but this action only aggravates the situation.

Mowing accelerates the seed distribution and potentially contaminates mowing equipment with lodged seed that can drop in non-contaminated areas. Additionally, the fibrous root system can quickly regenerate shoots with a whole new crop of seed shortly forthcoming.

Hand pulling is a possibility for small plots, but caution must be exercised. Never shake the soil from the roots as seed in the soil or on the plant may be returned to the site. Bagged up plants must be disposed of so their seed never have the opportunity to germinate.

Properly utilized herbicides can be effective, especially for larger plots. A pre-emergent herbicide can be helpful, depending on the situation, and prevent much of the seed production. The ideal application time is when the soil first begins to warm in the spring.

Once the plants have germinated, a selective post-emergent herbicide may be employed in some conditions. A non-selective herbicide may be needed in heavy Chamberbitter concentrations or where damage to adjacent plants is not a concern. All post-emergent herbicides have a better chance for success when the chamberbitter is young and actively growing.

Conclusion

Now is an excellent time to scout your property for signs of Chamberbitter, and if identified, to develop an action

plan. Spring always arrives sooner than anticipated. Consult your local Extension Office to get the latest recommendations on herbicides to control Chamberbitter and other eradication techniques.

Thistles in Pasture



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Figure 1. Flowering thistle in pasture. During its second stage, *bolting*, a flower stalk emerges (or bolts) from the rosette.

Photo Credits: Libbie Johnson

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Figure 2. Young thistle at the rosette stage. The thistle forms a taproot and the leaves form fairly flat to the soil surface in a circular pattern

Photo Credits: University of Georgia

Introduction

One of the largest scourges of winter pasture is the thistle plant. Thistle might be an important Scottish symbol, but it is definitely a weed that you do not want to allow to get a foothold in your pasture. One *single* plant can put forth 4000 seeds in one season, and those seeds will remain in your pasture until the following winter. It is best to walk (or ride) through your pasture December through February to look for any winter weeds, but especially look-out for thistle.

Ecology

What is a thistle? They are prickly leaved plants that have a biennial life cycle. Eight of the nine species found in Florida are biennials- plants that grow from a seed one year and then produce a seed the next year. In the first year during November through January, the thistle grows to resemble a *rosette*. At the rosette stage, the thistle forms a taproot and the leaves form fairly flat to the soil surface in a circular pattern (Figure 2). During its second stage, *bolting*, a flower stalk emerges (or bolts) from the rosette (*see picture*). Bolting usually takes place from January through July (Figure 1). The

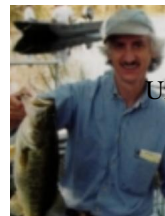
stalk will develop into a flower, and with the flower comes the seed. The reproductive cycle is completed from April to August.

Management

All of these details are important because you need to know what and when you can take action against the weed. If you have just a few plants, you can dig the rosettes individually when they are small. You could mow the entire field from April to June during late bolting *before* the flowers are formed—the flower stalk is usually hollow at this point. The only problem with this method is that you will need to mow more than once because not all the thistles will bloom at the same time. There are, however, chemical options available for thistle control. As with all herbicide applications, timely application is crucial. Most of these herbicides perform very well if applied during the rosette stage, but the usefulness of the chemical decreases as the plants mature. Please refer to the table to determine which herbicide would work best for your operation.

Information source: EDIS Publication #SS-AGR-95, Thistle Control in Pastures, Dr. B.A. Sellers and Dr. J.A. Ferrell.

Freezing Weather and Fish Kills



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County Extension offices have received numerous calls about fish kills that are occurring this winter in Florida. When the water or air temperatures fall below a critical level (scientifically termed their lower lethal temperature) for a particular species, they will die. Humans, for example, can die due to hypothermia, when their body core temperature falls below a critical level. As a result

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of Florida's sub-tropical climate and several years of mild winters, quite a few non-native tropical fish species have become established or have extended their range further into North Florida. This year, we have had record-setting cold weather, and water temperatures have fallen rapidly, often below the lethal temperature for many species. This combination of a recent history of mild winters combined with an unusually cold winter has resulted in large die offs of tropical fish such as blue tilapia

(http://www.myfwc.com/WILDLIFEHABITATS/Nonnative_FW_Tilapia.htm) and suckermouth catfish (http://www.myfwc.com/WILDLIFEHABITATS/Nonnative_FW_SuckermouthCatfishes.htm), among others.

In addition to non-native fish species, some of our native (indigenous) aquatic species are also prone to cold-weather-induced kills. Gizzard and threadfin shad often die during cold weather. In Florida, we also have the Florida subspecies of the largemouth bass, which have evolved in Florida's subtropical climate. Florida largemouth bass will often die due to low water temperatures, while the 'Northern' largemouth bass survives. Marine species, such as our common snook, tarpon, and sea trout, are also currently dying, especially if they are located in shallow areas that experience rapid drops in water temperature.

Even if fish don't immediately die due to the cold, they will often become stressed, which can make them more susceptible to future illnesses (such as bacterial and fungal infections). Some of these fish may later die, if their illnesses are severe. Even if they don't die, many may have temporary sores on the exterior parts of their bodies. See **Stress – Its role in fish disease** (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fa005>).

There are other reasons as to why fish die. To learn more about cold-induced and other types of fish kills, see our Florida LakeWatch (<http://lakewatch.ifas.ufl.edu/>) Extension circular #107 (**A Beginner's Guide to Water Management – Fish Kills**), which can be found at

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fa104> If you want additional information, please feel free to contact your local County Extension Agent.

AgriVine

Items of Interest, Calendar of Events, CEU Opportunities & More

*Funding and Resource Opportunities**

The following are currently active opportunities which are available to qualified readers:

High Tunnel/Hoop House Program: A new pilot project for Florida and other states has been announced under the USDA's 'Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food' initiative. The program is designed to help farmers adopt high tunnels, also known as hoop houses, with the goal of increasing the availability of locally grown produce by extending the market window. The 3-year, 38-state study will also verify if high tunnels are effective in reducing pesticide use, keeping vital nutrients in the soil, increasing yields, and providing other benefits to growers. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will administer the program through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the EQIP Organic Initiative, and the Agricultural Management Assistance program. One high tunnel per farm can be funded. High tunnels in the study can cover as much as 5 percent of 1 acre (2178 square feet).

To sign up or learn more about EQIP assistance for high tunnel projects, contact a local NRCS office. USDA Service Center Locator:

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?service=page/CountyMap&state=FL&stateName=Florida&stateCode=12>

Incentive Dollars for Printing the "Fresh From Florida" Logo: The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' logo incentive program is now accepting applications through March 31, 2010. The

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program's purpose is to provide members the opportunity to recoup a portion of their consumer packaging, carton printing and vehicle magnet cost which promote the "Fresh From Florida" message. Awards of up to \$2,000 are available. Applicants must have a paid type membership (producer, shipper, processor or broker) and meet other requirements to be eligible for the award dollars. For more information call: 850-921-1845.

Commercial Vineyard Increased Acreage Grant Program:

Grant proposals are encouraged from commercial grape growers and grape growing organizations in Florida that are interested in increasing their acreage. Applicants who successfully install a vineyard can be reimbursed up to \$1,000 per acre to offset cost for plants, irrigation, post, wire and other direct planting cost. For more program information and to get funding restrictions, contact: Tom Thomas, Viticulture Coordinator, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Room 422, Mayo Building, 407 South Calhoun Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0800, Telephone: (850) 922-9827, Fax: (850) 488-7127

*Always check with the agency or institution to confirm availability of resources and your documented acceptance into the program before expending any resources or making any binding commitments.

Farmers Reminded about Sun Safety and Skin Cancer.

The American Academy of Dermatology () has released the following:

Farming has its share of occupational hazards, but one that farmers may worry least about is the danger of over-exposure to the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays. Dermatologists say excessive exposure to UV radiation puts farmers at an increased risk of skin cancer, which can be deadly. As the harvest concludes and winter sets in, farmers should pay attention to the condition of their skin. "More than 11,000 Americans die each year from skin cancer, but when detected early, skin cancer has a cure rate of 99 percent," said dermatologist David M. Pariser, MD, FAAD, president of the American

Academy of Dermatology. "Since research shows farmers are among the least likely workers to receive a skin examination by a physician, it's important that farmers perform regular skin self-examinations, which could mean the difference between life and death." "Since skin cancer is the only cancer you can see on the surface of your skin, people who check their skin regularly for any suspicious moles are taking an important step in detecting skin cancer in its earliest stages," said dermatologist David M. Pariser, MD, FAAD, president of the Academy. Performing a skin self-examination consists of regularly looking over the entire body, including the back, scalp, soles of the feet, between the toes and on the palms of the hands. People are advised to use the ABCDEs of Melanoma Detection to determine if a mole or skin lesion should be brought to the attention of a dermatologist. Characteristics of potentially cancerous moles are: Asymmetry (one half unlike the other half), Border (irregular, scalloped or poorly defined), Color (varies from one area to another; shades of tan and brown, black; sometimes white, red or blue), Diameter (the size of a pencil eraser or larger), and Evolving (changing in size, shape or color). A mole with any of these characteristics, or one that is an "ugly duckling," meaning it looks different from the rest, should be brought to a dermatologist's attention.

To minimize your risk of skin cancer, the Academy recommends that everyone Be Sun SmartSM :

- Before heading out to the field, **generously apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen** with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 30 to all exposed skin. The term broad-spectrum means that the sunscreen provides protection from both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. Re-apply every two hours, even on cloudy days, and after swimming or sweating.
- such as a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses, where possible.
- when appropriate, remembering that the sun's rays are

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strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. If your shadow is shorter than you are, seek shade. Make sure your tractor has a sun umbrella.

- as they reflect the damaging rays of the sun which can increase your chance of sunburn.

UFL/IFAS Small Farms Academy



“Helping Small Farm Producers Prosper Through Education, Networking And Adaptive Research” NFREC-Suwannee Valley, Live Oak, Florida

<http://nfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/academy/index.shtml>

The University of Florida-IFAS Small Farms Academy is a cooperative model of partnerships among Land Grant Universities, state and federal agencies, allied industries and farmers in Florida committed to securing the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the small farm industry statewide. Through the design and implementation of advanced educational programming, the Small Farms Academy enhances state and county Extension programming by providing intensive, experiential training for a diverse farm clientele. Our mission is to provide a venue for subject mastery to secure the future of small farms in Florida.

Our goals are to:

Train small farmers by providing non-biased scientific information that enhances county/state extension and education programs. Sustain existing small farms and facilitate the increase in new small farms through advanced training. Support the increase and success of small farm operators through training supported by scholarships.

Currently Available Courses:

- Starting a Successful Hydroponic Business: Hydroponic Controlled Growing Systems for Locally Grown Products "The Hands-on Approach to Learning" - March 17 & 18 or March 19 & 20 (Optional Growers Tour on March 19)
- The 2010-2011 curriculum will be release in April 2010.

Please contact your local County Extension Office for more information, or click here at the Small Farms website, <http://nfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/academy/index.shtml#class>

Celebrating the 59th Annual Florida Beef Cattle Short Course

<http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/beef/index.htm>

May 5-7, 2010 Hilton University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida. Register today for one of the premier beef cattle educational events in the Southeast and Gulf Coast regions with national and global recognition. *Preparing for the Next Decade: Trends, Tools, and Technologies*- Now, if more than ever, issues affecting your beef cattle enterprise are coming from all directions and you are looking for more information. What's in store for the beef industry and what management decisions can beef producers make to weather the storm? The 2010 Annual Florida Beef Cattle Short Course continues the rich tradition of quality programs from the UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences that address the issues facing the beef cattle industry. The spectrum of topics related to beef enterprise issues, potential management systems, and fundamental management practices should provide something for every beef cattle producer, regardless of size. Make plans to attend the 2010 Florida Beef Cattle Short Course and come away with new and innovative knowledge about the beef cattle industry.

What Does the Registration Fee Include? The registration fee includes refreshment breaks, Entrance into the Allied Trade Show and Reception, Thursday Lunch, One

Panhandle Agriculture

Cattleman Steak-out Ticket, and proceedings. Extra Cattleman Steak-out tickets are available for purchase. Early Reduced Registration (on or before April 19, 2010), \$125.00. Regular Registration(after April 19, 2010), \$165.00. Extra Cattlemen's Steakout Tickets, \$16.00. Book your guestroom at the Hilton University of Florida today for \$129 plus applicable taxes. Call 352.331-3600 and mention you are with the Beef Cattle group for the discounted rate. Reservations must be made by Tuesday, April 13, 2010 to receive the discounted group rate. For more information, or to register online, visit:<http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/beef/index.htm> Or call Holly Paszko, Course Registrar, UF/ IFAS, Office of Conferences & Institutes, 352-392-5930, hpaszko@ufl.edu.

Other Meetings and Events of Interest:

- **Cotton Meeting, February 12th**– Jackson County Extension Conference Center (8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.)
- **NAP Application Deadline, February 28th2010**, for Beans, Cantaloupes, Grapes, Greens, Millet, Peas, Perennial Peanuts, Squash and Watermelons.
- **Peanut Short Course – March 4th** Jackson County Extension Conference Center (8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.)
- **IFAS CEU Day - 2010 - March 30**, Licensed Pesticide Applicators: Earn up to 6 DACS approved ceu's! Contact your local IFAS County Extension Service for more information.

The University of Florida IFAS Extension Needs You!

The University of Florida IFAS Extension works towards agricultural, environmental, and economic sustainability in our rapidly growing state and communities.

We accomplish this through research-based educational programs, publications, and opportunities provided to you locally.

Please consider donating to the UF IFAS County Extension office in your county. Your monetary gift is greatly appreciated, and will be used to continue our efforts at providing information and education you want and need.

To find out more about making donations and endowments to University of Florida IFAS Extension, please contact your County Extension Agents listed below, or Joe Mandernach, IFAS Development Office, at 352-392-5457, jmandern@ufl.edu.

Thank You!

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University of Florida IFAS Extension Panhandle Agriculture

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Information Provided By Your County Extension Agents in Northwest Florida

