Central District
2008 Extension Faculty Symposium

PROGRAM AND ABSTRACTS

9 April 2008
Lake County Extension, Tavares, FL

UF /IFAS EXTENSION
2008 Central District Extension Faculty Symposium
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Program

9:30 a.m Registration and poster set up
10:00 a.m Welcome - Charles Fedunak, Deborah Boulware, Tim Momol, Millie Ferrer

Moderator of the Morning Session, Charles Fedunak

10:10 a.m. Extension Program Evaluation and Success Stories. David Diehl, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, and David Holmes, Marion County

11:30 a.m. Updates, Questions & Answers. Larry Arrington by Polycom and Millie Ferrer, Extension Administration

12:00 p.m. Lunch and Poster Session (noon to 1:30 pm).

Moderator of the Poster Session, Cynthia Minot

12:30 p.m. Authors will be present at their posters from 12:30 to 1:30 pm.

Moderator of the Afternoon Session, Julie England

1:30 p.m. Natural Resources/Sustainability - Central District Team Development. Mike Spranger, Environmental and Natural Resources Program

2:00 p.m. MG Volunteer Management. Charles Fedunak, Lake County

2:30 p.m. 4-H is a Community of Young People Across America who are Learning Leadership, Citizenship and Life Skills. Shelda Wilkins, Seminole County

3:00 p.m. Take Charge of Your Diabetes – An Educational Program for Adults with Type 2 Diabetes. Nancy Gal, Marion County

3:30 p.m. Woods Walks and Environmental Wonders. Eleanor Foerste, Osceola County

4:00 p.m. Program adjourn

Organizing Committee

Charles Fedunak (Chair). Lake County
Julie England (Registration Coordinator), Lake County
Cynthia Minot (Abstract and Poster Coordinator), Brevard County
Abstracts for posters in this meeting were peer reviewed.
Deborah Boulware (Member), Lake County
Tim Momol (Member), Central District

Technical Support

Rene Bass (Lake County), Francis Ferguson (IFAS/IT), Nikki Wilson (Central District)
Lake County Master Gardeners

Poster # 1

HEALTH ROCKS! YOUTH HEALTH FAIR. G. Sachs. St. Johns County Extension, 3125 Agricultural Center Drive, St. Augustine, FL 32092.

Childhood obesity is on the rise and it is vital that America's youth are aware of the importance of making healthy lifestyle choices. The Health Committee of the St. Johns 4-H County Council is committed to bringing this message to residents of St. Johns County through a community-wide youth-focused health event promoting the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. This commitment led to the development of *Health Rocks! Health Rocks!* is a youth-focused health fair planned, organized and implemented by the 4-H Health Committee in partnership with 4-H staff, 4-H youth, adult volunteers and community supporters. The event was held in 2006 and 2007 at Flagler Hospital in St Augustine. *Health Rocks!* provided a variety of fun and educational health-related activities for youth and families from throughout the community. Event experiences included six engaging "youth-focused" presentations, over 22 interactive displays, a challenging fitness trail, an indoors activity room, a healthy snack factory and more! Nearly 500 people attended the health fair in 2006 and 2007. Participants provided positive feedback about the worthiness of the event. Participants stated they "enjoyed the physical activities," found it "fun for the whole family" and planned to use their pedometer to "increase daily steps." Over 30 volunteers from 4-H families, nearby colleges, and the local community assisted with the event each year. Based on the positive feedback, St. Johns County 4-H plans to offer *Health Rocks!* again in 2008.

"KEEP IT SWEET AND SIMPLE: LOGIC MODELS PUT TO WORK." S. Hensley. Sumter County Extension, 7620 SR 471, Ste. 2; Bushnell FL 33513.

The use of the Logic Model to plan for your extension program can be a frightening thought. However, by keeping program planning "sweet and simple" extension agents can make a plan to evaluate their programs by using a logic model. The purpose of this abstract is to give extension agents a simple approach to program planning through the use of a Logic Model and for them to have knowledge gain about the importance of planning for evaluation. The objective of this poster is to summarize the educational program presented for Goal Three members on using the Logic Model The success of the poster session will be determined by the number of attendees who plan to use the method in their program planning. The method used is a hands on experience where agents select impacts, outcomes, outputs, and inputs as based on needs assessment. The method has since been used by two 4-H agents with their advisory committees where beneficial results have been observed as related to program planning. The results of this educational poster will be for extension agents in the central district to implement use of the Logic Model approach when planning their programs and the use of evaluation as a first step in program planning.

Poster # 3

TEEN HORIZONS SUMMER CAMP 2007. J. Mayberry and C. Mondelus. Orange County/University of Florida Extension, 6021 South Conway Rd. Orlando, FL 32812

Many youth face uncertainties of life after high school, therefore an educational program designed to increase awareness of post-high school options is essential. Teen Horizons, a week-long summer day camp, was such a program developed by the Family and Consumer Sciences team to help Orange County 10^{th} and 11^{th} grade students explore life and work opportunities. This program was held at the Orange County/UF Extension Education Center. Objectives included students identifying personal strengths based on a personality inventory, gaining relevant life skills, increasing awareness of options to advance their academic careers, and learning about alternative post-high school opportunities. Family and Consumer Science agents and the 4-H program assistant, in addition to external educational support, conducted various themed workshops to help students meet the learning objectives. We also incorporated field trips to broaden the horizons of the young people through different career and educational pathways. Pre and post-tests were used to determine knowledge gained. As a result, sixty percent (7 students) of student participants reported an increase in knowing their personality strengths. Also, seventy-five percent (9 students) reported an increase in familiarity with the process to attend a Florida University and an increase in preparedness for job interviewing. The larger implication of the program is that students will explore post-high school options that they were not considering before Teen Horizons.

Poster # 4

AG IN THE CLASSROOM THE LEARNING BARN-A PARTNERSHIP WITH FARM BUREAU. J. Moll, Hernando County Extension, 19490 Oliver Street Brooksville, Florida 34601

Situation: Family farms use to be commonplace and most people were closely connected to local farms. These farms are disappearing and most children today are far removed from how their food is grown or raised. Children do not understand that the smell from a chicken farm may be related to tomorrow's dinner or the sound from an air cannon keeps birds from eating their fruit snacks. Today's children are tomorrow's leaders and need to understand the connection to the land and make sound decisions on population growth and land use. Purpose: The Learning Barn increases awareness of the important role of agriculture in everyday life. Method: Hernando County Master Gardeners donated $700 and obtained a $1300 grant from Florida Farm Bureau. Project leaders attended one of three state Ag in the Classroom trainings and began coordinating and scheduling schools to display and utilize the Learning Barn. The Barn contains teacher's manuals, books, videos, games, puzzles, puppets and toys, all of which are related to agriculture. Materials were labeled for age appropriate levels based on the Sunshine State Standards. Results: Interest was generated for students and teachers to pursue information related to agriculture. Pine Grove Elementary School had 12 teachers attend summer Ag in the Classroom conferences and earn certification. These teachers are using additional curriculum in their classrooms. Teacher's comments include: "I love to use the materials for my farm unit in kindergarten." "I look forward each year for the barn to arrive." "I use the books, the videos and some games." "The children utilized the items during free play and they especially enjoyed the farm animals and memory game. They set up objects in the room to create a 'home' for the animals." Teachers report that children demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between agriculture and their food during lessons and following the use of learning barn materials.

Poster # 5

FAMILY SCIENCE NIGHTS—A MARKETING OPPORTUNITY FOR EXTENSION. M.P. McGuire. St Johns County Extension, 3125 Agricultural Center Drive, St Augustine, FL 32092

Marketing of Extension programs is a difficult task. Many people refer to Extension as a "well-kept secret." County Extension Offices must continually try to find ways to educate clientele about the wide range of topics that Extension can address. Florida has approximately two million elementary school-aged children (US Census, 2006 estimates). Many school districts are trying to increase science education opportunities for elementary students and their families, in an effort to meet both No Child Left Behind and state testing requirements in science. Elementary school Family Science Nights are an increasingly popular way to address this need. Family Science Nights are typically a 90-minute to two-hour evening program during which elementary school students and their families visit various booths which feature hands-on science-related activities. Older family members help younger family members to follow the instructions for the activity, so all family members are involved in the knowledge gain. There may be anywhere from 200 to 600 people who attend these events, depending on the size of the school and the ways in which the event has been promoted to the students' families. County Extension Offices can partner with local elementary schools to sponsor a Family Science Night at the school. In this way, Extension's name will be linked to the event, and families will become aware that the activities provided during the evening are all part of Extension's programming. All program areas within a county extension office can be involved in Family Science Night—sample activities might be as follows: FCS—importance of hand washing; Horticulture—making a living necklace; 4-H—almost any learning lab activity; Agriculture—identifying what part of a plant various food items come from; Sea Grant/Marine—keep or release fishing game; Community Development—Enviroscape model. Family Science Nights provide an opportunity to educate a large number of potential clients about Extension, while supporting the school districts' mission to improve science education for elementary students.

EXPLORING INTERNATIONALIZING EXTENSION OPPORTUNITIES: A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ANTIGUA 4-H YOUTH PROGRAM. N. Samuel and N. Walker. Marion County Cooperative Extension, 2232 NE Jacksonville Road, Ocala, FL 33470-3615

The Youth Department within the Ministry of Health, Sports and Youth Affairs is charged with reviving an almost dormant 4-H program in Antigua. Staff had minimal 4-H knowledge and needed training on use of the Experiential Learning Model (ELM) and understanding the Essential Elements of 4-H. A needs assessment was conducted to determine how the UF/IFAS could assist. Norma Samuel, Marion County and Nicole Walker, Polk County, designed a program to address the needs identified. The objectives were to meet with local and regional officials to develop a 4-H support system; teach the 4-H 101 curriculum to effectively manage 4-H clubs and country-wide programming; to design, implement, and evaluate a horticulture judging event; to conduct a teen leadership workshop; and to gather local information to enhance our own county programs. Each of the objectives was met. A meeting was held with Youth Department staff and various stakeholders to gather information on program history, technical and financial support, and program direction. The major outcome of the 4-H 101 session was an action plan developed by the group outlining the role of the youth department staff, partnering organizations in Antigua and UF/IFAS. One-hundred percent of the final evaluations for the training session indicated knowledge gained in many areas, including: recognition of competencies critical for healthy youth development; understanding the history and culture of 4-H; targeting specific life skills in 4-H programs; applying the ELM; and starting 4-H clubs. Overall, the experience was exciting. We look forward to fulfilling our role of providing technical support for the staff, and being the liaison between the Government of Antigua and IFAS International Programs. Such a partnership is mutually beneficial. We gained teaching skills and knowledge in supporting cultural groups from the Caribbean that we will share with IFAS colleagues.

Poster # 7

ENHANCING IRRIGATION EFFICIENCY THROUGH A "DO IT YOURSELF GUIDE" J. Bradshaw**.** Citrus County Extension, 3650 West Sovereign Path Suite 1, Lecanto, FL 34461

Comments from 2006 program evaluations indicated a need for basic instructions and illustrations detailing solutions to typical irrigation challenges, including adjusting time clocks, sprinkler maintenance, and system modifications. **Objectives:** To stimulate consumer interest in troubleshooting their irrigation systems by providing a step-by-step guide to enhance irrigation system efficiency. **Methods:** A "Do It Yourself Sprinkler System Checkup Guide" and four inserts were developed as educational tools to facilitate easy understanding by residents interested in performing system modifications to improve irrigtion efficiency. Program participants using the guide learned how to: make adjustments to improve system pressure; clean sprinklers, filters, and piping; adjust sprinklers to avoid watering impervious surfaces; select an appropriate controller; obtain a new controller manual; solve controller problems; and how to relocate blocked sprinklers. **Results:** During irrigation hands-on workshops, the guide and inserts were used by participants to inspect and manipulate sprinklers heads, controllers, and other components to improve their comfort level. Additionaly these publications were used to enhance understanding of seasonal watering schedule, sprinkler relocation steps and typical sprinkler system layout in order to increase consumer familiarity with sprinkler systems and components. Evaluations revealed that the program met or exceeded the expectations 90% of the respondents, 84% responded that knowledge gained would be used to adjust their irrigation system and 93% would participate in other educational events. **Conclusions:** The guide and inserts were used as a teaching tool during a variety of educational activities with a number of target audiences with a high rate of success. Currently the Southwest Florida Water Management District will be printing sufficient copies to be distributed in 16 counties throughout central Florida.

Poster # 8

PRODUCTION OF A VALUE-ADDED TURKEY SAUSAGE PRODUCT FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE DIETS OF HAITIAN CHILDREN. E. Redden[a], S. K. Williams, C. Farin, N. Djeri, B. Gerbrian and D. Dinkins. [a]Putnam County Extension, 111 Yelvington Rd. Ste 1, E. Palatka, FL 32131

Jeremie, Haiti is comprised of a population of approximately 95,000. Approximately 30% of the population is children, and 30% (of the children) suffer from malnutrition. Due to poor economic conditions and lack of available nutritious food, there is an urgent need to provide protein food sources for the children. The objective of this study was to produce a value-added turkey product for incorporation into the diets of Haitian children. A canned turkey sausage product was manufactured in the University of Florida Department of Animal Sciences USDA-inspected processing facility and shipped to Jeremie, Haiti for evaluation in the Haitian Health Foundation feeding program. The average protein and fat content of the turkey sausage was 15.0% and 19.4%, respectively. The feeding program included three remote villages (Fond Rouge Torbek, Carrfour and Terre Rouge) in Jeremie, Haiti. Ninety children, average age 30 months, participated in the study. The children received a diet of 56 grams of turkey sausage with polenta three times a week at the feeding center. An overall significant weight improvement ($P < 0.05$) was observed for the children in their respective developmental groups. All children participating in this study had low birth weights because of the lack of nutrients, and remained below the 3 percentile when compared to the Center of Disease Control growth curves for gender, age and weight. The increase in weight suggested that the additional nutrients provided by the turkey sausage functioned to stabilize the growth of the children, and maintain life. At least 5000 kg of the turkey sausage is being produced per month at a commercial processing facility in Virginia, and shipped to Jeremie, Haiti so that the sausage will be available to the children on a regular basis.

NATURAL HORSEMANSHIP TRAINING. M. Thomas. University of Florida, Lake County Extension, 1951 Woodlea Road Tavares, FL 32778

Lake County's Natural Horsemanship Training Seminars provide interactive activities for clients of the Livestock Extension Program. Horse enthusiasts can learn how to modify their horse's behavior as well as their own and prepare themselves to create the horse/owner relationship for which they were hoping. **Objective:** For equine clientele to improve communication between themselves and their horses through ground work and riding techniques. **Methods:** On a yearly basis a local trainer who specializes in Natural Horsemanship training is invited to work with extension clientele to teach them techniques used in training. The first program included client observations of trainers working in a round pen with a horse that had behavioral issues. The trainers explain and solve behavioral problems by the end of the three hour workshop. Additional seminars involved a trainer working in an arena with participants either on ground work or riding techniques. As the trainer goes through various techniques the participants practice the learned exercises with their horses. **Results:** As a result of these programs, the clients were very pleased with the practices learned and were excited to do more work at home. Clients learned how to get their horses to respond and overcome common problems. **Conclusions:** Future programs will increase in difficulty for horses and riders. Attendance at these seminars has continually increased. Also, while at these seminars, clients can learn to modify their horse's behavior safely and effectively. Clientele also receive University of Florida research based information on equine health and nutrition.

GARDENING EDUCATION UNITS (GEU) FOR MASTER GARDENERS.

E. Thralls, Orange County/IFAS Extension Education Center, 6021 S. Conway Rd., Orlando, FL 32182; S. Park-Brown, Gulf Coast REC - Plant City, 1200 N. Park Rd., Plant City, FL 33563

Situation and Objectives: Master Gardener Volunteers are required to obtain ten (10) hours of Continuing Education Hours each year in addition to the specified number of volunteer hours to maintain certification as a Master Gardener Volunteer. The required continuing education hours are easily obtained by attending the Annual Master Gardener Continued Training Conference. However, Master Gardener Volunteers may obtain continuing education hours by attending Extension horticulture programs, attending District Multi-County Master Gardener Volunteer Conferences, attending programs provided by local garden clubs and botanical gardens, or touring the "Gardens of the World" with the Florida State Master Gardener Coordinator. With all these wonderful opportunities, earning Continuing Education Hours may still be a challenge for some Master Gardener Volunteers during the year. Therefore, "Gardening Education Units" (GEU) are proposed to help Master Gardener Volunteers earn up to five hours of the required Continuing Education Hours. **Educational Methods**: Create a twenty (20) question, multiple-choice "evaluation" from four new or updated UF/IFAS publications and make it available online for Master Gardener Volunteers to view and answer. A passing score of 80% (4 out of 5 on each publication) will be necessary to earn a GEU. One GEU is equivalent to one Continuing Education Hour. The Master Gardener Volunteer will record the GEU as a Continuing Education Hour in the Master Gardener Volunteer record forms that are already used in County Extension Offices. **Results:** This procedure has not been approved for implementation but trial runs with several Master Gardener Volunteers in Orange County have been positively received. **Conclusion:** The use of this procedure will help the Master Gardener obtain up to five hours of the annual required Continuing Education Hours, increase or "renew" knowledge, and reduce gas consumption because the GEU will be earned on-line.

Poster # 11

GREENHOUSE BIOCONTROL DEMONSTRATION. J. Popenoe and L. Parker. Lake County Extension, 1951 Woodlea Rd., Tavares, FL 32778.

Biological control is the most environmentally friendly control measure for pests, but the most difficult to learn. Greenhouse and nursery growers have been slow to adopt biocontrol partly because of the difficulty in identifying, purchasing and monitoring biocontrol agents. This poster is part of a demonstration to teach growers how to identify biocontrol agents and their prey and to show them how to use them in a production system with banker plants. The objective is to get more growers to try, and then adopt some biocontrol agents. The poster explains two banker plant systems to control the two most common greenhouse pests – whiteflies and spidermites. It illustrates the pests and the biological control agents through their life cycles for easy identification and shows how to purchase and use them. The demonstration project will be set up in a commercial greenhouse and growers invited to come and witness the use and success of the system. Follow-up visits to the attending growers to assist them in adopting the system are planned. Grower adoption of biocontrol strategies will reduce pesticide usage, make the environment safer, and will help growers save money with an inexpensive control strategy.

Poster # 12

WEDGEFIELD FIREWISE YEAR-ROUND PROGRAM, Dennis Mudge, Orange County/University of Florida Extension Education Center, 6021 South Conway Road, Orlando, Florida, March 2008

Objective: As a result of a January 2000 "Wild Land Fire Education Workshop" conducted by Martha Monroe, Matt Weinell, Alan Long, Alison Bowers, Frances Nevill, and Geoff Babb, Natural Resources Agent Dennis Mudge pursued community programs addressing the need for wild fire education interface for communities in Orange County. Method: A media event hosted by National Firewise was held in Wedgefield Community that had nearly succumbed to fire in 1998. With Agent facilitation, a Wedgefield Community Firewise Board was formed in 2001. It was then chosen as one of seven pilot communities nationwide participating in the National Firewise Program. The Wedgefield Firewise Community Committee has residents, realtors, St. John's River Water Managements representatives, Orange County Parks, Orange County Fire Department, Orange County Planning, and others. Direction comes primarily from Division of Forestry (DOF) and Ranger Drainage District (RDD) as well as Orange County IFAS Extension. The chair person is a resident volunteer. Presently, the committee oversees a year-round education calendar of events which is regarded by many as the most successful Firewise Community effort in the nation. National prestige has come from two national awards and also one from Orange County and another from private industry. Most recently a "Firewise Model Home" has been constructed in Wedgefield by private industry. Brochures on Firewise Landscaping have been authored by this Agent featuring this model home. Conclusion: This is a model Extension education effort from State training, to IFAS Extension application and programs to public agency and private industry adoption and ownership.

ORANGE COUNTY SAVES: ECO-NOMIC LIVING EXPO. Glinder S. Stephens, Mary Sue Kennington, Celeste White, Ed Thralls, Liz Felter, Cyndy Mondelus, Lelan Parker, Jonnali Mayberry, Dennis Mudge, Camille Reynolds, and Grisel Negron. Orange County/University of Extension Education Center, 6021 South Conway Road, Orlando, Florida, March 2008.

Situation/Objective: The environmental preservation movement is growing. Mayor Richard T. Crotty launched an initiative, "Turn Orange to Green," to promote energy efficiency and environmental protection in the county. Many consumers want to "Go Green," but are unsure how to get started. Extension has rich history of environmental stewardship and this is a opportune time to disseminate information. The purpose of this event was to help participants learn how to save energy, reduce waste and conserve resources, while saving money. The Expo was a spin-off of America Saves campaign with emphasis on preserving natural resources and saving money. Educational Method: In addition to a nationally renowned keynote speaker and the closing general session, Extension conducted 12 concurrent workshops to teach adults and youth. Vendors displayed "green" products and provided donations for door prizes. The Expo was a team effort of the entire staff working together to develop educational programs to inform residents using Extension's knowledge base in Agriculture/Agri-Business, Family and Consumer Sciences, and 4-H and Youth Development. Other items distributed were refrigerator magnets and an eco-bag that had the Orange County Saves: Eco-Nomic Living Expo branding and Extension's telephone number and website address to further promote Extension and to provide future contact information. The event was sponsored by the Central Florida Fair and Farm Credit Services. Conclusion: Approximately 175 residents were in attendance. An evaluation was administered, and 96% of the participants completing the survey indicated that they were motivated (24) to very motivated (58) to practice techniques taught to conserve natural/monetary resources. Participants will be evaluated after six months to measure practice change. The Extension staff is excited by the participant's responses and contemplating plans to replicate and broaden the collaboration efforts for another Expo in 2009.

Poster # 14

FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF BUILD YOUR BONES! OSTEOPOROSIS EDUCATION PROGRAM. J. England, UF/IFAS Lake County Extension, 1951 Woodlea Road, Tavares, Florida, 32778.

Osteoporosis is a disease that results in deterioration of the bone and increased fracture risk. Although commonly perceived as a disease of older women, osteoporosis occurs at all ages and both genders. The disease may cause pain, bone fracture, loss of independence and increased morbidity. Although effective therapeutic measures for treating osteoporosis have been developed, they are not a substitute for preventative measures. Build Your Bones! is an osteoporosis education program designed to increase awareness of participants' personal susceptibility and risk factors for osteoporosis and promote benefits of change in behaviors that increase susceptibility. The pilot Build Your Bones! education program is based on the Health Belief Model and designed as a four hour series targeted to middle-aged and older adults. The program incorporates educational theory, lecture, interactive activities and demonstrations to engage learners. Short-term objectives include knowledge gain on personal risk factors for osteoporosis, intent to increase calcium intake and intent to participate in weight-bearing exercises. Medium term outcomes measured by post-program survey include increased calcium intake and inclusion of weight-bearing exercises in physical activity plan. The program was presented five times in 2007 to 94 participants. Results from post-program survey of 75 participants showed 91% intended to take action steps to reduce their risk of osteoporosis; including 56% intending to increase daily calcium intake and 57% planning to increase weight-bearing exercise. A follow-up survey of one program with 48% response rate (n=11) showed 73% increased daily calcium intake and 55% included weight-bearing exercise in physical activity plan. The results from surveys, instructor observation and feedback from an Extension specialist show a need for program revision to increase knowledge gain and behavior change. Recommendations include expansion to six hours of contact with participants, increased number of interactive activities, inclusion of pre-test and revision of post-program and follow-up survey instruments.

Poster # 15

SUMTER COUNTY – WHERE AGRICULTURE MEANS BUSINESS CAMPAIGN.

S.Kelly. Sumter County Extension, 7620 SR 471 Ste 2 Bushnell, FL 33513.

When establishing the UF/IFAS Sumter County Extension Advisory Committee, the group was asked the question: "What are the main issues in Sumter County, and what could Extension do to assist Sumter County with those issues?" From that first discussion, an Agricultural Awareness Program was developed and a grant was applied for and received from the UF IPM and AEC Departments to fund the program. **Objectives:** To develop a publication providing the public with statistics and information about the agricultural industry in Sumter County. To distribute factual information through a newspaper insert to Sumter County residents and decision makers. **Methods:** The agricultural statistics were collected using the University of Florida Food and Resource Economics IMPLAN Professional Data modeling. The statistics were then verified by a local focus group consisting of agricultural industry professionals and economic development personnel. The statistics were then used to produce a newspaper insert, and a banner. Readers of the insert were encouraged to complete an online survey, which was used to determine the knowledge of agriculture and the interest in learning more about Sumter County agriculture. **Results:** A report of the statistics of the value of agriculture in Sumter County was received from the IMPLAN modeling. This report was used to produce a four page color insert, and 7,000 copies were distributed through the Sumter County Times newspaper and the Sumter County Library System. The number of people who completed the online survey was a disappointing part of this project, but those who did indicated that they learned about Sumter County agriculture and they wanted more information. The survey also helped identify the delivery methods that the respondents preferred, with 87.5% interested in a website, 66.7% interested in newspaper articles, and 70.8% in a printed newsletter. **Conclusions:** The statistics about the value of the agricultural industry are of interest to the population of Sumter County and updated information of this type should be collected and distributed. The results of the survey indicate preferred delivery methods for further information among those interested in learning more.

Poster # 16

ORGANIZING A FARM TOUR FOR STATE AND COUNTY POLICY DECISION-MAKERS. J.S. Strickland. Hernando County Extension, 19490 Oliver Street. Brooksville, FL 34601

Situation: A farm tour was organized in 2006, highlighting the diversity and existence of agriculture in Hernando County. There are 617 farms that average 106 acres in size. The average market value of production is $35,183. Almost half of the farmers are part-time farmers. The industries of commercial horticulture, fruit and vegetable production, livestock production and forage production are well represented in Hernando County.
Purpose: The objectives of this farm tour were to: organize the different agriculture industry into one common voice with one common goal, and show the existence and viability of agriculture in this county. The targeted audience was elected officials and other decision makers in the county.
Method: This was cooperative effort among the Hernando County Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency, Hernando County Cattlemen, and Hernando-Citrus Farm Bureau. There were members of each organization that were involved with the planning and execution of this 12 hour event. The planning of this tour took approximately eight months. Six agricultural businesses were visited. An evening dinner and speakers provided the opportunity for socialization between the agriculture community and the decision makers as well as additional education. Results: The Hernando County Agriculture Industry Farm Tour succeeded in demonstrating to local and state policy makers that agriculture is alive and well in Hernando County. Most of the local decision makers were surprised to learn about the wide ranging scope of agricultural diversity in Hernando County. Many commented, “I never knew this place existed”. As for the second goal to organize the agriculture into come common voice with one common goal, it was obviously successful because of the success of this event.

Poster # 17

SMALL FARMS STUDY TOUR: A LESSON IN INNOVATION AND DIVERSITY

G. England, L. Seals, J. Walter, N. Wilson. 1455 Treeland Blvd., Palm Bay, FL 32909

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), small farms represent over 90% of all farms in Florida. The USDA defines a small farm as one with up to $250,000 in sales. These farms make about 15% of all farm product sales in Florida. Input from counties throughout Florida indicated the need for the development of small farm educational programs. The objective of this study tour was to increase Extension agents' awareness and knowledge of innovative strategies used by small farmers in other states. In 2007, twenty Extension agents participated in a week-long study tour of 24 innovative and diversified small farms in the southeast. Agents observed and evaluated all aspects of the farm system. Debriefing sessions conducted immediately after each stop on the tour gave agents the opportunity to share lessons learned, programming ideas, and constraints to small farm success in Florida. At the conclusion of the training, agents completed a written evaluation that summarized their experience and observations. The knowledge gained and lessons learned while on the study tour have helped agents to develop educational programs that focus on the unique needs of small farms and alternative enterprises. In 2008, agents highlighted successful operations visited on the tour to 140 participants at the AGRItunity Conference in Sumter County. The experience helped agents in Brevard County select topics for the 2008 Pastures, Ponds, Growers, and Groves Conference. Agents statewide are collaborating to plan and implement a Florida small farms and alternative enterprises conference in 2009. In conclusion, this study tour provided agents with new ideas and the knowledge necessary to enhance educational programs for a unique and growing small farms clientele.

Poster # 18

AGRItunity 2008: MEETING THE NEEDS OF FARMERS LARGE AND SMALL

G. England**,** J. Bradshaw**,** E. Jennings, S. Strickland**.** Sumter County Extension, 7620 SR 471, Suite 2, Bushnell, FL 33513

Objectives: Plan and conduct a second annual conference and trade show focusing on areas crop production, livestock and marketing to small and large farm operations in the west central Florida region consisting of Citrus, Hernando, Pasco and Sumter counties involving educational sessions that will cover the diverse interests of the clientele of the region. Involve producers and allied industries through participation in program planning, sponsorships and exhibiting their products and services at the trade and equipment show. **Methods:** The planning group of the original event held in December 2006 met and determined the need for a second regional conference and trade show. This group consisted of the four Regional Specialized Extension Agents and CEDs plus any other interested Extension Agents of the west central Florida Region, as well as the Small Farm Commodity Focus Team and members of the agricultural community. The various subcommittees developed the educational sessions, obtained grant monies, arranged for facilities and volunteers, attracted exhibitors and sponsors and promoted the conference and trade show through media exposure and direct mailings. **Results:** Over 250 participants experienced an educational program that included a general session with examples of successful small farm ventures within and outside Florida. Three concurrent educational sessions, covering pertinent topic areas and an indoor trade show with outdoor equipment display area all funded by sponsors, exhibitors, grants and a modest admission fee, were successfully presented and well received. Evaluations revealed that the program met or exceeded the expectations of 100% of the respondents; Eighty four percent stated that gained knowledge would be used to start/enhance their business and 99% would participate in another event. **Conclusions:** The planning committee determined continued need for an annual event. Involvement of agricultural and allied industries in planning educational programs is critical to the region.

Poster # 19

WEATHER WATCH PROGRAM. Ryan A. Atwood. Lake County Extension, University of Florida, 1951 Woodlea Rd, Tavares, FL 32778, USA

Weather Watch is an extension program aimed to help agricultural producers in Central Florida protect their crops from potentially damaging freezes. This program has been on going for the past thirty-five years. Agricultural producers who subscribe for a $100 fee receive a phone number to call for local weather forecast recordings. Multiple phone lines are used to ensure the ability to access the recordings during times of high call volume. These forecasts are updated at least daily. During warm periods it provides a 7-14 day weather outlook and citrus leaf freezing data. During cold events where the potential for damage exists weather advisories are given multiple times a day. Weather Watch program data includes predicted temperature, temperature fall, temperature duration, wind speed, wind direction, forecast tracker, citrus leaf freezing points, fruit frost station forecasts, evaporative cooling potential, and wet bulb shut off. Advisories consist of data from the National Weather Service, Florida Automated Weather Network, Wallis George Regression model numbers, and predictions from Fred Crosby a retired agricultural weather forecaster. Weather Watch subscribers who give email addresses will be notified when a freeze event is up coming so that they do not “miss” an event. Subscribers with Nextel phones are included in a weather group which allows for twenty people to listen and broadcast on the direct connect feature simultaneously. This feature gives extension agents and growers the ability to discuss temperatures and other weather conditions at their groves during a cold event. The weather watch program assists growers by evaluating climate data that could potentially have damaging effects on production.

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