



UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

IFAS EXTENSION

The Green Machine

August 2009

<http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/>

SOLUTIONS
for *your* LIFE



Small Farms Conference a Highlight for Florida Farmers

Nola Wilson (Small Farms Conference Executive Committee & Marion County Extension Agent), Jim DeValerio (BCES) and Tyler Jones (UF/IFAS photographer)

At least 800 farmers and agriculture professionals participated in the 2009 Florida Small Farms Conference, held August 1 & 2 at Osceola Heritage Park located in Kissimmee, Florida.

This ground-breaking 1st annual event hosted by UF-IFAS/FAMU-CESTA included 30 educational sessions, over 80 educational and industry exhibitors, plus a multi-species live animal exhibit. Two days of education included topics related to: alternative energy, food policy and regulations, livestock, business and marketing, organic and sustainable farming and horticulture with nearly 100 speakers representing all facets of Florida agriculture.

The conference kicked-off with an inspiring welcome address from **Florida Commissioner of Agriculture, Charles Bronson**, who recognized the need to support small producers in agriculture by declaring that **"we need small farmers"**. He shared his thoughts about the Farm to Fuel Summit and the importance of becoming a more self-sustaining country that is less reliant on foreign oil.



Inside this issue:

Statewide Small Farms Conference Report	1 & 2
Fall Planting Checklist	3 & 4
Scheduled Events	5 & 6

Jim DeValerio
Agriculture,
and Community
Development
Agent
Bradford County
Extension Service
2266 N. Temple Ave.
Starke, FL 32091
Email: jtd@ufl.edu

Next Conference: July 31 & August 1, 2010.

Continued»

To find out more about all the programs your local Extension office offers visit our website at: <http://bradford.ifas.ufl.edu/>

An important part of the opening session was the **Florida Innovative Farmer Awards** presented to three producers for their innovation in developing and sustaining their small farm enterprise. The awards were presented to a lamb producer, pastured-poultry producer and an organic citrus & vegetable producer.



The conference highlighted **Farm to Table** lunches that showcased 20 farms that provided vegetables, meat or value-added products. Delicious meals made from farm direct products were prepared by Chef Tony and staff with Savor Osceola Catering Co. **The luncheons created an awareness of the diversity of products made available by Florida farmers for a local food system.**

During lunch, keynote speaker John Ikerd delivered a passionate speech about "his truth" on the past, present and future of agriculture. He told us an illustrative story which described how life might be in the year 2050. The story, provoked attendees to consider that the choices we make will impact future generations.

One of the most important results from this conference was the level of networking opportunities that transpired.

Many participants shared their gratitude to have the opportunity to attend the event.

More information about this conference and the next statewide conference will be coming soon at www.smallfarms.ifas.ufl.edu.



Production Checklist for Bradford County Strawberry and Vegetable Growers

Jim DeValerio, Bradford County Extension Agent & Bob Hochmuth, Multi County Extension Agent

Start with a record book to record planting dates, fertilizer applications, irrigation events, pesticide application and crop yield data. A copy of the FDACS pesticide record keeping form and USDA Private Applicators Record Keeping books are available at the Bradford County Extension Service. Keeping pesticide records is required by law.

Remove all debris from spring and summer crops and turn the soil under. This should be done as soon as the crop is finished. Leaving crop residues and weeds in the soil provide a food source for nematodes and diseases to live on and multiply while the land is fallow. Allowing weeds to mature and produce seed increases the seed bank for next year by billions of seeds.

Consider plant sourcing. Where are you going to purchase seedlings? Strawberry plant sources are listed at: <http://strawberry.ifas.ufl.edu/NurseryListing08.htm>

Soils with a fresh green crop should be turned under at least 14 days before planting to allow crop residues to decompose. Planting into freshly tilled crop residue increases the likelihood that soil-borne plant diseases will attack seedlings, young plants and developing roots.

Take a soil sample well in advance of planting to determine soil pH and nutrient (P, K & MG) levels in the soil.

Lime, if needed, should be applied well before fertilizer application to give it time to react in the soil.

Consider soil fumigation plans well in advance of planting. The exact time needed will depend on the fumigant used, but generally 2-4 weeks will be needed. Remember to factor in time to have materials delivered and to get equipment prepared and calibrated.

VAPAM or KPAM: Injecting VAPAM or KPAM through drip irrigation requires that the beds, tape and plastic be in place and all irrigation components connected at least two weeks before planting in the fall and four weeks in the spring. Pre-plant fertilizer (N and K in particular) are not usually applied because the water (3 or more hour irrigation event) used to rinse VAPAM or KPAM deep in the soil will cause them to leach below the root zone.

Methyl bromide & Chloropicrin: Prices have increased and reduced availability. The higher % of chloropicrin, more difficult for workers to use. Use of high barrier plastic mulch improves effectiveness at lower rates. Try using alternative fumigants on your farm.

Weed suppression: Select herbicides by considering target weeds, crop safety, timing of application, and soil persistence in relation to future crop rotation plans. **Be sure to read the label for any other precautions and use directions.**

Apply pre-plant fertilizers, drip tape and plastic mulch close to planting dates, but allow enough time to hook up all irrigation parts and test the system.

Prepare to apply mulch and drip ONLY if there is good soil moisture to form a good bed. After mulching, irrigate in short events if needed to maintain good soil moisture. Do not allow beds to dry.

Plant crop at the proper depth and in a well packed soil.

Injection timing of soluble fertilizer varies with pre-plant fertilizer program. Call Extension office to arrange leaf tissue analysis or petiole sap tests to guide fertilizer injection programs.

Fungicide applications may be needed as new growth appears.

Strawberry insect pests and some chemical controls:

Aphids: Imidacloprid (Admire 2F, etc. - plant back issues on non registered crops), thiamethoxam (Actara - plant back issues on non registered crops)

Armyworms: Bt, Spinosad (SpinTor), Methoxyfenozide (Intrepid)

Sap Beetles: Novaluron (Rimon - new Sect. 18 for larvae only), Brigade

Spider mites: Abamectin (AgriMek), bifenazate (Acramite), others

Cyclamen Mites: Diazinon, endosulfan (Thiodan)

Thrips: Spinetoram (Radiant - Relatively new, be careful of developing resistance from overuse, related to SpinTor)

Rotate classes of pesticides to slow the development of resistance. Know the class of a pesticide before using. The classes are noted in the UF/IFAS Vegetable Production Handbook.

NRCS is announcing a new **Conservation Stewardship Program** (CSP) which is available for private and agricultural or forest lands. The purpose of CSP is to encourage agricultural and forestry producers to maintain existing conservation activities and to adopt additional ones on their operations. A self-screening checklist designed to help farmers determine if they want to apply or not is available at the Extension office or USDA/ARS. Applicants will need to complete eligibility forms with the Farm Service Agency to be eligible.

CSP is still in draft form, but applications will be taken through September 30 at the USDA Service Center in Gainesville. CSP contracts will be for 5 years and enhancement payments will be made annually in the fall and will not exceed \$40,000 in any year. CSP will also have 2 "Special Projects" to study and demonstrate new technologies--"On-Farm Pilot Project" for ag and forest producers, and "On-Farm Research and Demonstration" for researchers. **Contact Donna M. Hopwood, District Conservationist, USDA NRCS, at 352-376-7414**

Check out these website to stay informed about local produce marketing opportunities.
<http://www.localharvest.org/> or <http://floridafarmlink.org/>

Dist. IV of Florida Federation of Garden Clubs and St. Johns County Extension Service present: Garden Fest2009 -"Florida Friendly" Sat., October 24 -9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. St. Johns County Extension Office. To register please call Rachel at 904-272-4252. Public Invited - General Admission \$10 Box Lunch \$5, or bring your own.

FOG and UF/IFAS will hold an "Operation Transition" workshop Sept. 25 at Alachua County Extension in Gainesville. The workshop will benefit conventional farmers seeking information about transitioning to organic production practices. **A farm tour Oct. 21 will provide farmers first-hand knowledge of a diversified organic production system at John Beville's Farm, Promised Land, in Brooker.** The 100-acre mixed vegetable operation has been certified organic since Jan. 2006. Beville also farms 35 acres of certified organic mixed vegetables in Alachua. For more information contact Florida Organic Growers at 352-377-6345 or email fog@foginfo.org.

Northeast Florida Small Farms Working Group

Reconnecting Urban Customers with the Farm Through Multiple Enterprises

Thursday, September 10, 2009 at 6:00PM

Eddie and Betty Jean Conner were "retired" from the poultry business in 2002. In order to maintain their farm, they opened a corn maze. Thousands of school children have been reconnected to the rural lifestyle through their efforts and the income from their various enterprises has enabled them to stay on the farm. The Conner's also have a hydroponic vegetable operation, farm fresh eggs, and beef cattle.

Agenda: 6:00 PM Registration, 6:30 PM BBQ Dinner, 7:00 PM Educational Farm Tour, 8:30 PM Wrap up

All farmers interested in diversifying their operation are invited to attend. The registration fee is \$5. Please RSVP to Nassau County Extension (904) 879-1019 by Tuesday September 8.

If you have trouble finding us call Steve Gaul at (904) 327-4815.

Directions: Drive west from Baldwin on SR 90 about 2 miles. Turn north on FL121.

A-MAIZE-ING ACRES Farm is located about 20 miles north of SR 90 on FL121.

Maps can be picked up at the Bradford County Extension office



Summer Wildlife Field Day & Archery Tournament . Saturday, September 12, 2009, 8:30 am -12:00 pm ET, Tournament following, UF-IFAS Suwannee Valley Research & Education Center, Live Oak, FL. Please RSVP - contact the Suwannee County Conservation District at (386) 362-2622 x 3, sccd@rocketmail.com