

**Palm Beach
County
Extension**

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**Thank you to
Sugar Cane
Growers
Cooperative
of Florida
for sponsoring this
newsletter issue.**



New Extension Agent

Palm Beach County is pleased to introduce Ron Rice, the new Agronomic Crops Agent based in Belle Glade. He joined us July 29, 2005. His educational program will focus on sugarcane, rice, sod, and any other agronomic crops of local interest.

Ron has worked in Belle Glade at both the UF/IFAS Everglades REC and Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative. He has a research/extension background in water quality, crop nutrition, and soil fertility issues related to sugarcane and other crops in the Everglades Agricultural Area. In 1993, Ron received his Ph.D. from the University of Florida Agronomy Department. Ron is an active member of the Sugarcane Focus Action Team and will work closely with UF/IFAS researchers and the surrounding agricultural community.



You can contact Ron by phone at:
561-996-1655 or via email rwrice@ifas.ufl.edu

Upcoming Events

Wednesday ~ October 12, 2005

Belle Glade Office

- Pesticide Review Sessions
- 8:00am General Standards/Core Test Review (2 CEUs)
- 1:00pm Agricultural Row Crop Test Review (2 CEUs)
- All Day Testing ~ Any Category

Monday ~ November 7, 2005

West Palm Beach Office

- Pesticide Review Sessions
- 8:00am General Standards/Core Training and Test Review (4 CEUs)
- 1:00pm Right-of-Way Test Review (2 CEUs)
- All Day Testing ~ Any Category

Wednesday ~ November 9, 2005

Belle Glade Office

- Pesticide Review Sessions
- 8:00am General Standards/Core Training and Test Review (4 CEUs)
- 1:00pm Private Applicator Test Review (2 CEUs)
- All Day Testing ~ Any Category

Monday ~ December 5, 2005

West Palm Beach Office

- Pesticide Review Sessions
- 8:00am General Standards/Core Test Review (2 CEUs)
- 1:00pm Aquatic Weed Control Test Review (2 CEUs)
- All Day Testing ~ Any Category

Wednesday ~ December 14, 2005

Belle Glade Office

- All Day Testing ~ Any Category



EXTENSION

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Palm Beach County Extension Agriculture Newsletter

October/November, 2005

The Sugarcane Focus Area Team

In 2002, Florida Extension launched a comprehensive long-range strategic planning effort to ensure that Extension remains responsive to the ever-changing needs of Florida's citizenry. Throughout 2003, planning sessions were held with target audiences, community officials, stakeholders, Extension advisory committees, County Extension faculty, and University of Florida/IFAS administration and research faculty. Ultimately, Extension programming was reorganized under 7 Statewide Major Goals encompassing 27 different priority topics termed Focus Areas.

One product of these planning efforts is the Sugarcane Focus Area Team, composed of UF/IFAS research faculty, USDA/ARS scientists, multi-county Extension faculty, and sugarcane industry representatives. The team's mission is to identify priority topics and coordinate the development of research and Extension (R&E) programs that are mutually beneficial to the sugarcane industry and scientists alike.

To support these R&E efforts, a document was developed in May 2004 by the Sugarcane Industry Research Committee that identifies high-priority research areas for sugarcane. These articulated research needs are divided into seven subject categories including: 1) Breeding and Genetics, 2) Planting Improvements, 3) Crop Nutrition, 4) Crop Management, 5) Decision Support and Information Management, 6) Harvesting Management, and 7) Ecological and Soil/Water Management Issues. This document is an important tool, since it provides a framework for securing relevant grant funding and helps organize R&E efforts that are directly responsive to industry needs.



The favorable impact of these statewide and local programmatic reorganization efforts were recently highlighted by the Sugarcane Focus Area Team, which hosted a sugarcane grower meeting on September 28, 2005 at the UF/IFAS Everglades Research and Education Center (EREC) in Belle Glade. The meeting objectives were to summarize current sugarcane R&E efforts in south Florida and to review trends (favorable) in funding and sugarcane research staffing over the past 5 years.

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**News
&
Notes**

On August 31, the EPA published tolerances for the herbicide S- metolachlor. Uses of importance to Florida include: sweet/field/pop corn, cotton, onion, peanut, sorghum, soybean, and tomato (paste), as well as head and stem brassicas (subgroup 5A), legume foliage (subgroup 7A), fruiting vegetables (group 8), leaf petiole vegetables (subgroup 4B), edible podded legumes (subgroup 6A), pea and bean (subgroup 6C), root vegetables (subgroup 1B), and tuberous and corm vegetables (group 1C).

The EPA also published tolerances for the insecticide flonicamid. Uses of importance to Florida include: cotton, stone fruit (group 12), potato and potato flake, spinach, tomato paste and puree, cucurbit vegetables (group 9), fruiting vegetables (group 8), and leafy brassicas (subgroup 5B). Associated animal tolerances were also approved. (*Federal Register*, 8/31/05).



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This meeting summarized over 40 on-going sugarcane research projects that address all seven subject categories identified by the sugarcane industry as research priority areas. Work in progress includes improved germplasm/cultivar development, molecular biology and genetics, high-sucrose germplasm development, improved seedcane management, host-plant resistance to pathogens, sugarcane growth responses to phosphorus, silicon, magnesium, and nitrogen, improved means for testing for crop nutrient deficiencies, new weed control tools, reducing risk of crop damage from insects, enhancing sucrose content, development of crop growth computer models and a farm management database for growers and other producers, residue management under different harvesting options, improvement of wildlife habitat, increasing soil organic matter in sandy soils, and protecting the organic soils of the Everglades Agricultural Area.

The sugarcane R&E initiatives highlighted in this grower meeting were impressive in scope and magnitude, made possible by significantly increased investments in R&E over the past 5-year period, and a renewed commitment by the sugar industry, UF/IFAS and USDA/ARS to produce relevant and responsive programs for growers. Eight new scientists and additional support personnel have been hired in the last three years. Once operating support is considered, more than \$5 million from industry, and the public and private sector, is committed to this Research and Extension effort. This is a positive example of the role the Sugarcane Focus Area Team plays in building productive relationships between UF/IFAS and the stakeholder community.

Job Opportunity

Extension Manpower Development Agent

Are you interested in joining the Palm Beach County IFAS Extension team? We're looking for a Manpower Development Agent to develop educational materials and conduct workshops for agricultural employers and their staff. Educational efforts will address restricted use pesticides, farm machinery safety, agriculture regulatory information and other priority needs of targeted clientele. A bachelor's degree in Agriculture and Extension Education, Farm Management, Business Administration, agricultural subject matter area, or closely related field is required. For more information please contact Darrin Parmenter, Vegetable Agent, at 561-233-1725 or via e-mail: DMParmenter@ifas.ufl.edu.

Palm Beach County 2005 Economic Summit

On November 9th and 10th, Palm Beach County's 2005 Economic Summit will bring together industry and business leaders, government agencies, community organizations, and others to define the vision of what people want Palm Beach County to be as an outstanding place to reside, work and relax, and provide recommendations to include in the updated County Strategic Economic Plan.

Summit organizers include The Board of County Commissioners, a Steering Committee comprised of members of the County's Overall Economic Development Planning Committee, and Subcommittees comprised of stakeholders representing a broad cross section of the community. During the summit, each subcommittee (listed below) will present of summary of economic conditions and challenges and draw upon community case studies to showcase potential solutions and "best practices."

- ✦ Agribusiness, Equestrian & Food
- ✦ Housing
- ✦ Industries of the Mind
- ✦ International Investment
- ✦ Quality of Place
- ✦ Smart Growth & Transportation
- ✦ Total Education

The Summit will be held at the Palm Beach County Convention Center, West Palm Beach, Florida. Registration is \$45 per person. More information is available on-line at: <http://www.pbcgov.com/economicsummit2005> or contact the Palm Beach County Economic Development Office at 561-355-3624.

For more information regarding the Agribusiness, Equestrian & Food Subcommittee, please contact Art Kirstein, Agricultural Economic Development Coordinator, PBC Extension, at 561-233-1715 or via e-mail: kirstein@ifas.ufl.edu.

Citrus Greening

In September, 2005 the USDA and the Florida Department of Agriculture confirmed the first US detection of *Liberibacter asiaticus*, or citrus greening, on pummelo tree leaf and fruit samples collected in the Homestead area. The disease, which already seriously affects citrus in India, Asia, Southeast Asia, the Arabian Peninsula and Africa, does not pose a threat to human health.

Citrus greening, or huanglongbing, is a bacterial disease transmitted primarily by insect vectors in the family Psyllidae. The disease attacks the vascular system of plants. Once infected, there is no cure for a tree with citrus greening



disease. In areas of the world where citrus greening is endemic, citrus trees decline and die within a few years.



Symptoms of citrus greening disease are similar to plants with severe nutritional deficiencies including yellow shoots, twig dieback, tree decline and reduced fruit size and quality, often affecting only a single branch at first. Older leaves develop a characteristic mottling, or patches of

discoloration. The inside of the fruit is lopsided and is inedible due to poor taste. The fruit drops off before ripening and has poor color. Molecular tests are needed to confirm the presence of this disease.

For more information see the following UF/IFAS Extension publications:

Citrus Diseases Exotic to Florida: Huanglongbing (Citrus Greening) <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/PP133>

Asiatic Citrus Psyllid, *Diaphorina citri* Kuwayama (Insecta: Homoptera: Psyllidae) <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/IN160>

Farm Labor Contractor Training Program

In Florida there are approximately 4000 farm labor contractors (FLC). They operate under Chapter 450, part III, Florida Statutes, passed in 1971 and implemented in 1973. On May 12, 1994 the rules were amended to include education and testing requirements.

As part of a cooperative effort among several organizations, the University of Florida/IFAS is presenting the first Farm Labor Contractor's Training Program on October 20, 2005 in Immokalee. The goal is to strengthen the current education opportunities offered to this valuable working community. The FLC training program is designed to provide the most current information in regulatory and safety issues.

The FLC training program will be presented at:
The Career Service Center of Collier County
750 South 5th Street
Immokalee, FL 34142

Registration will begin at 8:00am. We suggest that participants call for pre-registration. For more information and registration for this training program, contact Cesar Asuaje at 561-233-1727 or Barbara Hymnan at 239-658-3415.