

UF/IFAS EXTENSION & ST. JOHNS COUNTY

WORKING TOGETHER

January, February and March 2016

The St. Johns County Board of Commissioners and UF/IFAS Extension work in a cooperative effort to provide relevant programming to citizens throughout the County. During the first quarter of 2016, Extension Agents and Staff recorded approximately **18,995 contacts** with clientele that included emails, phone calls, office visits and field calls. Agents conducted **40 on-site visits** (Agriculture, Horticulture, Schools, Livestock, and Forages) to assist residents one-on-one in St. Johns County. Below are a few examples of impacts reported by our Agents during this quarter.



- A **partnership has been developed** between the UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County, UF/IFAS Florida Friendly Landscaping and **the UF Historic St. Augustine** leadership to assist in establishing native plant landscapes in the downtown St. Augustine area.
- **Suzanne Mulvee, St. Johns County Master Gardener**, was recognized as an **Outstanding Volunteer by the St. Johns County Schools** (Ocean Palms Elementary School) for her work in the Kindergarten Garden Program.
- **Debbie Safford, St. Johns County Master Gardener**, was recognized as an **Outstanding Volunteer by the St. Johns County Schools** (Ponte Vedra/Palm Valley Elementary School) for her work as a Kindergarten Volunteer and as the Coordinator for the 2nd Grade Garden Program.
- **Six 4-H Chicken Embryology presentations**, provided by our 4-H Agents, **reached 361 elementary students** who are taking part in the 4-H Embryology project this spring. Classroom teachers reported that students gained a deeper understanding of the life cycle and needs of a developing embryo, increased skills in observation and recording data, and expanded their love of science.
- One-hundred and forty (140) participants at **the 2016 Spring Ranchers Forum** gained **chute-side experience** on breeding soundness exams for bulls during a **hands-on activity** that was conducted by our Production Agriculture Agent.
- The St. Johns County Sea Grant Agent's Florida **Microplastic Awareness Project** (funded by a grant from NOAA's Marine Debris Program) has 140 volunteers collecting coastal water samples at over 178 locations statewide.
- Of the nearly 400 water samples collected by citizen scientists, **91% of one-liter water samples collected have contained at least one piece of plastic**. On average, there are eight pieces of plastic per liter, and seven of the eight pieces are microscopic plastic fibers. **Over 240 people have pledged to take an average of 3 actions to reduce plastic use**.
- At the **Kids and Bees** event at the **American Beekeeping Federation** Conference, taught by our Commercial Vegetable Agent, **more than 500 youth in St. Johns County** developed competencies about honey bee biology and ecology.



- As a result of passing a **SafeStaff Food Certification Course**, led by our Family and Consumer Science Agent, **thirty eight (38) participants are able to prepare and serve food to the public**. One restaurant, that had recently opened, needed and received certification of its staff.
- **One-hundred and forty-four (144) 2nd grade students** from eight classes indicated that after **learning about protecting sea turtles**, taught by our Sea Grant Agent, they would initiate simple actions such as picking up trash at the school yard.
- **The St. Johns County 4-H program was awarded \$4,000** by the National Rifle Association Foundation. This grant will fund new targets for the archery range and resupply the disposable targets and **will allow the program to host open archery events and trainings**.
- Thirty-eight (38) participants attended a **Pasture Weed Management Workshop**, led by our Production Agriculture Agent, and **gained knowledge** related to soil testing, weed identification and herbicide selection and application.
- **Four (4) classes** on vegetable gardening, native plants and the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Program, **taught by St. Johns County Master Gardeners**, reached more than **280 participants**.
- As a result of the **Family Nutrition Program (FNP)**, led by our Family and Consumer Science Agent, **2,658 St. Johns County title one school teachers and students were taught nutrition education**. Construction and maintenance of alternative and raised bed garden curriculum was taught at three schools.
- The Hastings-based **Tech Wizards 4-H Club**, led by our 4-H Agents, has increased the number of volunteer mentors from four to nine. Program standards include 1 mentor to 4 youth. This 2-hour weekly program is housed at the W.E. Harris Center through a **partnership with St. Johns County Parks and Recreation**.
- Our Commercial Vegetable Agent provided more than **40 participants at the Garden Club of St. Augustine** a better understanding on agriculture (**Agricultural Awareness**) in St. Johns County at their monthly meeting.
- An **Herbicide Demonstration was established at a commercial potato farm** to determine if herbicide resistance was present using commonly used herbicides. Preliminary data indicated that resistance was not present. Subsequently, a pre-emergent herbicide was sprayed to see if regrowth of weed populations could be reduced to an acceptable level.

For more information, visit the UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County Website at <http://stjohns.ifas.ufl.edu> or contact us at **904-209-0430**.