

UF/IFAS EXTENSION & ST. JOHNS COUNTY

WORKING TOGETHER

January, February, March 2017

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 2017, Extension Agents and Staff recorded approximately **10,339 contacts** with clientele that included emails, phone calls, office visits and field calls. Agents conducted **65 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.



- The Commercial Agriculture Agent and the Family and Consumer Sciences Agent **co-taught 191 youth in St. Johns County about potato food systems** (history, production, marketing, storage, handling, food safety and nutrition) at the Bolles School in Ponte Vedra.
- The UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns/Putnam County **4-H Meats Judging Team**, led by a 4-H Leader and our Production Agriculture Agent, attended a **Meats Judging Clinic at the University of Florida** and received technical training on retail meat identification.
- An **Associated Press story featuring the Sea Grant Agent's Florida Microplastic Awareness Project** was carried by **over 330 news outlets in the US and 2 dozen overseas media**. The Sea Grant agent gave **interviews to nine media outlets (four overseas)** because of this AP story.
- **Twenty-two golf course industry superintendents in Florida** are now certified to safely and properly manage ornamental and turf systems with pesticides after a training course taught by the Commercial Agriculture Agent.
- Because of efforts of our Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, 1,681 participants and youth learned about good nutrition and proper eating habits. Within this group, 134 youth learned about **gardening through hands on experience**.
- **Ten youth and four adults** from St. Johns County attended the **4-H Day at the Capitol** in Tallahassee with our 4-H Youth Development Agent. This year the group met with **State Senator Travis Hutson and State Representative Cyndi Stevenson**. Both offered the youth their perspective on state government including what motivated them to get involved. Members of the group reported that they enjoyed meeting with their legislators and found that watching the Senate's afternoon session to be the most interesting part of the day.
- Over **300 consultations and/or diagnostics were provided** by the UF/IFAS St. Johns County Horticulture Department on subjects such as: Florida Friendly Landscaping; turf, palm, citrus, vegetable and ornamental plant diseases; soil pH test results, plant identification and other horticulture-related topics.
- At a workshop conducted by our Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, **45 participants learned how to clean and sanitize** the home kitchen using inexpensive household food safe products.
- UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County **Horticulture Department partnered with Florida Forest Service to disseminate over 1,000 trees and fact sheets** on tree care to over 90 individuals at 5 Florida Arbor Day tree give-away events throughout the county.

- **The St. Johns County Junior/Intermediate 4-H Horse Judging Team**, led by our 4-H Youth Development Program Assistant, **took fourth place** in the combined team age division at the **Florida State Fair Horse Judging Competition**. This was the first horse judging competition the team competed in this year and we look forward to future accomplishments on this rising team of 4-H equestrian enthusiast!
- The UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County Family Nutrition Program, led by our Nutrition Educator, **harvested kale and lettuce from a school garden at Osceola Elementary School**. Of the 18 students that participated, 5 had never eaten salad; after trying salad, 4 of these 5 said they loved it!
- Because of **training provided by our Sea Grant Agent**, staff from the **Mississippi/Alabama Grant and NOAA's Marine Debris Program** know how to collect and analyze water samples for **microplastics**. Those staff will in turn be training partners throughout the Gulf of Mexico to implement citizen science microplastics projects in their states.
- The UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County Extension Office provided **agricultural awareness at the Morning on the Farm Economic Development Council Quarterly Breakfast Expo** (St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce) at Blue Sky Farms. This event was attended by more than 150 participants, most of whom do not work or are not familiar with agriculture in St. Johns County or Florida.
- **The Sea Grant Agent trained** two instructors from **the Copenhagen Business School's Environmental Technology Program in Denmark** how to collect and analyze water samples for **microplastics**. They hope to incorporate this aspect of water monitoring into their training program.
- At a workshop conducted by our Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, **63% (n=88) indicated an increase in knowledge of proper food storage and sanitation** including time temperature abuse and proper food storage techniques.
- The Commercial Agriculture Agent co-taught Produce Safety Alliance Grower training where **13 commercial growers are now compliant** with the education portion of the **Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule**.
- Our Production Agriculture Agent provided an overview of livestock and production agriculture education, to 95 participants at the **Florida Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Conference Tour** at the Hastings Agricultural Extension Center.
- The Commercial Agriculture Agent, along with the director of the Hastings Agricultural Extension Center, director of UF Plant Diagnostic Center and a UF disease specialist, held a **listening session with commercial growers in Tri-County Agricultural Area to identify their plant disease diagnostic needs** which led to a decision to begin a Hastings Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab pilot project that will be led by Commercial Agriculture Agent.
- One-hundred forty participants gained knowledge on beef production practices, from our Production Agriculture Agent, at the **2017 Spring Ranchers Forum**.
- **The 3rd annual 4-H Potato Planting Field Day**, hosted by at the **Hasting Agricultural Extension Center** and lead by our 4-H Youth Development Agent, provided educational opportunities for **44 youth** and their families from the Tri-County area. At this event, youth gain knowledge in soil testing, hand/mechanical planting, buying local, marketing and community service, water quality, container planting, and food safety.
- The St. Johns County **Urban and Commercial Horticulture Agent provided 15 programs to 278 individuals**, which included 6 Florida Friendly Landscaping programs, 2 Food System workshops, 2 Green Industry Best Management Practices workshops, 4 hands-on demonstrations for Master Gardeners and 1 Master Gardener business meeting.
- **The Sea Grant Agent** judged the Webster School's 5th grade science projects and **coordinated the judges for the St. Johns County Regional Science Fair**. At the Florida State Science and Engineering Fair, she judged senior (high school) earth & environmental science projects and selected the winner of the Chuck Skoch Florida Sea Grant Scholarship.
- Twenty-three 4-H'ers competed in the **4-H Public Speaking Contest** and 25 youth participated in the **4-H Demonstration Contest**, lead by our 4-H Youth Development Agent. 89% of the 4-H'ers that participated in a demonstration workshop indicated that were more prepared for the contest. Judges for these events included members from the St. Augustine Kiwanis Club, community supporters and Extension faculty.
- The St. Johns County 4-H Youth Development Agent taught and demonstrated the **chicken embryology projects in 7 schools, involving 36 teachers and over 800 youth**. This science based, hands-on learning experience engages students in a deeper understanding of the life cycle and the needs of a developing embryo. The embryology project in the classroom also develops the student's skills in observation, problem solving and recording data, and increases their love of science.

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**.