



UNIVERSITY OF  
FLORIDA

E X T E N S I O N

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Hendry County Extension

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# SOUTH FLORIDA VEGETABLE PEST AND DISEASE HOTLINE

**November 2, 2009**

**A ridge of high pressure dominated the weather across South Florida during the month of October keeping things mostly hot and dry.** A cold front swept across the area on October 17<sup>th</sup>, dropping overnight lows into the mid 40 and low 50s across the area and bringing about the official end of the rainy season. The cool weather behind the front only lasted a few days before hotter and more humid conditions returned to the area through the end of the month.

**Belle Glade and Balm reported the most rainfall for the period with 2.24 and 1.39 inches respectively.** Most other areas received only a fraction of an inch for the period and water levels have been dropping rapidly in ponds and canals.

**Records for hottest and driest October were broken in two South Florida locations and most areas were not far behind.** Daytime highs have been mostly in the 90's with nights in the high 60's and 70's.

### FAWN Weather Summary

Date	Air Temp °F		Rainfall (Inches)	Ave Relative Humidity (Percent)	ET (Inches/Day) (Average)
	Min	Max			
<b>Balm</b>					
10/17 – 11/2/09	45.57	97.12	1.39	80	0.10
<b>Belle Glade</b>					
10/17 – 11/2/09	50.67	93.13	2.24	84	0.14
<b>Clewiston</b>					
10/17 – 11/2/09	49.57	92.52	0.07	80	0.11
<b>Ft Lauderdale</b>					
10/17 – 11/2/09	56.41	93.2	0.73	76	0.12
<b>Fort Pierce</b>					
10/17 – 11/2/09	46.49	92.95	0.54	80	0.11
<b>Homestead</b>					
10/17 – 11/2/09	53.46	90.7	0.42	83	0.11
<b>Immokalee</b>					
10/17 – 11/2/09	45.72	97.3	0.22	80	0.11

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**The short-term forecast from the National Weather Service in Miami indicates that the stationary cold front just north of Tampa will finally get a push south into the local area late Tue afternoon/night before stalling out and becoming diffuse across mainland south Florida Wednesday to Thursday. The next few nights will be foggy with dense fog possible inland and chance of showers will increase as the front approaches.**

**By the latter part of the week slightly cooler/drier air will move in from the north bringing windy conditions and lower humidity making it feel more like November in South Florida next weekend.**

**For additional information, visit the National Weather Service in Miami website at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/mfl/newpage/index.html>**

## **Insects**

### **Worms**

**Respondents around SW Florida report that worm pressure has increased in most places and pressure is variable from moderate to non-stop with a range of species present including mostly armyworms with a few fruitworms, hornworms and loopers. Melonworms are common in cucumbers and squash.**

**On the East Coast, heavy looper pressure is eggplant and other crops. They also report low to moderate numbers of beet and southern armyworms on eggplant pepper and tomato. Melonworm pressure is reportedly increasing in cucurbits. Pickleworm is also causing problems in squash.**

**Growers and scouts in the Manatee Ruskin area report that worms are busy and note jump in numbers with lots of armyworm, and loopers present.**

**Growers in Devils Garden and the Glades indicate that fall armyworm numbers are increasing in sweet corn to the point where multiple applications per week are necessary to keep them under some control.**

### **Broad mites**

**Respondents in Palm Beach and east Coast locations report that heavy broad mite pressure on eggplant, pepper and basil.**

**Around Immokalee, broad mites continue to be up and down in pepper and eggplant. Pressure is constant and some growers report having difficulty bringing them under control.**

**Broad mites are present in pepper in the Manatee Ruskin area.**

**This destructive pest attacks terminal leaves and flower buds and causes them to become malformed. Broad mite feeding distorts plant tissue, causing leaves to become hardened, thickened and narrow, giving them a “strappy” appearance. The blooms abort and plant growth is stunted when heavy pressure is present.**

**Mites are usually seen on the newest leaves and small fruit. Leaves turn downward and turn coppery or purplish. Internodes shorten and the lateral buds break more than normal.**

**Malformed terminal buds and stunted growth is often a telltale sign that broad mites are present. Broad mites are extremely tiny and are difficult to see without a 10X or stronger hand lens. The mites may crowd into crevices and buds. Mites prefer the shaded side of fruit and the underside of leaves, which usually faces the plant, so scouts must be diligent and carefully inspect affected plants to detect these tiny creatures.**

**Broad mite injury can be confused with herbicide injury, nutritional (boron) deficiencies or physiological disorders.**

**Males and females are very active, but the males apparently account for much of the dispersal of a broad mite population in their frenzy to carry the quiescent female larvae to new leaves.** When females emerge from the quiescent stage, males immediately mate with them

**Broad mites are known to use insect hosts, including bees and whiteflies, to move from plant to plant.**

**While a number of products such as AgriMek and Oberon are labeled for control of this pest, sulfur, insecticidal oils or soaps may just as effective and less toxic to the environment.** Coverage is important and due to short life cycles, frequent repeated sprays may be necessary to obtain control.

**Biological control agents including several species of predatory mites have been used successfully to control broad mites in field and green house situations.**

### **Whiteflies**

**Reports from around Manatee County indicate whitefly numbers are variable with most places reporting low numbers although some increases in pressure has been noted in some locations.** The exception seems to be around Myakka City where numbers remain high.

**Around SW Florida whiteflies numbers are lower than they were early in the season but numbers are rebounding in a number of places.** Eggs, nymphs and pupae are present in a number of areas and some growers have commented that they do not seem to be the length of control that they would have expected with some of the older neonicotinoids.

**Reports from Palm Beach indicate whiteflies mostly low with some nymphs present in older crops.**

### **Aphids**

**Around Palm Beach County, respondents report that winged aphids are blowing around and showing up in squash, pepper and some specialty items.** No colony formation has been noted except in organic production situations.

**Scouts, in Manatee County, report that aphids are beginning to increase in some areas.**

**Around Immokalee, aphids remain very low with just a few scattered winged aphids showing up.**

### **Leafminers**

**Leafminer pressure in the Manatee Ruskin area is increasing but has yet to reach treatment threshold levels on most farms**

**On the East Coast leafminer activity is increasing is being treated in a few locations.**

**A few leafminers are also beginning to show up around Immokalee but pressure remains low.**

### **Spider mites**

**Respondents in Palm Beach indicate that spider mites are increasing in crops like eggplants and strawberries with highest pressure on field margins and near weedy ditch banks.**

**A few spider mites are present in tomatoes and are building in some melons around Manatee and Hillsborough Counties but most of the melons are being harvested and under little threat.**

### **Thrips**

**A few Florida flower thrips have been reported around the area but are causing no problems. Populations are mostly low.**

**David Sui, Vegetable Extension Agent in Palm Beach County has been sampling thrips in pepper around Palm Beach County and reports that to date, 100% are native Florida flower thrips, with an average of 3.5 adults per flower.** He reports he has not found any western flower thrips this season. He notes that thrips numbers are moderate.

**The adults of western flower thrips, eastern flower thrips, palm thrips, and Florida flower thrips aggregate in the flowers of pepper where they feed on pollen and the petals, pistils, and the stamens.** Economic thresholds have not been established; however it is known that pepper tolerates 5 to 10 adults per flower without serious damage.

**Each of the species lay eggs in the flower with the larvae developing in the flowers and on the small fruits.** Again, economic thresholds have not been established. Peppers in north Florida typically are exposed for a short period in the spring to populations of about 15 larvae per flower without economic damage. Longer exposure to greater populations has been observed to result in serious fruit damage.

**Thrips in the flowers and small fruit are sampled by sharply thumping the flowers onto a white cardboard or plate.** Adults and larvae are stunned temporarily for counting. Magnification of 25 x or more is needed to determine the individual species of adults preserved in 60-70% alcohol.

**Thrips in peppers in the southern US are controlled naturally by minute pirate bugs.** Calculating the predator to prey ratio when sampling provides a prediction of the effectiveness of the minute pirate bugs in controlling thrips. Under field conditions, about one predator to 180 thrips is needed for suppression of the populations of thrips. When the ratio reaches about one predator to 40 thrips, thrips populations will approach extinction within several days.

**Severe thrips problems have been observed in fields where broad-spectrum insecticides were applied due to the detrimental affect on minute pirate bugs.**

### **Diseases**

#### **Bacterial leaf spot**

**Respondents in Southwest Florida report that drier weather has helped slow bacterial but there are still locations that have new activity following some of the isolated showers and foggy nights.**

**In the Manatee/Ruskin area, bacterial spot is drying up although wet nights have allowed a slow spread low in the bush to continue in some fields.**

**Scouts in Palm Beach County report that the bacterial spot situation is stabilizing in pepper and tomato and lesions are mostly dried up.**

## Target Spot

**Around the Manatee Ruskin area, target spot is increasing and is starting to become common and is present low in plant (especially where bottom of bush is gone from bacteria).** Some fruit damage is also being reported.

**Growers and scouts around Immokalee report that target spot is beginning to show up in older tomato fields.**

**Target spot is often a problem on tomatoes in Florida.** The disease is caused by the fungus *Corynespora cassiicola*. Target spot is frequently misdiagnosed as in its early stages as leaf lesions are difficult to recognize and may be mistaken for bacterial spot

**The name derives from the bull's eye appearance that is often displayed in lesions caused by the disease.** Since concentric rings are not always visible and not all lesions with concentric rings are target spot, it is recommended that a laboratory diagnosis be obtained to ensure that a correct diagnosis is made.

**The pathogen has several means for survival and spread in the field.** It may survive up to 2 years in crop debris. The wide host range of this fungus may also contribute to survival of the fungus in Florida. The primary means spread in the field is by air-borne conidia. Optimum conditions for disease development include temperatures from 68° - 82°F and long periods of free moisture.

**On tomato leaves and stems, the disease first appears as small necrotic lesions with light brown centers and dark margins.** Some varieties display a pronounced yellow halo around these leaf spots. Individual lesions often coalesce and cause a general blighting of leaves.

**On tomato fruit, lesions are more distinct.** Small, brown, slightly sunken flecks are seen initially and may resemble abiotic injury such as sandblasting. As fruits mature the lesions become larger and coalesce resulting in large pitted areas. Advanced symptoms include large deeply sunken lesions, often with visible dark gray to black fungal growth in the center. A zone of wrinkled looking tissue may surround the margins of lesions on mature fruit. Placing suspect fruit in a moist environment for 24 hours will often induce the growth of dark gray mycelia providing telltale diagnostic evidence of target spot infection..

**In trials, wounding was essential for reproduction of the fruit symptoms.** Wind-blown sand is probably important in outbreaks of target spot on tomato fruit in the field. Target spot symptoms, especially in the early stages, can be readily confused with two other tomato diseases, bacterial spot and early blight.

**Currently, target spot is controlled primarily by applications of protectant fungicides.** It should be noted that tank-mix sprays of copper fungicides and maneb do not provide acceptable levels of target spot control. Recommended fungicides include various chlorothalini formulations (Bravo, Echo, Bravo Ultrex, Bravo Weather Stik and Ridomil Gold/Bravo).

## Wet Rot

**Growers and scouts around Southwest Florida are reporting some problems with Choanephora wet rot on pepper, beans, and cucurbits.** Incidence and severity is mostly low.

**Respondents in Palm Beach and Martin County are also reporting scattered problems with Choanephora in peppers and beans.** Some reports indicate big problems in some squash especially in weedy fields that stay wet longer in the morning.

**Wet rot or Choanephora blight is caused by the fungus *Choanephora* sp., and can affect many plants under warm wet conditions.** It is a weak pathogen which is most aggressive under condition of high heat and humidity and when given the advantage of some type of injury or dead material (spent flowers) to get started on. Hosts include Southern peas, eggplant, yellow squash, and poinsettia and occurrence on bean and pepper plants in Florida is not uncommon.

**Outbreaks of Choanephora blight are associated with extended rainy periods and high temperatures.** Leaf area may appear water-soaked and margins and leaf tips blighted. Older lesions appear necrotic and dried out. The dark-gray fungal growth is apparent on some lesions. Under magnification, a silvery, spine-like fungus with a dark head is seen. Symptoms may be confused with Phytophthora blight (*Phytophthora capsici*) when young or spray burn on bean plants with older symptoms.

**There are few management techniques available, but fungicidal sprays may reduce disease damage although none are specifically labeled for this disease.**

### **TYLCV**

**Respondents in Manatee/Ruskin area report that new TYLCV infections have slowed down in most areas.** In the most severely affected areas, crops losses promise to be high.

**Around Immokalee, TYLCV is around at very low levels in scattered fields but a few hotspots have been reported with a 5-8% infection rate.** Many farms are still TYLCV free.

**Growers and scouts around Palm Beach report that TYLCV incidence is very low and is really not an issue at this time.**

### **Southern Blight**

**Growers and scouts around Manatee County report that Southern Blight is still active in a number of plantings across the area.**

**Low levels of southern blight on pepper and tomato is being reported from scattered locations around Palm Beach and Martin Counties.**

**Southern blight is caused by a soil-born fungus, *Sclerotium rolfsii*.** Whitish fungal growth develops around the base of herbaceous plants (and some woody plants) at the ground line. Small seed-like structures (sclerotia) are found with fungal growth. They are white at first and later turn dark brown to black.

**Disease outbreaks are most severe during periods of wet, warm weather when temperatures range from 80 to 95 degrees.**

**Plants which have been attacked by southern blight first tend to turn yellow.** This stage of the disease is quickly followed by wilting and death of the affected plant after the fungus girdles the stem.

**There are several pests which may cause plant yellowing and wilt, however it's easy to determine if southern blight is responsible.** A diagnostic symptom of the disease is the presence of white fungus growth on the lower stem and nearby plant debris. This growth is most easily observed several days after a rain. Numerous smooth, round, light tan to dark brown seed-like structures called sclerotia are usually formed in the mat of fungus growth. The sclerotia generally aren't too difficult to locate and are about the same size as mustard seed.

**Southern blight can be controlled with cultural and chemical techniques.** Residue management is important if the previous crop was a susceptible one such as peanut, cantaloupe, or black eye pea, residue should be buried deep enough to prevent its being brought back up in land preparation and cultivation.

**Fumigants can reduce problems with southern blight and fungicides such as Terrachlor may also be applied to the soil on certain crops to inhibit development of the fungus.** Planting on raised bed also helps reduce damage on some crops.

### **Pythium**

**Growers on the East Coast continue to report some problems from pythium in beans and other crops affecting stand establishment.**

**Respondents in Homestead also report problems with pythium in new plantings.**

**Rick Raid, Pathologist at UF/IFAS EREC reports problems with Pythium on both beans and sweet corn in the Glades.** These problems are being aggravated by some locally heavy thundershowers and the above normal temperatures. Frequently, Pythium will cause a stalk rot on sweet corn at lay-by, particularly when warm moist soil is placed up against the stalk. The characteristic symptom is a rotting and twisting of the stalk between the first and second node above ground level.

**Around Immokalee, pythium is causing some problems with pepper mostly in seep fields with low spots or where growers have been over irrigating.**

### **Rhizoctonia**

**Rhizoctonia stem rot is causing some problems on snap beans around the area.** This disease is characterized by a dry orange-red rot that develops on the lower stem, usually right at ground level. A cottony mass of mycelium or fungal threads on the stem is diagnostic for Pythium stem blight, rather than Rhizoctonia. Good soil drainage and seed treatments are recommended control measures.

### **Downy Mildew**

**Around Southwest Florida growers and scouts are beginning to report problems with downy mildew on cucumbers and squash.**

**Downy mildew is also present on cucurbits, mostly squash and cucumbers in Homestead, Palm Beach and other east Coast location**

**In the Manatee/Hillsborough area reports indicate that downy mildew has jumped on melons.**

**Downy mildew is also causing problems on basil in a number of locations.** Basil and lettuce downy mildews continue to be present and management should continue through the end of the season. Dr Rick Raid, Plant Pathologist at UF/IFAS EREC reports that phosphonics can provide good economic control but cannot be solely relied upon for total control. Rotate or tank mix with some of the other registered fungicides.

### **Gummy Stem Blight**

**Reports from around Southwest Florida indicate that gummy stem blight is widespread in melons.**

**Growers and scouts around Hillsborough and Manatee Counties report that gummy stem has taken off in a number of fields.**

## Powdery mildew

**Powdery mildew is present at low levels on squash and cucumbers in several locations around south Florida including Homestead, Immokalee and Palm Beach County.**

## **Southern corn leaf blight**

**Rick Raid, Pathologist at UF/IFAS EREC reports southern corn leaf blight, caused by *Bipolaris maydis* is being observed in some fields in the Glades.** Lesions are light brown, short (<1 inch), and rather rectangular in shape. Triazole or strobilurin fungicides are most effective for this disease and these can be rotated or tank-mixed with a broad spectrum protectant such as mancozeb or chlorothalonil. If a susceptible variety is being grown, a well-timed fungicide program can successfully prevent disease build-up and yield losses that would occur otherwise. This disease starts in the lower canopy and works its way upward, attacking fully expanded leaves. So far, rust has been absent on fall sweet corn.

## **News You Can Use**

### **Hottest October on record set at Miami and the driest October on record set at Fort Lauderdale**

The National Weather Service reports that two significant records were set in October 2009. Miami set the record for the all-time hottest October in 2009. The average temperature for October 2009 at Miami was 82.4 degrees. This was 3.6 degrees above average. This breaks the record for the hottest October at Miami. The previous hottest October for Miami was 82.05 degrees in 2002.

Fort Lauderdale set the record for the all-time driest October in 2009. Rainfall for October 2009 at Fort Lauderdale was only 0.73 inches. This was 5.71 inches below average. The previous driest October for Fort Lauderdale was 0.94 inches set in 1977.

### **Florida Tomato Deal Starts with Lower Yields**

The Packer reports that the start of Florida's fall tomato deal is marked by lower volume and an expected later arrival of higher volumes.

Though harvesting started a little earlier than normal, yields are reported to be down by as much as a third and shippers expect promotable volume to start a week to 10 days later than normal.

The combination of extreme heat and heavy rains that hit during the early fall growing season damaged early plantings. Record-breaking daytime temperatures, warm nights and excessive rains caused bloom drop that prevented much of the fruit from setting.

Drops in California volume and the decline of Virginia's eastern shore production should keep opening season prices a little higher than normal, shippers said in late October.

While prices opened a little higher for the start of the Florida season, prices by the end of the month began falling as central Florida tomato production began increasing.

On October 29; the US Department of Agriculture reported these prices for 25-pound cartons of loose mature greens: 5x6s, \$13.95; 6x6s, \$12.95; 6x7s, \$10.95-11.95. That was down from the week before when 5x6s sold for \$17.95, 6x6s, \$15.95, and 6x7s, \$13.95.

Last year in mid-November from central Florida: 5x6s sold for \$19.95; 6x6s, \$18.95; and 6x7s, \$17.95.



On cherry tomatoes, flats of 12 1-pint baskets marketed for \$15.95, down from \$16.50-16.95 but higher than \$8.95 last year. For grape tomatoes from central Florida, flats of 12 1-pint containers with lids marketed for \$10.95-11.95; 20-pound cartons of loose grapes sold for \$19.95-21.95, down from earlier in the week when the 1-pint containers sold for \$12.95-13.95 and the bulk sold for \$24.95-25.95.

Last year, the USDA reported romas from central Florida sold for \$11.95 for 25-pound cartons for extra-large and large with mediums selling for \$9.95-10.95, down from \$13.95 for extra-large and large and \$11.95 for medium.

Last year in mid-November, romas from central Florida sold for \$16.95-17.95 for extra-large, \$15.95-16.95 for large, and \$14.95-15.95 for mediums.

Northern Florida production at Quincy usually starts in early October and runs through Thanksgiving.

Palmetto-Ruskin volume normally runs through Christmas, overlapping Immokalee and south Florida, which runs through the end of April, when central Florida's spring volume resumes. Homestead volume normally starts after Christmas with volume in January through March.

Excerpted from the Packer Online 10/30/2009

### **USDA Grants \$19 million to Organic Agriculture Research**

The US Department of Agriculture has 30 universities across the country working on solving critical organic agriculture issues, with the help of more than \$19 million in grants. Deputy secretary Kathleen Merrigan announced the research, education and extension projects grants October 30.

"Organic agriculture is one of the fastest growing segments of US agriculture and USDA and congress, through the 2008 farm bill, are committed to helping this industry succeed by addressing critical organic agriculture issues through the integration of research, education and extension projects," Merrigan said.

Grants will go toward projects across organic agriculture. According to the release, US organic production has more than doubled in the last decade, but organic food sales have more than quintupled.

Most of the grants are part of the USDA'S national institute of food and agriculture's organic agriculture research and extension initiative. Almost \$2 million of the \$19 million grants announced are through the integrated organic and water quality program, which funds research on soil and water availability and the organic industry.

Excerpted from the Packer Online 10/30/2009

### **El Niño Could Set the Stage for Stormier Weather this Coming Winter and Spring**

The National Weather Service forecast for the upcoming winter and spring season of 2009-2010 is for El Niño conditions to persist and strengthen over the pacific ocean.

El Niño, Spanish for "the child", is characterized by a warming of waters in the central and eastern equatorial pacific waters which typically peaks around Christmas. This warming of the pacific to above normal values affects large scale weather systems across North America, particularly Florida. The main impact of El Niño in Florida is typically a wetter and stormier winter and early spring, with an enhanced threat of severe weather and tornadoes.

The present El Niño developed in the early summer and is presently in the weak phase. Latest forecasts and outlooks from NOAA's climate prediction center indicate that this El Niño will likely reach moderate strength during the 2009-2010 winter season. If the current El Niño develops as expected, South Florida can expect higher than normal rainfall amounts as well as an increased threat of severe weather, including tornadoes. Even if El Niño remains weaker than forecast, the probability of severe weather will still be higher than in years with no El Niño.

The last significant tornado outbreak in South Florida occurred on March 27, 2003 during a moderate El Niño episode. A total of 8 tornadoes were sighted across South Florida, and one person was killed in the Liberty City/Brownsville section of Miami when an EF2 tornado with winds well in excess of 115 mph ripped through northern sections of Miami-Dade County. The last El Niño episode of 2006-2007, although it did not result in any significant severe weather in South Florida, included a significant tornado outbreak in Central Florida which resulted in the deaths of 21 people during the early morning hours of February 2, 2007.

The increased probability of severe weather is due in large part to a stronger jet stream in the upper levels of the atmosphere which tends to be located farther south over the Gulf of Mexico and Florida during El Niño seasons. As a result, low pressure systems tend to form farther south, often tracking from the Gulf of Mexico east or northeast across the Florida peninsula. This southern storm track creates favorable conditions for strong to severe thunderstorms, particularly along and ahead of cold fronts moving down the peninsula. The wind shear associated with the jet stream also enhances the threat of tornadoes with any of the pre-frontal severe thunderstorms.

Rainfall is expected to be above normal this upcoming winter and spring, due to increased moisture carried eastward from the Pacific Ocean by the jet stream. The rainfall typically occurs as cold fronts move down the state and affect south Florida. However, precipitation is normally not uniformly distributed during an El Niño winter and spring, which can result in the possibility of prolonged periods of dry weather more typical of the South Florida dry season. The average dry season rainfall over South Florida ranges from 12 to 15 inches over interior and western sections to 15 to 21 inches over eastern metro sections.

There is also an increased likelihood of below average temperatures as cloudiness and additional rainfall are expected to keep temperatures lower. The trend for cooler temperatures is typically most noticeable with slightly lower maximum temperatures during the day than with overnight low temperatures. The stronger and southward position of the jet stream tends to limit or prevent the southward penetration of frigid arctic air masses from the northern United States and Canada, thereby reducing the threat of significant freeze events.

However, this trend is mostly observed with stronger El Niño events, and freezing temperatures have occurred in South Florida in previous weak and moderate El Niño seasons. During the moderate El Niño of 2002-2003, a series of cold air outbreaks affected South Florida in January 2003, resulting in freezing temperatures and an estimated 2 million dollars in crop damage to interior sections of the peninsula. The average winter temperatures over South Florida range from 64 to 66 degrees over interior and western areas to 67 to 69 degrees over eastern metro areas.

Growers are urged to stay informed of potential severe weather events this upcoming winter and spring as it is difficult to determine exactly how much and where severe weather will occur.

### **Gap Audit Harmonization Effort Underway**

Grower-shipper-processors, members of the retail and foodservice industries, and representatives of produce associations including FFVA are working to harmonize standards and audits for Good Agricultural Practices.

The effort, called the Produce GAP Harmonization Initiative, was launched after discussion at the Global Conference on Produce Food Safety Standards held in conjunction with the United Fresh Produce Association convention in April.

“Our goal is that one audit by any credible third party can be acceptable to all buyers,” said Brian Kocher of Chiquita Brands North America, who leads the initiative’s steering committee. At its first meeting in September, the steering committee members agreed that developing the standards would be an open and transparent process that would welcome all industry players to participate.

A technical working group plans to meet in November to examine similarities and differences in existing GAP standards in an effort to develop harmonized GAP standards for proposal back to the steering committee

FFVA Communications 10/30/2009

### **McAvoy receives 2009 Excellence in Crop Advising Award.**

Gene McAvoy, Hendry County Extension director and a LaBelle-based regional vegetable Extension Agent with the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, has been chosen to receive the 2009 Excellence in Crop Advising Award.

The recognition is presented by the Florida Farm Bureau Federation and the Florida Certified Crop Advisors Program. He received the award at the Florida Farm Bureau’s 68th annual meeting, Oct. 28-30, in Daytona Beach.

Mary Hartney, president and chief executive officer of the Winter Haven-based Florida Fertilizer & Agrichemical Association and who coordinates the Certified Crop Advisor program, says she nominated McAvoy because of “his unstinting devotion to providing the ag community with the best information possible.”

Hartney said, “Gene’s a tireless champion of the Florida Certified Crop Advisor program, consistently providing quality programs and seminars for CCAs to earn their required 40 hours of continuing education credits. He keeps them up-to-date on field conditions through his electronic S FL Vegetable Pest and Disease Hotline. He’s constantly striving to educate the general public about agriculture’s role in feeding the world.”

“His influence reaches across 70,000 acres of vegetable production and involves helping growers in Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee with everything from crop production efficiency and sustainability to farm safety and regulatory compliance; from integrated pest management, post-harvest quality and food safety to vegetable nutrition and irrigation management.”

“Not only does he organize a lot of meetings, but they are cutting edge and promote professionalism in the field”, she says. “Thanks to his efforts, Florida Certified Crop Advisors are armed with the technical and research information they need to help grow Florida agriculture.”

McAvoy, who has been the SW Florida Regional Extension vegetable specialist for 13 years, says, “I was taken completely by surprise. I am very honored, very appreciative of it.”

The national Certified Crop Advisor program, administered by the American Society of Agronomy, is a voluntary certification program that promotes increased knowledge of nutrient management, soil and water management, integrated pest management and crop management.

CCAs must pass two exams (international and local) in four major competency areas: nutrient management, soil and water management, integrated pest management and crop management and submit credentials detailing their education, crop advising experience plus two references. They must sign and adhere to a code of ethics. They must then maintain their certification through continuing education programs.

The CCA program is administered locally in 37 states. In Florida, the Florida Fertilizer & Agrichemical Association oversees it.

## Up Coming Meetings

### Palm Beach County

**November 4, 2009**                      **FL Lettuce Advisory Committee Meeting**                      **12:00 noon**

UF/IFAS Everglades REC  
Belle Glade, Florida

Contact David Sui at (561) 233-1718 or [dsui@ufl.edu](mailto:dsui@ufl.edu)

**November 12, 2009**                      **Spray Application & Equipment Calibration**                      **8:45 AM. – 11:30 AM**  
**Technologies Meeting**

For sugarcane producers, vegetable growers chemical applicators, and chemical representatives.

UF/IFAS Everglades REC  
Belle Glade, Florida

Contact: Jeff Summersill at 561-722-4502 or Email: [lindadale1@msn.com](mailto:lindadale1@msn.com)

### Southwest Florida

**November 3, 2009**                      **Vegetable Growers Meeting**                      **12:00 Noon – 2:00 PM**

UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research & Education Center  
SR 29N  
Immokalee, Florida

Contact 863-674-4092 for more information or to register.

**November 4, 2009**                      **Food Safety Train the Trainer Class**                      **8:30 AM – 3:30 PM**

UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research & Education Center  
SR 29N  
Immokalee, Florida

Contact 863-674-4092 for more information or to register. Registration fee is \$20

**November 10, 2009**                      **Agricultural Production and EcoSystem Services**                      **8:00 AM - Noon**

UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research & Education Center  
SR 29N  
Immokalee, Florida

Cap and Trade, Carbon Markets and Water Quality Credits are some of the topics to be discussed. Speakers from the University of Florida/IFAS, Florida Farm Bureau, and Southern DataStream will be summarizing

evolving federal and local legislation concerning carbon emissions and water quality standards, as well as potential opportunities for agricultural producers to participate in emerging markets for carbon and water quality credit markets.

Please call Fritz Roka at 239.658-3400 for more information and to register.

**November 11, 2009**

**Radish Variety Trial Field day**

**10:00 AM - Noon**

C&B Farms  
CR 835  
Clewiston, Florida

## **Opportunities**

### **Technician Position**

University Of Florida/IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center, Immokalee, FL. To assist with field and laboratory research on insect biology and pest management. Valid Florida driver's license and social security card required. Contact Kris Sytsma at 239-658-3400/3420. AA/EA/EEO

### **Food safety Manager**

Well established produce company in Miami, FL is searching for a Food Safety/QC Manager. Would like someone who has a degree in Agriculture Science, Food Science or a related field. A couple of years of experience in a Food Safety/QC capacity in produce is ideal, but they are willing to train the right person. Any experience with vegetable crops is a big plus! This is a new position overseeing the company's external and internal Food Safety/QC process. The candidate MUST be bilingual (English/Spanish). There will be some travel involved with this position. Salary range is \$45-65k doe.

Interested candidates may contact Stacey Rouse at JBN & Associates at 480-222-5519 or e-mail [www.stacey@jbnassociates.com](mailto:www.stacey@jbnassociates.com).

### **Research Associate in Phytopathology**

Join the winning team at Harris Moran Seed Company, a global leader in vegetable seed; as part of the world's largest independently owned seed company, we offer exciting careers full of challenge, diversity, and growth. The Assistant Plant Pathologist will design, implement and manage, in a team environment, the plant pathology program based in Immokalee, FL. The Florida research station houses a fresh market tomato and a sweet pepper breeding programs, and it is used by other programs including corn, melon, watermelon, squash and bean for trials in hot and humid environment.

Main responsibilities:

- Implement plant pathology tests for diseases that are considered industry standard.
- Put in place new tests with the support of the Business Unit research pathology team.
- Manage the daily activities of the pathology laboratory, growth chamber and greenhouses.
- Establish and maintain a pathogen collection.

Other responsibilities:

- Support breeding, sale and product development in identifying diseases in field samples in coordination with other Business Unit laboratories.
- Supervise the phytosanitary conditions of plants grown at the Immokalee FL station field and greenhouses.

Qualifications:

- M.S. in Plant Pathology or closely related field with 2+ years of relevant experience or B.S. with relevant experience of at least 10 years
- Experience with plant pathology, microbiology and molecular biology is required
- Spanish language skills desirable

Skills required:

- Able to work independently.
- Detail oriented.
- Strong oral and written communication skills.
- Familiarity with MS Word/Excel/Access.
- Willing to take initiative and able to work independently.
- Must be able to multitask, with strong problem solving abilities.
- Some travel required.

Harris Moran is an "at will" employer.  
 Equal Opportunity Employer.  
 Drug Free Workplace.

Please send application and resume to:  
 Harris Moran  
 PO Box 4938  
 Modesto CA 95352  
 USA  
 or by e-mail to: [hr@harrismoran.com](mailto:hr@harrismoran.com)

### **Vice President of Farming Operations**

A well established Grower Shipper in Central Florida is looking for a VP of Farming Operations. The ideal candidate will have 5-10 years of agricultural commercial experience (leafy green or produce experience is a plus) and 5-10 years of research experience. Client has farming operations in 6 east coast states and specializes in two (2) commodities.

The candidate must have a minimum of a M.S. in Horticulture, Agronomy, or a related field, with an emphasis on technology. The candidate will be responsible for the company's total farming operations and have 4 head growers reporting to him/her. The candidate must have experience resolving critical growing issues by generating growing ideas and incorporating technologies. The candidate must have the experience and the ability to hire and lead a group of professionals.

Client is offering a very attractive compensation package based on experience plus full benefits! Client is open to relocation for this position. Please contact Stacey Rouse at JBN & Associates at 480-222-5519 or [www.stacey@jbnassociates.com](http://www.stacey@jbnassociates.com).

### **Farm Land for Lease**

Farm Land for lease in LaBelle area – contact Clyde Lavender at 863-673-2338

## Websites

**UF/IFAS Thrips Biology and Management Website** – The purpose of this website is to provide knowledge of thrips and tospoviruses and their management in field-grown crops using reduced-risk tactics. Check it out at <http://thrips.ifas.ufl.edu/Background.htm>

**USDA AMS Fruit and Vegetable Market News Portal** – AMS provides current, unbiased price and sales information to assist in the orderly marketing and distribution of farm commodities. Reports include information on prices, volume, quality, condition, and other market data on farm products in specific markets and marketing areas. Go to <http://www.marketnews.usda.gov/portal/fv>

**SpanishDict.com** - claims to be the world's largest Spanish learning website. Learn Spanish with free video Lessons and step-by-step instructions for speaking and understanding Spanish. It is all free at <http://www.spanishdict.com/>

## Quotable Quotes

There's no trick to being a humorist when you have the whole government working for you. - Will Rogers

A banker is a fellow who lends you his umbrella when the sun is shining, but wants it back the minute it begins to rain. - Mark Twain

When I read about the evils of drinking, I gave up reading. - Henny Youngman

The secret of joy in work is contained in one word - excellence. To know how to do something well is to enjoy it. - Pearl S. Buck

You cannot multiply wealth by dividing it. – Adrian Rogers

You cannot legislate the poor into prosperity by legislating the wealthy out of prosperity. – Adrian Rogers

## On the Lighter Side

### The Half Wit and the Tax Man

A man owned a small ranch in Texas.

The Federal Wage & Hours Department claimed he was not paying proper wages to his help and sent an agent out to interview him. "I need a list of your employees and how much you pay them", demanded the Agent.

"Well," replied the farmer, "there's my ranch hand who's been with me for 3 years. I pay him \$400.00 a week plus free room and board.

The cook has been here for 18 months, and I pay her \$300.00 per week plus free room and board.

And there's the half-wit. He works about 18 hours every day and does about 90% of all the work around here. He makes about \$10.00 per week, pays his own room and board, and I buy him a bottle of Bourbon every Saturday night. He also sleeps with my wife, occasionally."

"That's the guy I want to talk to, the half-wit", says the Agent.

That would be me", replied the farmer.

### **Across The Bayou!**

Boudreaux live across de bayou from Clarence, who he don like at all. Dey all de time yells across de bayou at each other. Boudreaux would yell to Clarence, "If I had a way to cross dis bayou, I'd come over dere an beat you up good, yeah!"

Dis went on for years. Finally de state done built a bridge across dat bayou right by dere houses; and Boudreaux's wife, Marie, say, "Now is you chance, Boudreaux. Why don you go over der an beat up dat Clarence like you say?"

Boudreaux say, "OK," and start across de bridge, but he see a sign on de bridge an he stop to read it and den he go back home.

Marie say, "Why you back so soon?"

And Boudreaux say, "Marie, I dun change my mind 'bout beatin' up dat Clarence. You know Marie, dey got a sign on dat dere bridge dat say, 'Clarence 13 ft. 6 in.'

You know, he don look near dat big when I yell at him across de bayou."

**Note: State and local budgets cuts are threatening to further reduce our funding – if you are receiving currently receiving the hotline by mail and would like to switch over to electronic delivery – just drop me an email. It is much quicker and you will get the hotline with in minutes of my completing it and help conserve dwindling resources at the same time. Thanks to those that have already made the switch.**

**Contributors** include: Joel Allingham/AgriCare, Inc, Jeff Bethel/Syngenta Flowers, Bruce Corbitt/West Coast Tomato Growers, Dr. Phyllis Gilreath/Manatee County Extension, Michael Hare/Drip Tape Solutions, Fred Heald/Farmers Supply, Sarah Hornsby/AgCropCon, Cecil Howell/H & R Farms, Loren Horsman/Glades Crop Care, Bruce Johnson/General Crop Management, Barry Kostyk/SWFREC, Dr. Mary Lamberts/Miami-Dade County Extension, Leon Lucas/Glades Crop Care, Mark Mossler/UF/IFAS Pesticide Information Office, Gene McAvoy/Hendry County Extension, Alice McGhee/Thomas Produce, Dr. Gregg Nuessly/EREC Chuck Obern/C&B Farm, Dr. Aaron Palmateer/TREC, Dr. Ken Pernezny/EREC, Dr. Rick Raid/ EREC, Dr Ron Rice/Palm Beach County Extension, Dr Pam Roberts/SWFREC, Dr. Nancy Roe/Farming Systems Research, Wes Roan/6 L's, Dr. Dak Seal/ TREC, Kevin Seitzinger/Gargiulo, Ken Shuler/Stephen's Produce, Crystal Snodgrass/Manatee County Extension, John Stanford/Thomas Produce, Mike Stanford/MED Farms, Dr. Phil Stansly/SWFREC, Dr David Sui/Palm Beach County Extension, Dr Gary Vallad/GCREC , Mark Verbeck/GulfCoast Ag, Alicia Whidden/Hillsborough County Extension, Dr Henry Yonce/KAC Ag Research and Dr. Shouan Zhang/TREC.

The **South Florida Pest and Disease Hotline** is compiled by **Gene McAvoy** and is issued on a biweekly basis by the **Hendry County Cooperative Extension Office** as a service to the vegetable industry.

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