



UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA

E X T E N S I O N

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SOUTH FLORIDA VEGETABLE PEST AND DISEASE HOTLINE

February 20, 2009

The second Arctic air mass of the year impacted South Florida growing areas on February 5 and 6th once again plunging temperatures into the mid to upper 20's for several hours in many locations. Fortunately temperatures did not fall quite as low and low temperatures did not persist for as long a time as they did in January and winds held up reducing frost formation so that crop damage was not quite as severe as that experienced in January but there was still widespread reports of crop damage in many of the normally cooler areas.

In contrast to the freezing weather of two weeks ago, temperatures warmed and last week was relatively balmy with highs in the mid 80's across the area. Growers report that this helped crops and plants are finally beginning to grow again after the cold. Most of the area has been relatively dry with the exception of Balm which received just over an inch of rain.

FAWN Weather Summary

Date	Air Temp °F		Rainfall (Inches)	Ave Relative Humidity (Percent)	ET (Inches/Day) (Average)
	Min	Max			
Balm					
1/29 – 2/19/09	27.15	85.17	1.31	69	0.08
Belle Glade					
1/29 – 2/19/09	29.86	87.49	0.07	72	0.09
Clewiston					
1/29 – 2/19/09	28.11	86.07	0.19	70	0.09
Ft Lauderdale					
1/2 - 1/29/09	35.3	88.66	0.24	71	0.09
Fort Pierce					
1/29 – 2/19/09	31.17	87.35	0.02	73	0.09
Homestead					
1/29 – 2/19/09	34.38	87.57	0.15	75	0.09
Immokalee					
1/29 – 2/19/09	24.73	87.75	0.20	76.3	0.09

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE, FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES, SEA GRANT AND 4-H YOUTH, STATE OF FLORIDA, IFAS, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND BOARDS OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COOPERATING

Once again the amount and distribution of crop damage reported is amazingly variable. In general, younger plantings did well with very little freeze damage except around heads, borders by dikes, etc. where there was some kill. Growers and scouts report that in many places cumulative freeze damage is worse than originally thought - some small tomatoes in tops that looked perfectly fine on the outside but have brown seeds when cut and some of the stems that feel solid still have laddering pretty far down into the plant. In places the older plantings that will be picked in a few weeks were hurt fairly badly with half of the plant dead and lots of tomatoes littering the ground.

Growers prepared for the cold and wind by raising water tables and covered plants for protection and harvested heavily in advance of the freeze. Spring planting is pretty much finished up around Immokalee and other south Florida locations and is winding down in the Ruskin area.

The short-term forecast from the National Weather Service in Miami calls for the cold front currently across mainland South Florida this morning to move south to the Florida straits by sunrise. The main impacts from this system will be a dry airmass later this afternoon and the low temperatures Saturday morning. The biggest question is whether minimum temperatures will fall to freezing across northern interior sections. Although almost ideal conditions are expected, i.e. clear skies and lighter winds, the latest forecast models call for slightly higher temps (a few degrees above freezing) increasing uncertainty with respect to a freezing event.

Over the rest of south Florida min temps could fall a good 5 to 10 degrees below normal values Saturday morning but will quickly recuperate by Sunday. Otherwise, pleasant and dry conditions should prevail through Sunday with little, if any, precipitation expected.

For the longer term...Monday through Thursday...another cold front may approach the area Monday but this will likely stall over south-central Florida and dissipate without making it to mainland South Florida. The rest of the extended forecast period should remain fairly dry with temperatures slowing getting back to the upper 70's and low 80's. For additional information, visit the National Weather Service in Miami website at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/mfl/newpage/index.html>

Insects

Aphids

Growers and scouts around SW Florida report aphids are also on the move and can be found on almost everything out there including cole crops, cucurbits eggplant, pepper, potato and more. Species include green peach, melon and some potato aphids.

Reports from around Palm Beach indicate that aphids are worse than usual and are widely present eggplant, pepper, tomato, squash and cucumbers.

Around the Glades and other parts of south Florida, aphid numbers have been increasing on crops including celery and Chinese cabbage since the freeze.

Leafminers

Growers and scouts around Southwest Florida leafminer indicate that leafminer pressure remains low but note that numbers have increased marginally over the past week.

Around the Glades, leafminer activity has picked up on lettuce and leafy greens over the past week or so, respondents indicate that numbers are not high but pressure has been consistent.

Respondents around Palm Beach and the East Coast indicate that leafminer pressure is low in squash, tomato and eggplant.

Reports from Manatee County indicate leafminers are on the increase and are currently the big pest in tomato.

Whiteflies

Respondents around Palm Beach report that whiteflies are around but numbers are mostly low.

Around SW Florida, whitefly adult numbers have been spotty since the cold snaps but last week we saw an increase in older tomatoes around Immokalee and Devils Garden. Numbers are still below normal but respondents report some significant increases in past week including more nymphs building in older plantings.

Growers are advised to watch this situation closely as quite a few acres of older crops have been destroyed in the past couple of weeks which is could potentially increase whitefly migrations.

Some early cucumber and squash plantings have seen some fairly high adult whitefly numbers.

Respondents in Homestead indicate that whitefly populations remain moderate to high in tomatoes and squash.

In the Manatee Ruskin area reports indicate that whiteflies are mostly low but some hot spots have been reported in spring tomatoes where numbers are reaching high levels.

Recommendations

A. Crop Hygiene - Field hygiene should be a high priority and should be included as an integral part of the overall strategy for managing whitefly populations, TYLCV incidence, and insecticide resistance.

- Disrupt the virus-whitefly cycle in winter by creating a break in time and/or space between fall and spring crops, especially tomato.
- Destroy the crop quickly and thoroughly, killing whiteflies and preventing re-growth.
- Promptly and efficiently destroy all vegetable crops within 5 days of final harvest to decrease whitefly numbers and sources of plant begomoviruses like TYLCV.
- Use a contact desiccant (“burn down”) herbicide in conjunction with a heavy application of oil (not less than 3 % emulsion) and a non-ionic adjuvant to destroy crop plants and to kill whiteflies quickly.
- Time burn down sprays to avoid crop destruction during windy periods, especially when prevailing winds are blowing whiteflies toward adjacent plantings.
- Destroy crops block by block as harvest is completed rather than waiting and destroying the entire field at one time.

B. Other Cultural Control Practices - Reduce overall whitefly populations, regardless of biotype, and avoid introducing whiteflies and TYLCV into crops by strictly adhering to correct cultural practices.

- Plant whitefly and virus-free transplants.
- Do not plant new crops near or adjacent to old, infested crops.
- Use determinant varieties of grape tomatoes to avoid extended crop season.
- Use TYLCV resistant tomato cultivars where possible and appropriate, especially during historically critical periods of virus pressure. Whitefly control must continue even with use of TYLCV resistant cultivars because these cultivars can carry the virus.

- Use ultraviolet light reflective (aluminum) mulch on plantings that growers find are historically most commonly infested with whiteflies and infected with TYLCV.
- Apply an effective insecticide to kill whitefly adults prior to cultural manipulations such as pruning, tying, etc.
- Rogue tomato plants with symptoms of TYLCV at least until second tie. Plants should be treated for whitefly adults prior to roguing and, if nymphs are present, should be removed from the field, preferably in plastic bags, and disposed of as far from production fields as possible.
- Manage weeds within crops to minimize interference with spraying and to eliminate alternative whitefly and virus host plants.
- Dispose of cull tomatoes as far from production fields as possible. If deposited in pastures, fruit should be spread instead of dumped in a large pile to encourage consumption by cattle. The fields should then be monitored for germination of tomato seedlings, which should be controlled by mowing or with herbicides if present.
- Destroy old crops within 5 days after harvest, destroy whitefly infested abandoned crops, and control volunteer plants with a desiccant herbicide and oil.

C. Insecticidal Control Practices.

- Delay resistance to neonicotinoid and other insecticides by using a proper whitefly insecticide program. Follow the label!
- Use neonicotinoids in the field only during the first six weeks of the crop, thus leaving a neonicotinoid-free period at the end of the crop.
- As control of whitefly nymphs diminishes following soil drenches of the neonicotinoid insecticide or after more than six weeks following transplanting, use rotations of insecticides of other chemical classes including insecticides effective against biotype Q. Consult the Cooperative Extension Service for the latest recommendations.
- Use selective rather than broad-spectrum control products where possible to conserve natural enemies and enhance biological control.
- Do not apply insecticides on weeds on field perimeters. These could kill whitefly natural enemies and, thus, interfere with biological control, as well as select for biotype Q, if present, which is more resistant to many insecticides than biotype B.
- Soil applications of neonicotinoid insecticides for whitefly control.
- For best control, use a neonicotinoid as a soil drench at transplanting, preferably in the transplant water.
- Soil applications of neonicotinoids through the drip irrigation system are inefficient and not recommended.
- Do not use split applications of soil drenches of neonicotinoid insecticides (i.e. do not apply at transplanting and then again later).
- Foliar applications of neonicotinoid insecticides for whitefly control.
- Foliar applications, if used instead of or in addition to soil drenches at transplanting, should be restricted to the first 6 weeks after transplanting. Do not exceed the maximum active ingredient per season according to the label.
- Follow scouting recommendations when using a foliar neonicotinoid insecticide program. Rotate to non-neonicotinoid insecticide classes after the first 6 weeks and do not use any neonicotinoid class insecticides for the remaining cropping period.

Worms

Around Southwest Florida, worms remain fairly low but scouts report small flights of beet and southern army worm moths and are finding some new hatches of armyworms in past couple of days and indicate pressure remains low but persistent.

Reports from Palm Beach indicate that worm pressure is mostly low with few loopers and armyworms around. Relatively high numbers of melonworms have been reported on some squash.

Some light worm pressure is being reported in sweet corn in the Glades, species include fall armyworm and a few beet armyworms.

Broad mites

Around Southwest Florida, broadmites continue to be active in low numbers on pepper and eggplant.

Reports from Palm Beach County indicate that broad mites are common on pepper and eggplant.

Spider mites

Growers in scouts across south Florida report that spider mites are showing up in more places but numbers remain mostly low.

Around Plant City scouts report seeing an increase in two-spot mites in strawberries.

Pepper weevils

Around Southwest Florida, scouts report pepper weevils are building in older pepper but overall remain fairly low.

Respondents in the Palm Beach area report that pepper weevil numbers are present in scattered locations.

Thrips

Growers and scouts in Palm Beach County report finding moderate levels of thrips in pepper and eggplant with a few western flower thrips being found but note the majority of thrips they are finding are Florida flower thrips. Applications of Movento and Requiem are said to be providing good control.

In Southwest Florida, Florida flower thrips are starting to show up but numbers remain low.

Around Plant City thrips are starting to show up in high numbers in strawberries.

Diseases

Late Blight

Growers and scouts report that late blight is still active with new sporulation recently on tomatoes and potatoes around Immokalee, but it is greatly reduced from last month. Some scouts report finding some new late blight blaming warmer weather combined with growers trying to get fruit off of decimated bushes which has limited Bravo sprays for fear of fruit burn.

Growers and scouts in Palm Beach report that late blight is now present in scattered locations around Palm Beach.

Reports from Homestead indicate late blight has shown up on tomato in several places.

No reports of late blight from Manatee County.

Fusarium Crown Rot

Around Immokalee, fusarium crown rot and some fusarium race 3 has increased in a number of places where water levels were pumped up for cold protection over the past few weeks.

Reports from Palm Beach indicate that fusarium is bad in number of places.

Phytophthora

Growers and scouts around Palm Beach continue to experience problems with *Phytophthora* primarily in fields with a history of the disease.

Around Southwest Florida, *Phytophthora capsii* has increased in a number of places again due largely to flooding fields for freeze protection.

TYLCV

On the East Coast, tomato yellow leaf curl virus continues to increase in occurrence and severity with a number of fields averaging 2 -3% infection rate. Incidence is higher on some organic farms.

Reports from Homestead indicate that TYLCV is present on tomatoes but incidence remains low.

Around Southwest Florida TYLCV incidence remains mostly low with a few hotspots being reported around Devils Garden.

Bacterial leaf spot

Respondents on the East Coast report bacterial spot is mostly low with some activity on tomato and pepper.

Strawberry producers around Hillsborough County are suffering thru some of the worst bacteria they have seen following all the watering during freezes.

Around Southwest Florida, bacterial spot has been active in pepper in several locations and some new infections have been reported in tomato as well.

Reports from Manatee County indicate that growers are seeing very little bacteria bleeding in around some freeze damaged tissue.

Around the Glades, dry weather has kept bacterial leaf spot of lettuce to near zero levels.

Sclerotinia

Reports from around Southwest Florida indicate that sclerotinia seems to have slowed in most places on tomato and pepper with not much new infection being reported.

Around Palm Beach report sclerotinia is still active in some hotspots on primarily pepper.

Topsin M has given good results on sclerotinia. EPA has extended the expiration date of the Section 18 use of Topsin M WSB on fruiting vegetables in Florida from December 31, 2008 to April 24, 2009. Label must be in applicators possession at the time of application. Call if you need a copy of the Section 18 label.

Downy Mildew

Around Palm Beach County, downy mildew is present at low levels on squash.

Growers and scouts around Southwest Florida report that downy mildew is still active on cucumbers, and is present in many squash fields but not near as bad as in cucumber.

Respondents from Homestead report some problems with down mildew on squash but not incidence is low.

Around the Glades and around South Florida downy mildew is present on cole crops and has increased in some places in recent days.

Across South Florida, downy mildew is widely present on basil.

Since its appearance in South Florida downy mildew has emerged as an important disease on basil and growers should be on a very strict, preventative spray program if they want to control it. The phosphites are effective when applied early, and these should be alternated in a program with azoxystrobin (Amistar or Quadris) to provide the desired control. Spray intervals should be no more than 7-days, with 2 times per week preferable. Once plants are infected, it is very difficult to control. Research is being conducted on additional chemistries with IR-4 and soil applications for early disease control are also being researched.

Powdery Mildew

Growers and scouts in all areas of South Florida continue to have significant problems with powdery mildew on squash and other cucurbits. Pressure is extremely high in squash where it is rampant in most areas.

Respondents in Pam Beach report scattered problems with powdery mildew on pepper.

Dr Rick Raid, Pathologist at UF/IFAS EREC reports that for the first time in many years, growers in the Glades are seeing powdery mildew of lettuce, presumably because of the drier conditions.

Botrytis

Respondents around south Florida continue some problems with botrytis. Gray mold is a fairly common problem in tomato and can also attack beans, eggplants, pepper, and potato as well as many ornamentals.

Target Spot

Around Immokalee, target spot is still present in tomatoes working on the lower inner foliage and up inside the canopy.

Target spot is also present at low levels around Palm Beach County.

Early Blight

A few reports of Alternaria on tomato are starting to come in from several locations around south Florida particularly on freeze damaged plants.

Gummy Stem Blight

Around Southwest Florida, gummy stem is common on young watermelon

In Florida, gummy stem blight is a serious disease that occurs annually on watermelons. Infection and symptoms may occur on all plant parts and at any stage of development from seedlings to maturity.

Symptoms appear as light to dark brown circular spots on leaves or as brown to black, lesions on stems. Wilting, followed by death of young plants may occur. Stem lesions enlarge and slowly girdle the main stem resulting in a red-brown-black canker that cracks and may exude a red to amber gummy substance. Vine wilting is usually a late symptom. Use of a hand lens will reveal small, clear white (when young) to black (when old), pycnidia embedded in older diseased tissue.

Because other plant disorders can cause exudation of a gummy substance, “gummy-ness” should not be relied upon for diagnosis of gummy stem blight. Anthracnose and inadequate liming can both cause stem lesions and gumming.

Gummy stem blight typically progresses from the central stem of the plant to growing tips. Leaf spots are variable in shape, red-brown in color and initial infections are generally seen on leaf margins and veinal areas.

The fungus (*Didymella bryoniae*) produces two spore stages, a sexually produced spore (ascospore) and an asexually produced spore (pycnidiospore). The ascospore is windborne and serves as a primary source of inoculum. The pycnidiospore functions in secondary spread of the disease. Pycnidiospores are released in a gummy substance that makes them adaptable for spread by splashing water.

Growers often comment on this disease occurring “overnight.” What they are actually seeing are the results of secondary spread, which is more difficult to control than primary spread simply because of increased spore numbers with increased diseased tissue.

Temperatures and moisture conditions are often ideal for development during watermelon season in Florida. Gummy stem blight is most severe in wet years since moisture is necessary for spore germination. After a spore germinates on a susceptible host, the fungus penetrates the plant tissue and symptoms can appear in 7 to 12 days.

Gummy stem blight can be successfully managed using a combination of control strategies. Control of primary sources of inoculum is important. Growers should purchase clean seed and avoid transplants that have gummy stem blight or other diseases.

Multiple applications of fungicides are necessary to control gummy stem blight. It is important to begin a fungicide program prior to the first sign of gummy stem blight. In south Florida, the spray program should be initiated soon after emergence or transplanting. In other areas of the state, fungicide spray programs can be initiated when the vines begin to “run.” When vines are small, band applications of fungicide over the crown area are effective and help reduce application costs.

In recent years, strains resistant to the strobilurin fungicides have been detected throughout the Southeast, so it is important that growers practice resistance management and avoid repeated applications of these materials. New materials such as Pristine (BASF) a mixture of boscalid and pyraclostrobin has shown good efficacy against resistant strains of the disease.

Mosaic

Mosaic virus is present on squash around South Florida.

News You Can Use

Florida Organic Growers-IFAS April Workshops to Provide Tools for Growers to Transition to Organic

GAINESVILLE, Fla. – Florida Organic Growers (FOG) will team up with the University of Florida IFAS to present two Organic Transition workshops in April: Wednesday, April 22 at the IFAS Extension facility in Homestead and Thursday, April 23 at the UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research & Education Center in Immokalee. Commercial growers who are interested in transitioning to organic production will learn about organic farming practices, regulations, and organic farm plan development. The program includes an update on financial incentives available to transitioning producers included in the 2008 Farm Bill.

The workshops are part of FOG's Organic Transition & Pesticide Reduction initiative that offers farmers free technical assistance to transition to organic production by pairing growers with an experienced organic production crop advisor. The advisor, FOG staff, and allied professionals offer support, technical know-how and assurance growers may need or desire to successfully make the transition.

Growers who transition to organic production gain access to the organic foods marketplace, which, in the U.S., has grown from \$1 billion in sales in 1990 to an estimated \$23 billion in 2008.

“The organic marketplace continues to expand and Florida growers may want to seriously consider the market opportunities,” FOG Executive Director Marty Mesh said.

In addition to assisting transitional growers, FOG's program is open to Florida fruit, vegetable, and row-crop producers who are motivated to reduce their use of pesticides. Growers who participate with the goal of reducing pesticide use and abandoning high-risk pesticides can work with a Crop Advisor to learn and adopt sustainable farming practices and sound Integrated Pest Management.

To register for the April 22 workshop in Homestead, please contact Teresa Olczyk at 305-248-3311 or twol@ufl.edu.

To register for the April 23 workshop in Immokalee, please contact Gene McAvoy at 863-674-4092 or gmcavoy@ufl.edu.

Registration is \$15 and includes lunch, refreshments, and a resource binder.

Growers who would like to work with a Crop Advisor through the Organic Transition & Pesticide Reduction program should contact Matt Vargas at (352) 377-6345 or matt@foginfo.org. More information, including the application to participate in the program, can be found at www.foginfo.org/epa

February 27, 2009 Deadline For Water Users

Irrigation permits using surface water from Lake Okeechobee or its tributaries for landscape, golf course, nursery, livestock, improved pasture and agricultural uses need to be renewed to avoid losing the legal right to use this water.

Anyone using surface water from Lake Okeechobee or its tributaries for irrigation purposes must submit a permit renewal application to the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Water Use Division by February 27, 2009 or lose their right to use water and miss the opportunity to obtain a 20-year duration permit. Failure to renew a water use permit could also result in an enforcement action that could include fines and a consent order to obtain the necessary permit. If an application is received prior to the permit expiration, the permit will remain in force past the expiration date until final agency action on the application is taken.

Why February 27? The expiration date of Feb. 28th falls on a Saturday and the SFWMD is closed. The application must be received by close of business on Friday, Feb. 27th (Not just post-marked). Applications may be filed electronically through the e-permitting portal at sfwmd.gov and also must be filed by close of business on the 27th.

The expiration date applies to renewals in the Lake Okeechobee Service Area (LOSA).

On Feb 25th a LOSA Renewal Workshop will be given by SFWMD water use staff. Location: Clewiston SFWMD Field Station, State Road 832, 2425 Hookers Point Road

Time: 10:00 AM Phone: (863) 983-1431 Map: see LOSA Renewal link below

The SFWMD water permit renewal hotline number is 800-547-2694 and here is the e-mail for renewals in general: wurenuals@sfwmd.gov

Below is the link to the web page or web page address for LOSA renewals:

https://my.sfwmd.gov/portal/page?_pageid=1874,4164374,1874_19868190&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

Please review the following six items to see if the permit renewal deadline applies to you.

1) Are you in the Lake Okeechobee Service Area (LOSA)?

Projects that utilize surface water from Lake Okeechobee, the Caloosahatchee River, the St. Lucie River/Canal or integrated conveyance systems that are hydraulically connected to any of these sources are in LOSA. You can find a map link on the web page link above at the bottom of the page labeled "Irrigation Permit Expiration Basin Map". If there is any doubt contact the hotline number above for assistance.

2) Is your water use volume high enough?

If you use 3 million gallons per month (3 MGM) or more then you should have either a Major General Water Use Permit or an Individual Water Use Permit that needs to be renewed or newly obtained. Alternatively, you could be served by a Diversion and Impoundment water use permit holder that provides your water needs, but you will need a written legal agreement (see #3 below). The Major General Permit applies to water use between 3 MGM and 15 MGM. The Individual Permit applies to water use that exceeds 15 MGM.

Water Use Permits are still needed for non-exempt uses under 3 MGM but this group, known as Minor General Permits, is not in this renewal cycle. Water uses which are exempt from the permitting process include domestic uses for potable and home irrigation and water used for fire fighting.

3) If you are served by a Diversion and Impoundment (D&I) holding a water use permit, will they be obtaining the necessary permit for your water use?

Most D&Is, but not all, are water control districts. Check with your D&I to determine if they are including you as a dependent water user or an independent water user. If you are a dependent user they will ask you to sign an agreement acknowledging that you will abide by the D&I's water use permit. If you are an independent water user you must obtain your own water use permit.

If you are not sure, apply by February 27th, 2009. You can always withdraw if you are able to be covered by a D&I.

4) You have received a renewal package from the SFWMD.

Then you must submit a renewal application by February 27, 2009 to avoid losing your legal right to use water and potential enforcement actions, which can include penalties.

5) You know that you or a previous land owner had a water use permit with SFWMD but you haven't received a renewal package.

Contact the SFWMD Water Use Division right away and work with them to track down the status of your water use permit and your water use permit renewal package.

6) You are using 3 MGM or greater but don't have any knowledge of a SFWMD water use permit ever having been obtained by you or a previous land owner.

Contact the SFWMD Water Use Division right away and work with them to track down the status of your water use permit needs. They may be able to identify the location of the appropriate water use permit renewal package or you may need to submit an application for water use based on your unpermitted historic water use.

Operation Cleansweep

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection are again joining forces to collect and safely dispose of cancelled, suspended or unusable commercial pesticides for the 9th annual Operation Cleansweep.

Operation Cleansweep is a convenient, cost-effective public-private partnership to dispose of unwanted or outdated pesticides, providing free collection and disposal for Florida's pesticide consumers.

To participate in Operation Cleansweep, commercial pesticide applicators can call FDACS at (877) 851-5285 or download the sign up form at www.flaes.org/pdf/Flyer2006.pdf. For more information, visit DEP's website at www.dep.state.fl.us/waste/categories/cleansweep-pesticides.

2009 Florida Certified Pile Burner Courses

The Florida Division of Forestry and University of Florida IFAS are cooperating to offer Certified Pile Burners Courses in 2009. This course will show you how to burn piles legally, safely and efficiently. Most importantly, it could save a life by decreasing risks associated with smoke on roadways. If you burn piles regularly, don't put off registering for this training. **When the weather is dry, certified pile burners will receive priority for authorization to burn.** Also, certified pile burners are allowed to burn up to two hours longer per day and get multiple day authorizations. Don't wait. The number of trainings offered and attendance at each training is LIMITED. The cost of the course is \$50 per person and includes all course materials, test and lunch.

February 24, 2009; Highlands County Extension Office in Sebring, FL

See http://www.fl-dof.com/calendar/cal_pdf/pile_burner_sebring_Feb2009.pdf for details and registration form. Please share this information with your clients, constituents, neighbors or others that may be interested.

Florida's Certified Pile Burner Course is a service of: Florida Division of Forestry
University of Florida - IFAS, School of Forest Resources and Conservation University of Florida - IFAS,
Cooperative Extension Service

It may seem that this class is not for vegetable growers but in conversations that I have had with the Department of Forestry – this is why citrus growers can burn when vegetable growers are denied permits. Having this certification is no guarantee but will cause the Department to look more favorably on allowing you to burn especially in dry times. – GM

Attention Florida Agricultural Producers: Farm Bill Meetings

The Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, commonly known as the 2008 Farm Bill, has become law and rule making is in process. As NRCS in Florida prepares to deliver the conservation programs within the bill, many of which provide cost-share and other financial assistance, we want to ensure that we address the natural resource conservation priorities within the State and get the information out to our partners and Florida’s agricultural producers.

As a result, we are holding public information sessions designed to provide NRCS customers and natural resource partners the opportunity to hear what programs will be available with the new 2008 Farm Bill and changes from the 2002 Farm Bill. Information on how to make public comments will be available. A question and answer session will follow.

Several meetings will be held across Florida where topics ranging from invasive species to water conservation will be discussed.

	Meeting Room	Date and time	Address	Contact
Marianna	Marianna Agricultural Service Center	March 2, 2009 6 pm – 8 pm	2741 Pennsylvania Ave. Marianna, FL 32448	Jeff Norville (850) 482-2002 x110
Jay	Jay Community Center	March 3, 2009 6 pm – 8 pm	5259 Booker Lane Jay, FL 32565	Jeff Norville (850) 482-2002 x110
Live Oak	Suwannee County Extension Service	March 4, 2009 6 pm – 8 pm	1302 11th Street SW Live Oak, FL 32060-3611	Frank Ellis (386)-755-5100 x103
Gainesville	Doyle Conner Ag. Bldg Auditorium	March 5, 2009 9 am – 11 am	1911 SW 34 Street Gainesville, FL 32608	Frank Ellis (386)-755-5100 x103
LaBelle	USDA Service Center	March 9, 2009 9 am – Noon	1085 Pratt Blvd Labelle, FL 33975	Jeff Schmidt (561) 683-0883
Okeechobee	Okeechobee Ag Civic Center	March 9, 2009 3 pm – 5 pm	US Hwy 98 North Okeechobee, FL 34972	Jeff Schmidt (561) 683-0883
Bartow	Polk County Ag Center South Auditorium	March 10, 2009 1 pm – 3 pm	1700 Highway 17 South Bartow, FL 33830	Jeff White (941) 729-6804
Kissimmee	Osceola Heritage Park Extension Bldg. Room 161	March 11, 2009 1 pm – 3 pm	1921 Kissimmee Valley Ln Kissimmee, FL 34744	Jeff White (941) 729-6804
West Palm Beach	Palm Beach Extension Service-Exhibit Hall A	March 12, 2009 10 am – noon	559 N. Military Trail West Palm Beach, FL	Jeff Schmidt (561) 683-0883

For additional information about the sessions call the contact person for the meeting nearest you.

DBPR Investigators to Cover the State

See following letter from DBPR Secretary Drago. This note plus an article in last weekend’s News Press discussing lack of oversight of farm labor transport and memo by DBPR Secretary Drago suggests that scrutiny will be increased in coming days. - GM

February 6, 2009

Dear Friends:

I don't know about you, but I've been freezing this past week! For someone who moved to Florida more than 30 years ago for the warm sun and sandy beaches, this latest cold front is like a blast from the past. This week, the National Weather Service has issued hard freeze warnings for many counties throughout Florida. While many of us are turning on our faucets and turning up our thermostats, farmers are worrying about livelihood of their crops.

My thoughts have been with DBPR's farm labor licensees, farmers and growers for their efforts to protect crops, such as green beans, strawberries and citrus. Only four to six hours of temperatures below 28 degrees can damage citrus crops. For more delicate vegetable crops, cold weather damage can occur even sooner.

For those of you who didn't know that DBPR was involved with farm labor, I'd like to share a little more about the program. The Bureau of Farm Labor ensures that Florida's farm workers are protected from harmful work situations and exploitation. The bureau conducts routine checks, inspections and investigations of farm labor contractor employees. For the protection of Florida's farm workers and agriculture industry, these inspections include field sanitation, payment of wages, and passenger vehicle safety.

Sixteen investigators have been placed in agriculturally significant areas of the state to ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal laws. Investigators are assigned to the following areas: Homestead, Ft. Pierce, Ft. Myers, Belle Glade/Clewiston, Immokalee/Labelle, Sebring Wauchula, Tampa, Orlando, Gainesville, and Quincy.

While you're bundling up during the cold snap, I ask that you keep our agriculture employees in your thoughts. They play a significant role in Florida's economy.

Sincerely,

Charles W. Drago
Secretary
Department of Business and
Professional Regulation

Florida Farmers/Handlers Eligible for Organic Certification Reimbursement

GAINESVILLE, FL - Florida Certified Organic Growers and Consumers, Inc. (FOG) is accepting applications from certified organic growers and handlers in Florida for reimbursement of up to 75 percent of certification costs, or a maximum of \$750. Reimbursement for certification costs paid between Oct. 1, 2008, and Sept. 30, 2009, will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are depleted. The deadline for submitting applications is October 15, 2009.

“FOG worked with other prominent national sustainable and agricultural organizations to make the national organic certification cost share reimbursement program a high priority in the 2008 Farm Bill. We are pleased to be part of this important effort to assist farmers in the state of Florida,” FOG Executive Director Marty Mesh said. “We thank the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for assistance in this effort.”

To qualify for the organic certification cost share reimbursement, an operator must have certified organic farm or production facilities in Florida, must hold an organic certificate issued by a USDA accredited certification

agency issued between Oct. 1, 2008, and Sept. 30, 2009, and must not have previously received cost share reimbursement for the same period.

FOG is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation that began in 1989 to promote organic and sustainable agriculture and healthy and just food systems, working diligently to educate producers, consumers, media, institutions and governments about the benefits of organic and sustainable agriculture. The Certification Cost Share Program and the Organic Transition Program that offers free crop advisors for growers interested in transitioning to organic production are programs FOG operates to encourage growers and handlers to become certified organic producers. FOG also offers workshops nationally and internationally on transitioning to organic production. It is the hope that the Certification Cost Share Program will aid growers who have been reluctant to get certified because of the cost associated.

For additional information, including the cost share program application, visit www.foginfo.org, call 352.377.6345 or email fog@foginfo.org.

Green Market

A new green market in Boynton Beach had a grand opening on January 30, 2009, and is looking to offer spaces to more green market venues to share business opportunities. Rent per venue is \$40/week, or \$135/month. The green market is open on Fridays from 8AM to 1PM.

Interested party please call Lenora Glickman at 561-740-9000 Ext 266.

Farm Land for Lease

Farm Land for lease in LaBelle area – contact Greg Jones at 863-675-0545

Agriculture land available for a long term lease of 8-10 years. This 320 acre property is located in Martin County on Hwy 609 and 3 miles north of Hwy 710 (The Beeline Hwy). It is within the Troop Indiantown Water District (TIWD) which provides for irrigation water and free-flowing drainage. This land is free of wetlands and cleared for farming. Contact Miguel Perales: 561-718-4635.

Up Coming Meetings

Southwest Florida

March 13, 2009

WPS – Train the Trainer Workshop

**Hendry County Extension Office
LaBelle, Florida**

Contact 863-674-4092

Other Meetings

Mar. 9 - 13, 2009

2009 FL Postharvest Horticulture Industry Tour

For more information contact Adrian Berry at adberry@ifas.ufl.edu

June 7-9, 2009

Florida State Horticultural Society Meeting

Jacksonville, Florida

For more information contact Mary Lamberts at 305-248-3311 x234, email to lamberts@ufl.edu or go to <http://www.fshs.org/meetings.htm>

Websites

Watermelon Diseases – UF/IFAS site with photos, description and recommended controls for a wide array of watermelon disease problems – set your browser to <http://watermelons.ifas.ufl.edu/diseases/diseases.htm>

Management of Whiteflies, Whitefly-Vectored Plant Virus, and Insecticide Resistance for Vegetable Production in Southern Florida for current UF/IFAS Recommendations, go to <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/IN695> .

Quotable Quotes

Grown-ups never understand anything for themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them. -- Antoine de Saint

When the gods wish to punish us, they answer our prayers. -- Oscar Wilde

A billion here, a billion there, pretty soon it adds up to real money. -- Senator Everett Dirksen

Never attribute to malice that which can adequately be attributed to stupidity. -- Robert J. Hanlon

Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education. – John F Kennedy

On the Lighter Side

THINGS YOU'D LOVE TO SAY AT WORK, BUT CAN'T!

- I don't know what your problem is, but I'll bet it's hard to pronounce.
- How about never? Is never good for you?
- I'll try being nicer if you'll try being smarter.
- I'm out of my mind, but feel free to leave a message...
- I like you. You remind me of when I was young and stupid.
- You are validating my inherent mistrust of strangers.
- I have plenty of talent and vision. I just don't give a damn.
- I'm already visualizing the duct tape over your mouth.
- I will always cherish the initial misconceptions I had about you.
- Thank you. We're all refreshed and challenged by your unique point of view.
- Any connection between your reality and mine is purely coincidental.
- What am I? Flypaper for freaks!?
- Do I look like a people person?
- This isn't an office. It's Hell with fluorescent lighting.
- I started out with nothing and still have most of it left.
- How do I set a laser printer to stun?

Old Farmers Advice

- Your fences need to be horse-high, pig-tight and bull-strong.
- Keep skunks and bankers and lawyers at a distance.
- Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.
- A bumblebee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor.
- Words that soak into your ears are whispered...not yelled.
- Meanness don't jes' happen overnight.
- Forgive your enemies. It messes up their heads.
- Do not corner something that you know is meaner than you.
- It don't take a very big person to carry a grudge.
- You cannot unsay a cruel word.
- Every path has a few puddles.
- When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.
- The best sermons are lived, not preached.
- Most of the stuff people worry about ain't never gonna happen anyway.
- Don't judge folks by their relatives.
- Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
- Live a good, honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time.
- Don't interfere with somethin' that ain't botherin' you none.
- Timing has a lot to do with the outcome of a rain dance.
- If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop diggin'.
- Sometimes you get, and sometimes you get got.

Contributors include: Joel Allingham/AgriCare, Inc, Jeff Beethel/Yoder Brothers, 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, 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.

Gene McAvoy

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