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UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

A Newsletter for Retired & Emeritus UF/IFAS Faculty & Staff

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THINKING OUTSIDE THE SHOEBOX

The 2nd annual CALS Homecoming Shoebox Parade showcased creative floats from UF/IFAS clubs, programs and departments and benefited the [Alan and Cathy Hitchcock Field and Fork Pantry](#).

You can watch the parade [here](#) and [check out the floats here](#).



FROM THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

J. Scott Angle, Senior Vice President for Agriculture & Natural Resources
jangle@ufl.edu | [@IFAS_VP](#)



We can talk about how the University of Florida has risen in stature much the same way a character in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* explains how he went bankrupt: "Two ways. Gradually and then suddenly."

Suddenly we find ourselves mentioned among the schools that have dominated public university rankings for 30 years—UCLA, Berkeley, Michigan, Virginia and North Carolina-Chapel Hill. But first we gradually improved over decades. Your service helped build the excellence that gave us the audacity to aspire to such recognition. It made the case for state investment in UF to hire 500 additional full-time faculty members in the past two years.

Our [U.S. News & World Report ranking](#) for UF reflects other measures of our excellence. [UF/IFAS is ranked #1 by the National Science Foundation](#) in total federally financed higher education R&D expenditures in agricultural sciences and natural resources and conservation.

Rankings give us a picture of how we're perceived. A rise in reputation helps us recruit talent, whether researchers, Extension agents, teachers, staff or students. It's an effective tool for recruiting top companies and employers to Florida. It establishes us among potential funders as a worthy investment. And it means your grandchildren do not have to leave Florida to seek a world-class education. All of this means we'll have a greater capacity to do good for Florida and for the world.

We need to continue building that capacity because there is so much need. Our [4-H](#) summer camps need to be modernized. Our [Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering](#) proposes a teaching building with a hands-on construction classroom and a biological engineering lab to give our undergraduates top-5-worthy spaces to develop into future academics and industry professionals. We also seek to build a [microbiology](#) teaching lab for undergraduates who enroll in our lab courses from 41 different majors.

It's a great time to be a Gator! In October, I helped celebrate the [100th anniversary](#) of the UF/IFAS [North Florida Research and Education](#)

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[Center](#) in Quincy. Emeritus Professor Ron Barnett and retired UF/IFAS Extension agent Bobby Durden elevated the event into an important education for me and other heirs to their work. They equipped us with a [history of the center](#) and a deeper understanding of its excellence. It would have been worth the trip to Quincy had I done nothing more than heard Durden and Barnett.

I hope I will see and meet some of you at the [Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame](#) banquet in February to celebrate the induction of emeritus professor [Wayne Smith](#) and longtime Extension agent [Reggie Brown](#).

They reminded us that our excellence is manifest in many ways that will never be measured by a magazine ranking. Our student-faculty ratio is important, but so is the FloRunner peanut, the advances in irrigation and nutrient management scheduling that have boosted corn yields and the control measure for Asian soybean rust that have all come out of NFREC. My thanks to Durden and Barnett and to all of you who remind us that UF/IFAS has been among the best and getting better for a long time.

MEET DEAN ANDRA JOHNSON

Andra Johnson, Dean for UF/IFAS Extension | andra.johnson@ufl.edu

What made you decide to join the UF/IFAS family?

UF/IFAS Extension is one of the top extension units in the country. This is evident in the work of our faculty and the passionate stakeholders who strive to see Floridians flourish. In addition, the opportunity to work in a state with such diversity is truly amazing. These factors made my decision to join the UF/IFAS family an easy one. Having grown up in Louisiana, it is exciting to get back to some familiar crops and the sunny South.



What does UF/IFAS Extension need to do to stay preeminent?

I am extremely excited to work at a preeminent university. There is a sense of pride that comes along with such a ranking, but there is also a sense of responsibility to ensure we are doing our part to reflect that ranking and even move beyond it. I believe that UF/IFAS Extension can be even more customer-focused, ensuring that we are relevant, responsive, accountable, and are building trust both internally and externally. I also believe in changing with the times, fully embracing technology and online learning. Customers are learning differently, and we must ensure that we can provide the solutions to their problems when they want it, how they want it and when they want it.

What is your 18-month plan for UF/IFAS Extension?

First, I plan to spend time visiting each of our counties and listening to our faculty and stakeholders. Second, I will look for opportunities to beef up our county faculty, to ensure that we have experts in place to meet the needs of our stakeholders. Third, I want to examine our priorities to confirm we are providing our stakeholders with what they need. Finally, I want to take a critical look at our infrastructure, to make sure that we have the necessary platforms to provide greater online learning opportunities and data access capabilities. I believe these steps will ultimately help us to be more customer-centric as we embrace a vision of being the premier Cooperative Extension Unit in the country.

20 YEARS OF FMNP



The **Florida Master Naturalist Program** celebrates its 20th anniversary

[Read More](#)

PAVE THE FUTURE FOR 4-H'ERS



PURCHASE YOUR SPECIALTY PLATE VOUCHER ONLINE

FLORIDA4H.ORG/TAG

OR AT YOUR LOCAL TAG OFFICE

Help 4-H reach our goal of 3,000 tags and get the 4-H plate on the road! Your \$25 specialty tag fee supports Florida 4-H leadership programs, camping and more!



FLORIDA 4-H
FOUNDATION

FRESH FACILITIES

UF/IFAS Advancement | advancement@ifas.ufl.edu

UF/IFAS has much to be thankful for this season.

In April, **Florida 4-H Camp Cherry Lake** celebrated its renovated pavilion, which was named [in memory of Henry and Nell Davis](#) thanks to a generous gift from Morris and Judy Steen. Photos of the ribbon cutting can be [accessed here](#).

In November, the **UF/IFAS North Florida Research & Education Center - Suwannee Valley (NFREC-SV)** [opened a new 4,200-square-foot pavilion](#) during the annual Florida Farm Bureau Suwannee CARES event. Made possible by the generous support of Suwannee Valley community members and friends, this flexible indoor/outdoor space is the perfect venue for demonstrating research-based best practices to farmers and engaging local youth.



The new NFREC-SV pavilion.

The **UF/IFAS Extension Alachua County and Ag Auditorium building** ribbon cutting took place November 30. With support from the Alachua County Commission, the City of Newberry, and a grant from the Florida Department of Agriculture, the new facility houses six Extension Faculty Agents and four staff, with an auditorium seating 300.

The UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences held two ceremonies on December 11. With gratitude to Kim and Danny Sams and honoring Avery and Bernie LeFils, the new **Sams-LeFils Round Pens** at the Horse Teaching Unit will provide much-needed cover for equine students “in all kinds of weather.” In addition, the **Sam Tripson Memorial Porch** at the Beef Teaching Unit (BTU) was dedicated in memory of Sam R. Tripson, who was a Florida cattleman, AGR brother and CALS alumnus, thanks to a gift from



The new Sams-LeFils Round Pens, opened Dec. 11, 2021.

Trey and Chelsea Warnock establishing an endowment to support the BTU. Photos from the events can be accessed at these links: [HTU](#), [BTU](#).

We are grateful for the passionate alumni, friends, volunteers, stakeholders, industry partners and community members who made these facilities a reality.

UF UNIVERSITY of
FLORIDA
College of Agricultural
and Life Sciences

**Remember
McCarty Hall
classrooms?**



**...They haven't
changed much.**

**Help us raise \$50,000
to renovate a
CALS classroom.**

**Upgraded Technology
Fresh Paint
Moveable Chairs & Tables**

Give today:
tinyurl.com/CALSclassrooms



A special initiative of the UF/IFAS
SHARE Council, a board of volunteers
committed to advancing the mission of the
UF Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences.

UF Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)3.
Your gift may be eligible for tax deduction.
More information: 352.392.1975,
advancement@ifas.ufl.edu

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

UF/IFAS College of Agricultural and Life Sciences | @UFCALS

Through the [V.P. Promise fundraising initiative](#), UF/IFAS Senior Vice President Scott Angle and CALS Dean Elaine Turner aim to make hands-on learning opportunities accessible to every CALS undergraduate student, regardless of their financial circumstances. Below are a few stories about the impact of CALS beyond-the-classroom experiences.

JAY LYNCH

FOREST RESOURCES & CONSERVATION

Jay spent the summer as a procurement forestry intern at West Rock's paper mill in Fernandina Beach, FL, where he learned about purchasing timber, conducting inspections, managing logging crews and more. [Full story](#)



ZYRESHIA JACKSON, FAMILY, YOUTH & COMMUNITY SCIENCES

Zyreshia interned with UF/IFAS Extension Bay County, where she developed curricula and trainings, evaluated programs and connected with the community. [Full story](#)

AUSTIN LEE, AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

Austin interned with U.S. Sugar, a fully-integrated sugarcane operation in Clewiston, FL. While there, he helped manage fertilizer applications, scout for herbicide applications and complete fieldwork. [Full story](#)



MELODY GLADDERS, ANIMAL SCIENCES

Melody interned in Kyrgyzstan with a non-profit organization to teach the local community about modern agricultural practices, including animal genetics, artificial insemination and husbandry.

[Full story](#)

UF/IFAS RESEARCH IS OUT OF THIS WORLD

UF/IFAS plant molecular biologists **Anna-Lisa Paul** and **Rob Ferl** study plant gene expression in extreme environments.

In July, they sent 3 *Arabidopsis thaliana* plants on Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic space plane, the VSS Unity, to study the changes plant cells undergo during the transition to and from sustained microgravity.

[Learn more](#)



hos.ifas.ufl.edu/spaceplantslab

VOICES OF UF/IFAS: RAY GOLDWIRE

[Read a Q&A with Ray,
UF/IFAS volunteer &
Master Beekeeper](#)



GRANTS AGAINST GREENING

Ruth Borger, Communications Specialist

UF/IFAS Citrus Research & Education Center (CREC) | rborger@ufl.edu

UF/IFAS citrus researchers continue to provide innovative leadership in the fight against the devastating disease *Huanglongbing* (HLB), also known as citrus greening.

The USDA NIFA Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program awarded over \$2.2 million in three grants to UF/IFAS faculty to fight the disease, and UF/IFAS researchers will help lead two other multi-million-dollar grants awarded to institutions across the nation. These projects are part of an aggressive strategy to finding viable solutions in the fight against citrus greening and represent over \$3.5 million in federal funding for UF/IFAS.

► TARGETING THE ASIAN CITRUS PSYLLID (ACP) GUT

CREC faculty Kirsten Pelz-Stelinski and Bryony Bonning will direct a two-year, \$1,020,810 grant aiming to identify gut-binding peptides that compete with the bacterium that causes citrus greening for attachment to the gut of the Asian citrus psyllid vector. Ultimately, that process could disrupt the cycle of pathogen transmission at the source by neutralizing the psyllid.

► UTILIZING HLB-TOLERANT CITRUS GERMPLASM

CREC faculty Manjul Dutt, Nabil Killiny and Lauren Diepenbrock and UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center (SWFREC) researcher Ozgur Batuman will focus on integrating the natural HLB resistance present in Australian limes into conventional citrus to produce resistant rootstocks, interstocks, and eventually, scions. The two-year, \$500,000 grant will involve planting on stakeholder plots and greenhouse environments.

► MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION

CREC faculty Lauren Diepenbrock, Megan Dewdney, Ariel Singerman, Davie Kadyampakeni and Christopher Vincent will compare new tools to support young tree establishment, including Individual Protective Covers, reflective “mulch” and red-dyed kaolin as potential deterrents to the Asian citrus psyllid, and measure their resulting effects on psyllid and other infestations, pathogen incidence, tree growth, irrigation and fertilizer needs and yield. They aim to provide a holistic comparison of these tools to commercial and residential growers, as well as modified versions of these tools for use with Florida Master Gardener Volunteers. The two-year program is funded at \$750,000.

► NOVEL DEFENSIN PEPTIDES AND THERAPIES

Ute Albrecht from SWFREC and CREC faculty Ariel Singerman and Choa El-Mohtar will collaborate on a four-year project with Texas A&M to test promising bacterium-killing therapies, including use of the hairy root system to screen peptides and small molecules. Researchers will use multiple locations and multi-year field evaluations, and will conduct economic feasibility studies. This project will direct \$868,792 to UF/IFAS.

► MAPPING TOLERANCE & RESISTANCE GENES

Ute Albrecht from SWFREC and Zhanao Deng from the UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center will work with the USDA and the University of California, Riverside on a two-year project to identify the best performing HLB-tolerant rootstocks for commercial release. Researchers hope to select at least three new rootstock cultivars for release before the end of 2023. UF/IFAS will receive \$445,808 for its role in this project.

UF/IFAS HONOREES

Congratulations to the honorees who were recognized at the 2021 UF/IFAS Dinner of Distinction:

Elisabeth C. DeLuca
UF/IFAS Champion

Ducks Unlimited
SVP's Friend of UF/IFAS

Morris G. Steen, Jr.
UF/IFAS Volunteer of the Year,
presented by SHARE Council

Trey M. Warnock
CALs Alumni & Friends
Horizon Award

Russell P. & Pam A. Hyatt
CALs Alumni & Friends
Award of Distinction

Larry & Debbie Swindle
UF/IFAS Extension Advocates

Florida Sugar Cane League
UF/IFAS Industry Partner

YEAR-END GIVING TO UF/IFAS

Give online to support [your local Extension office](#), [CALs students](#), [IFAS' greatest needs](#), and [more](#).

Mail checks, payable to the UF Foundation, to:

UF/IFAS Advancement
P.O. Box 110170
Gainesville, FL 32611

- Include the area you wish to support in the memo line or an enclosed letter.
- Envelopes must be **postmarked by USPS (do not use a courier service)** on or before Dec. 31 to qualify for 2021 tax credit.

Give via [IRA Rollover](#) or [Donor Advised Fund](#).

For more ways to give, contact [UF/IFAS Advancement](#) (352.392.1975).

UF FOUNDATION, INC.
TAX ID: 59-0974739

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 3 [CALS Career Expo](#)

Feb. 15 [Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame Banquet](#)

Feb. 17 [UF Gator Nation Giving Day](#)

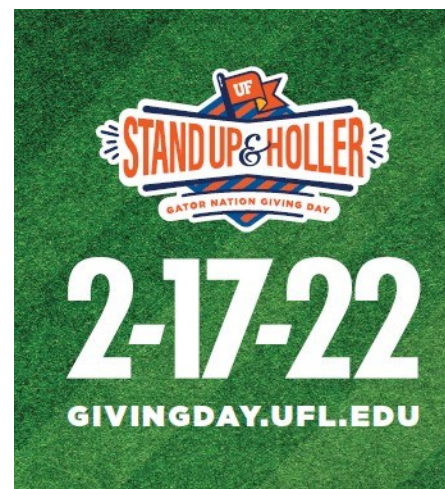
Feb. 23 4-H Day at the Capitol Alumni & Friends Reception

[UF/IFAS Event Calendar](#)

[Extension Event Calendar](#)

[Florida 4-H Event Calendar](#)

[FDACS Event Calendar](#)



**Which UF/IFAS areas
do you want to hear about
in future newsletters?**

Let us know: [Survey](#)



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