

University of Florida/IFAS Sarasota County Extension 2009 Annual Report

FINANCIAL

County share of budget	\$1,089,827
University of Florida research and salary support	\$ 444,196
Total grant funding	\$ 597,146
Total fees for service	\$ 32,005
Total donations	\$ 41,936
In-Kind donations	\$ 555,210
Value of volunteer hours	\$ 549,028

Cost of service per capita: \$2.60

2009 Focus Areas: sustainable living, natural resources, residential and commercial horticulture, sustainable agriculture, nutrition, youth leadership development, climate and energy, web-based education.



2009 ACTIVITY SUMMARY

18 full-time faculty and staff,
assisted by 9 full-time grant-funded employees and 300 volunteers,
provided 6,257 educational classes to 76,572 participants
and provided educational assistance to 90,000+ Sarasota county residents
in person, by telephone, or by email
and provided educational resources to 1,241,659 website visitors.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

- Extension education supported county NPDES storm water permit reporting, the water and fertilizer ordinances, county land development regulations, Green County Certification and the Green Champion Training Program for county employees
- 838 landscape professionals achieved BMP Certification, and 150 pesticide applicators received Continuing Education Credits required for recertification
- 8 community and school gardens were managed and served as locations for onsite education classes in food growing for personal use including “Organic Vegetable Gardening” (360 attendees) and “Edible Schoolyard” (510 attendees)
- Sustainable local commercial food production training was conducted in 2 courses of “Market Gardening” (315 attendees) and 3 on-farm workshops of the SW FL Small Farmer Network (190 attendees)
- 47% of the 1237 Condo and Homeowner Associations in Sarasota County are now receiving Florida-Friendly landscape information and education
- Florida 4-H celebrated its Centennial Year providing five generations of Sarasota residents the benefit of 4-H youth leadership development education and support. During 2009 a Sarasota 4-H youth gained national prominence with a monofilament recycling program featured on Nickelodeon, and two Sarasota youth served as State Council Officers: President and Reporter.
- The Sarasota County Family Nutrition Program received a new \$452,000 USDA grant, bringing total federal grant funding for this program to \$2.8 million dollars to support nutrition and food resource management education for the Food Stamp-eligible population in Sarasota County.
- Extension follows the federal Affirmative Action mandate to serve underserved populations. During 2009, 51% of the 62,000 Family Nutrition Program class participants were from minority populations and received education in English, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, and Brazilian Portuguese.



4-H Youth Leadership Program

In 2009, the 4-H Youth Leadership Program recruited, trained and coordinated 150 Community 4-H Club adult and youth volunteer leaders. 200 active volunteers reported 14,782 hours for a value of \$299,335.

4-H provided youth leadership opportunities for 486 youth in 37 Community 4-H Clubs and for 4,532 4-H school enrichment members. 4-H Leadership also participated in 4-H County and District Councils, Club Officer Training, District, State, and National Leadership programs, community service projects, 4-H Tropicana Public Speaking, 4-H Environmental Science Education and 4-H Radish Growing program.

The Leadership Program supported and coordinated 350 members to participate in County Fair in Livestock, Mini Building, Small Animal, Equine, Consumer Education, Sustainable Agriculture, Horticulture, and Share the Fun activities. A close partnership with the Sarasota County 4-H Foundation was maintained, which donates \$24,000 dollars annually to programming and youth activities in Sarasota County. 4-H also provided summer camp opportunities to 105 4-H members at Camp Cloverleaf.

2009 Achievements include:

- The Sarasota County 4-H Program had the highest participation levels in youth reporting their results for 4-H National Youth Science Day. As a result they received a \$400 award from the National 4-H Council to use toward Science, Engineering and Technology programming.
- The Sarasota Green Team 4-H Club received a Community Pride Grant and was named as one of the top five Community Pride programs in Florida
- One youth, out of 4 in the State, selected to attend National 4-H Conference
- Two youth appointed to State 4-H Council officer positions 2009-2010
- 6 Sarasota youth participated in the Southern Region Teen Leadership Conference held in Tennessee.
- 4-H Youth donated over 3,000 hours of Community Service to Sarasota County.
- 12 Clubs conducted Community Service projects in Sarasota County



4-H Marine Science, Environmental Science and Coastal Eco-Systems Protection Education for Youth

Activities of this 4-H program:

- Taught over 1000 youth who participated in research-based classroom and field trip hands-on education focused on awareness of and protection of our coastal systems
- Student internship program with North Port High School
- Two free summer fishing tournaments organized for all Sarasota County youth
- Coastal field trips for summer Parks & Recreation youth focused on awareness of and protection of our coastal ecosystems
- Marine biology classes provided to the entire 5th grade at Garden Elementary School in Venice
- New 6 week microbiology program provided to youth 12 years of age and older



Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resources Education Programs

The education programs of the Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension of Sarasota County include the following areas:

Sustainable Agriculture

- Agriculture policy
- Diversified small farm and ranch management
- Local food system development
- Farm to School Program
- Agroforestry

Natural Resources

- Florida Master Naturalist
- Backyard Landscapes for Wildlife
- Wildland-Urban Interface
- Master Wildlifer
- Monitoring of ESLPP Conservation Easements

The achievements of the Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension programs can be summarized as follows:

Sustainable Agriculture

- Leadership of the Sarasota Food Policy Council to conduct “ReNewAbility” Workshops for implementation of 2006 agriculture policies of Comprehensive Plan (123 participants)
- Leadership of the Southwest Florida Small Farmers Network to support regional producers for sustainable local food system development (190 attendees). Winner of NACAA National Award in USDA/SARE Search for Excellence.
- Leadership in direct marketing development for locally-raised, grass-fed beef by 7 ranches to Whole Foods Market, Florida Region
- Conducted Agroforestry Workshop at a training center in diversified small farming & ranching at Crowley Museum & Nature Center, in partnership with the Forest Stewardship Program and UF/IFAS/FAMU Small Farm & Alternative Enterprise Program (45 attendees).
- Coordination of 2009 Florida Small Farm Conference in partnership with UF/IFAS/FAMU Small Farm & Alternative Enterprise Program (800 attendees).
- Supported Sarasota Farm to School Program with education programs including classes of the edible schoolyard at Booker Middle School (510 students) and at 2 public events of the Slow Food Greater Sarasota chapter (117 attendees)
- Conducted market gardening class series (315 attendees)
- Conducted Organic Vegetable Gardening classes at Community Gardens (360 attendees).

Natural Resources

- Participation in and organization of Extension training in climate change education and policy programming (60 attendees).
- Conducted Backyard Landscapes for Wildlife workshops (30 attendees).



Commercial Horticulture Education Programs

In 2009, program emphasis was implementing a new Fertilizer and Landscape Management Code enacted by the Sarasota County Government in late 2007 and made mandatory in March of 2008. The new law requires certification of professionals engaged in landscaping and related businesses through a Best Management Practices (BMPs) educational program.

2009 Program Objectives, Outcomes and Impacts

- 654 Green Industries professionals participated in 16 BMP classes during 2009, which included three classes conducted in Spanish
- 88% of the 654 participants achieved certification status
- The knowledge gain averaged 15% based on the pre/post test score difference. Of particular importance was the average pre-exam grade of 72% vs. the average grade of 87% achieved by those taking the post-exam.

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Response to the new fertilizer Code has been positive, and certification of additional professionals will continue. The program has had a positive impact on the landscape and fertilizer businesses within Sarasota County. Continued certification of these professionals will help reduce fertilizer runoff from lawns and landscapes thereby improving local water quality.

Overall Events/ Topics	Number of Events	Number of Participants
BMPs Best Management Practices	16	654
Continuing Education Units/Pesticide Training	12	397
Commercial Updates/Seminars	1	81
Speaking Engagements/Professional Memberships	4	622



Integrated Pest Management Education

During FY 2009, the IPM outreach focus continued to be IPM education for green industry professionals and IPM education for homeowners and school children on the proper use and role of pesticides in the lawn and landscapes, insect identification and least toxic control methods that reduce negative impacts on the environment.

86 IPM classes were provided for 1883 participants with 231 surveyed participants stating they gained knowledge and 230 stating they intended to make a practice change based on information in their classes.



Environmental Horticulture Education Programs

These programs promote environmental sustainability and reduction of stormwater runoff through the use of Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles and practices by providing educational assistance to community associations, neighborhoods, and associated property management and landscape

maintenance contractors, and include the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods (FYN) programs for homeowners and builders and developers. In addition, these programs provide educational support for the county fertilizer and water conservation ordinances, and the county Land Development Regulations (LDR). Highlights:

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- The programs received \$93,000 total in funding from its partners (Southwest Florida Management District, Sarasota County Utilities Department, and Sarasota Bay Estuary Program).
- 418 educational programs were provided to 4,333 participants.
- Of the 1237 community associations in Sarasota County, 580 (47%) have been reached since 2000, and potential future water savings is estimated at over 1,560,000,000 gallons yearly, conservatively.
- 64 community associations removed invasive plants and/or restored natural areas or stormwater retention areas. This should greatly improve the quality of stormwater runoff
- 16 Master Gardener Yard Advisors provided 773 volunteer hours. Staff and volunteers provided *Florida-Friendly Yard* recognition to 93 residents and to the landscapes of 24 City of Sarasota and Sarasota County public buildings.
- 14 new homes were evaluated for incorporation of Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles and received the Florida Green Building Certificate.
- The Florida Yards & Neighborhoods “Nine Landscape Principles” and “Creating Your Florida Yard” DVDs produced in partnership with Sarasota Bay Estuary Program to teach sustainable landscape principles and aired over 60 times on Access Sarasota



Urban Horticulture Education Programs, including Master Gardener Program and Horticulture Help Desk

The Urban Horticulture Program provided:

- Training and coordination for 136 Master Gardener volunteers who donated over 11,000 volunteer hours

- (value \$227,347) to promote best horticulture practices for Sarasota County homeowners
- 30 classes to 570 residents
 - Coordination of the Speakers Bureau comprised of Master Gardeners trained to give presentations in the community on many subjects of interest to the public
 - 12 articles for one newspaper, one website, and one newsletter
 - Coordination for Master Gardener Plant Sale, over 3,000 plants sold at the 5th Annual Master Gardener Plant Sale, raising \$7500 for gardening education
 - Partnership with Home Depot to provide 8 composting classes in libraries
 - Training for 19 new Master Gardeners volunteers in 2009 (90 hours of training)
 - Management of the Horticulture Help Desk and Satellite Services staffed by Master Gardeners, providing landscape and garden information and education, including identification of plants, pests, diseases and wildlife, to 13,512 walk-in, telephone and email customers
 - Coordination of the Sarasota Community Gardens Program, where monthly educational Programs teach Vegetable Gardening and Market Gardening

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- Completion of 330 soil tests
- Collaboration with Suncoast Polytechnical High School to plant a wildlife garden on campus at the Florida House
- Electronic notification of Extension classes to 650 residents monthly



Family and Consumer Sciences Education Programs

The Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Education Programs provided information and education on nutrition, financial management, consumer issues, energy and indoor water conservation, housing and home environment, successful aging, sustainable living and hurricane preparation. FCS also managed the large Family Nutrition Program and partners

with 40 community agencies, including the County Health Departments, All Faiths Food Bank, Sarasota County Public Schools, Sarasota County Libraries and Parks and Recreation, Children First and First Step.

- Hurricane preparation information was made available to residents at five hurricane fairs and classes: provided 8000 handouts.
- 3 classes on Closing Up Your Home to 91 residents
- FCS partnered with All Faiths Food Bank for the fourth year using the Growing Healthy Kids curriculum: trained 167 teachers in 39 daycare centers serving over 1,500 children
- As part of the County's Sustainability Month, FCS partnered with the libraries and presented 4 classes on "Stretching Your Food Dollar"



Family Nutrition Program

The Family Nutrition Program is a federal grant program that provided nutrition, food safety and food resources management education to over 62,000 Food Stamp clients for 2009 in Sarasota County, three-fourths of whom are from minority populations. The 2009 federal grant (starting October 2007) was a record \$452,523 and provided a Program Coordinator in addition to 8 Program Assistants to teach nutrition, food

safety and food resource management in community locations including the Health Departments. Educational information is provided in English, Brazilian Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Spanish, Russian and Ukrainian. The Sarasota County FNP Program, started in June 2001, is now one of the largest in the state and is used as a model for

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seven other Florida counties. With the addition of the 2009 grant, this program will have brought \$2,888,523 in federal money to Sarasota County, which was leveraged to bring in additional grants.



Florida House Learning Center and Sustainable Living Education

While decisions of the new Florida House Strategic Planning Board are in progress, the Learning Center's mission and message continue to be delivered to the community through outreach presentations and programs. In addition to horticulture and agriculture classes,

Extension educators are currently teaching the following programs at local libraries, businesses and community organizations:

- Living Green – Energy*
- Living Green – Water*
- Universal Design – Aging In Place
- Storm Protection – Hurricane Shutters*
- The Green Home
- Energy Incentives for Homeowners*

2009 accomplishments:

- Coordinated Energy Management Action Plan efforts in Community Services Business Center, recruiting champions for each facility and organized their tactics. \$102,539 in reduced energy costs for CSBC for FY09 compared to FY05
- Coordinated Extension building's EMAP and served as Energy Champion and staff trainer. \$6,738 in reduced energy costs for Extension in FY09 compared to FY05.
- Created Green@Work and Green@Home staff training programs for the Sarasota County Green Champion Program and conducted 4 highly rated employee classes
- Created 4 new sustainability education programs* (above) with voiceovers for Extension and County websites
- Provided 36 classes for 2,357 participants (formal, informal, individual & groups)
 - 100% satisfied
 - 98% intend to change practices
- Responded to 1,566 citizen inquiries (telephone, email, and in person)
- Distributed 300 CFLs and 500+ energy conservation brochures, and collected 300 carbon reduction pledges during 2009 festivals and Sustainable September
- Sustainable Communities Workshop Organizing Committee; over 100 attendees
- Awarded \$27,500 grant from the William and Marie Selby Foundation for facility renovation
- Created new comprehensive, integrated natural and built environment design to inspire personal sustainable behavior change for all ages

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- Produced sales and marketing plan, graphics package, animated rendering video, guest maps, project resource guide and strategic plan
- Secured major sponsorships such as: deck, railing and LED lighting; total solar-powered air systems with indoor air quality features, new gutters, cisterns, micro irrigation, rain garden, and more.
- Hosted community Watershed Awareness event offering 15 activities for all ages to 115 guests, sponsors, and volunteers
- Featured on 3 television news segments highlighting community involvement



eLearning and Web-Based Delivery Education

Provided weekly website updates with current research-based information, especially alerts and warnings about emerging and new plant diseases and pests, and food safety recalls. Maintained individual Timely Topic News areas for each department.

- Added 172 new record books, publications and other pdf files to the website
- Tracked web-hits data tracking on Google Analytics and Urchin recording over 1.2 million visitors to the website
- Added 2 new videos
- Converted 12 PowerPoint presentations to on-line flash presentations
- Added 1 new web gallery
- Expanded and refined all content areas of web pages
- Continued conversion of compostinfo.com to a new updated format
- Recorded over 200 slides of voiceovers for the current web and future podcasts

2010-2015 Sarasota County Extension Strategic Plan

Overall Objective:

To assist Sarasota County to become a Model Sustainable Community by providing education and outreach supporting the Sarasota County Roadmap to a Sustainable and Renewable Community.

Focused activities to accomplish the overall objective will include the following:

- Continued educational programming toward a sustainable Sarasota with particular emphasis on energy use, green jobs, green economy, sustainable landscapes, and a reduced Ecological Footprint
- Development of a local food and nutrition system that helps to create new economic opportunities and promotes the health of our environment and Sarasota citizens
- Increased emphasis on youth development and engagement toward a sustainable Sarasota
- Increased emphasis on web-based learning
- Renewed engagement in the new Florida House and all the educational outreach and evaluation opportunities that will be available there
- Continued development of public/private partnerships and an expanded Extension funding portfolio
- Sustained efforts toward community engagement by facilitating community conversations around difficult issues