UF/IFAS Extension Staff

Administration
Evangeline “Van” Linkous, PhD, AICP – County Extension Director
Aubrey Phillips – Outreach Coordinator
Jacqueline Warr – Office Coordinator
Janie Besselman – Administrative Assistant

County Agents
Erin Alvarez – Commercial Horticulture
Annemarie Post – Environmental Horticulture
Robert Kluson, PhD – Agriculture and Natural Resources
Jp Gellermann – Community Development and Sustainability
Maria Portelos-Rometo, EdD – Family and Consumer Sciences
Marcia Morris – 4-H Youth Leadership Development
Keith Wilson – 4-H Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

Program Assistants
Mary King – Family and Consumer Sciences
Robert Mertens – Horticulture
Wilma Holley – Florida Yards and Neighborhoods
Sheila Holland – 4-H
Katherine Padula – Family Nutrition Program
R. Damaris Heinlein – Family Nutrition Program
Claudia Kaput – Family Nutrition Program
Lisa Panman-Thole – Family Nutrition Program
Stacy Spriggs - Community & School Gardens Coordinator

Regional Team
Stephen Futch – Citrus
John Stevely – Sea Grant
Zach Glorioso – Farm to School Coordinator
Georgene Bender – 4-H
Mission

*Extension provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses and communities solve problems, develop skills and build a better future.*

A Message from the County Extension Director

UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County is part of a nationwide educational network that brings research-based information to communities—an “extension” of the personnel, resources and programs of academia and the federal government. The UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County program is a partnership of the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS), Sarasota County and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

New leadership and a fresh vision for the Extension program characterized 2012. In the last year, we welcomed Randall H. Reid as the new Sarasota County Administrator and Dr. Nick Place as the new Dean and Director for Extension. These County and University leaders have put forth a vision of accountable, high-quality public service. Similarly, the USDA launched exciting new initiatives such as The People’s Garden, Let’s Move and Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food that create robust linkages to Extension’s role of providing community-based solutions. With new commitments to environmental, social and economic sustainability from our partner organizations, UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County is part of a new era of providing services that support an exceptional quality of life in Sarasota and Florida.

One hundred and fifty years ago, President Abraham Lincoln signed into law the Morrill Act, which created the USDA and the land-grant university system through which the Extension program is administered. President Lincoln envisioned an education system that was accessible to all and created stronger households, businesses and communities. This annual report documents the accomplishments of UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County in 2012. We hope you’ll see President Lincoln’s vision reflected in our service, both over the last year and on the road ahead.

We look forward to serving you.

Evangeline Linkous, PhD, AICP
County Extension Director
Strategic Framework

Florida Extension Roadmap

Super Issues
• The awareness and appreciation of our food systems and our environment.
• The sustainability and conservation of resources in Florida communities.
• The financial security of individuals, business enterprises and communities.
• The opportunity for our youth to experience science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).
• The opportunity for Floridians to embrace healthy lifestyles.

High-priority Initiatives
• Increasing the sustainability, profitability and competitiveness of agricultural and horticultural enterprises.
• Enhancing and protecting water quality, quantity and supply.
• Enhancing and conserving Florida's natural resources and environmental quality.
• Producing and conserving traditional and alternative forms of energy.
• Empowering individuals and families to build healthy lives and achieve social and economic success.
• Strengthening urban and rural community resources and economic development.
• Preparing youth to be responsible citizens and productive members of the workforce.

UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County Long Range Plan

Major Programs
• Landscape practices and water quality and conservation
• Environment and natural resources
• Youth leadership development and wellness
• Local foods and agriculture
• Sustainable community development

Key Strategies
• Enhance outreach, partnerships and program delivery strategies
• Serve as a community convener and facilitator
• Act as gateway to university research and services
• Enhance role of partnerships

Sarasota County Mission, Vision and Values

Mission
The Mission of Sarasota County is to be the most livable and best managed community in the country, providing quality services, programs and facilities that reflect the goals of the community.

Vision
To be the premier community where people choose to live, work and play.

Values
Respect • Accountability • Integrity • Quality • Teamwork • Trust
Our Programs

What does UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County do?

We offer education, technical assistance and volunteer programs in these areas:

**Agriculture**
- Best Management Practices Education and Technical Assistance to Industry
- Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education
- Community and School Gardens
- Farm-to-School
- Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises
- State Agriculture Response Team

**Commercial Horticulture**
- Green Industry Best Management Practices Education
- Technical Assistance to Industry and Local Governments

**Environmental Horticulture**
- Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Education and Technical Assistance
- Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ for Community Associations
- Master Gardeners
- Free Irrigation Evaluations

**Family and Consumer Sciences**
- Family Nutrition Program
- Florida Master Money Mentors Program
- Disaster Preparation
- Healthy Lifestyles Education and Technical Assistance

**Community Development and Sustainability**
- Community Development Education and Technical Assistance
- Sustainable Floridians

**Natural Resources**
- Master Naturalists

**Sea Grant**
- Stewardship of Marine Resources Education and Technical Assistance

**4-H**
- Positive Youth Development and Youth Leadership
- Citizenship and Healthy Living for Youth
- Clubs and School Enrichment
2012 Accomplishments

UF Celebrates 150th Anniversary of the Morrill Act
One hundred and fifty years ago, President Abraham Lincoln signed into law the Morrill Act, which created the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the land-grant university system. Land-grant universities like the University of Florida offer extension programs that bring research-based knowledge and discoveries from the university to communities. In 2012, UF/IFAS Extension celebrated the anniversary with a variety of events celebrated throughout the state that continue into 2013.

Florida Friendly Landscaping™ Contributes to a Cleaner Roberts Bay
In 1998, Roberts Bay in northwest Sarasota County was added to Florida’s 1998 Clean Water Act list of impaired waters for exceeding the historical minimum chlorophyll-a value threshold (an indicator of algal biomass). Through a variety of efforts from numerous project partners, chlorophyll-a levels dropped and Roberts Bay was removed from the impaired list in 2010. Extension’s Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ program played a key role in educating homeowners, community associations and green industries professionals in best management practices to reduce nutrient loads entering the bay through landscaping practices.

Food Nutrition Program Expands
The Family Nutrition Program (FNPs) is a federally funded program designed to increase food security and reduce the risk of chronic disease, health complications and food borne illness. The program targets Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Eligible Florida residents. Program content areas include nutrition knowledge, planning for daily food needs, financial management for family food budgets, maternal and infant nutrition education, fitness and referral to other resources and assistance programs. In 2012, FNP expanded to offer new services at Woodland Middle School in North Port. FNP already served four other area schools, the Sarasota County Health Department and many community partners.

4-H County Association Formed
Thank you to the new 4-H County Association! These outstanding volunteers put in long hours to help create new capacity to support the 4-H program in Sarasota. Along with the extraordinary Sarasota County 4-H Foundation, the Association helps area young people to step up to the challenges in their community and the world. Using research-based programming around positive youth development, 4-H youth get the hands-on real world experience they need to become leaders.

Planning Symposium Brings Together State Land Use Leaders
Extension hosted a symposium on Florida’s 2011 Community Planning Act, which implements significant changes to Florida’s state growth management framework. One of the changes is the removal of Rule 9J5, which set state guidelines for local comprehensive plans. The symposium brought together leaders from the public, private and academic sectors to discuss what the changes mean for Florida local governments, planners and citizens.

Fresh Opportunities for Local Food Systems
Extension supported Sarasota’s thriving local food movement with new and expanded classes including Chickens 101, canning and food preservation and contemplative food gardening. The UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County office houses a regional Farm-to-School coordinator, whose role supports farm-fresh products in school cafeterias, healthy lifestyle education for youth and school gardens.
An Annual in Full Bloom: Master Gardener Plant Sale
Sarasota’s Master Gardeners continued their tradition of hosting an annual plant sale to promote awareness of Florida-Friendly Landscaping™, provide answers to horticulture questions and showcase the hard work of these dedicated community volunteers. This beloved community event is a partnership with Friends of Sarasota County Parks.

School Salsa Gardens: A Cause For a Fiesta
Extension piloted a new school garden program in 2012. Toledo Blade Elementary, Lamarque Elementary and New Gate Montessori planted salsa gardens with assistance from Sarasota County Master Gardeners and 4-H. Students started seeds indoors, installed raised-bed gardens and transplanted seedlings. As part of the program, students learn horticulture, agriculture and nutrition science. Their hard work culminates in a nutrition-themed Cinco de Mayo celebration in May.

New Sustainable Floridians Program Launches
Extension launched the new Sustainable Floridians program, training and graduating 16 ambassadors in fall 2012. The Sustainable Floridians program follows the model of the successful Florida Master Gardener program and aims to develop engaged citizen volunteers who will become local sustainability champions.

Dig In! Community Gardens
Extension, in partnership with Sarasota County Parks and Recreation and Friends of Sarasota County Parks, offers a variety of support for community gardens in Sarasota County including education and technical assistance. Extension congratulates the new Culverhouse Community Garden and Bee Ridge Growers Community Garden as they begin to “sprout!”

100% Pass Green Industry Best Management Practices Exam
The Green Industry Best Management Practices (GI-BMPs) are a science-based educational program for Green Industry workers (lawn-care and landscape maintenance professionals), brought to you by the UF/IFAS Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ program. The GI-BMPs teach environmentally safe landscaping practices that help conserve and protect Florida’s ground and surface waters and promote awareness of local landscape regulations. In April 2012, 100% of participants passed the exam, indicating that Sarasota County landscaping and green industry professionals are well-versed in strategies that save the Florida homeowner money, time and effort; increase the beauty of the home landscape; and protect the health of your family, pets and the environment.

New Canning Classes: We’re Jamming!
In 2012, UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County offered a new series of canning classes. Tailored to Florida’s growing seasons and conducted using Master Food Preserver curriculum, the program offers a new way to eat local.

Sarasota Extension Hosts Regional Gateway
UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County hosted the UF/IFAS South Central District annual Gateway event. County administrators and department heads from the 11-county South Central District gathered to learn more about the variety of UF resources Extension brings to communities.
2012 At a Glance

UF/IFAS EXTENSION SARASOTA COUNTY CONNECTIONS

In 2012, UF/IFAS Extension made

6,681,822 PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

6,405,241
Web Visits

165,061
Group Learning Participants

59,106
E-mail Consultations

15,858
Phone Consultations

30,279
Field or Site Visits

6,082
Office Consultations

195
Educational Materials Produced

525
Number of Volunteers

28,100
Volunteer Hours