



May 29, 2020

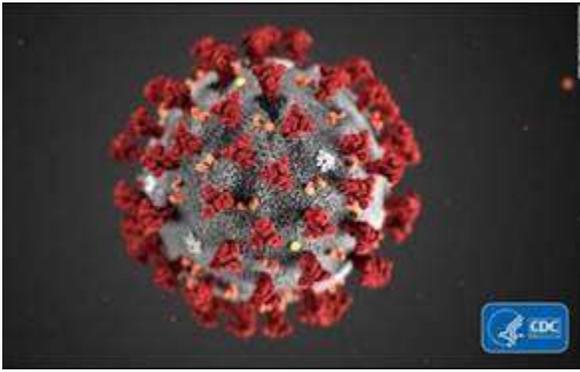
Welcome to SWFREC Update E-news! This newsletter is distributed biweekly and contains news about the center and its faculty and staff, program research updates, and upcoming events.

Web site: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Social media:  

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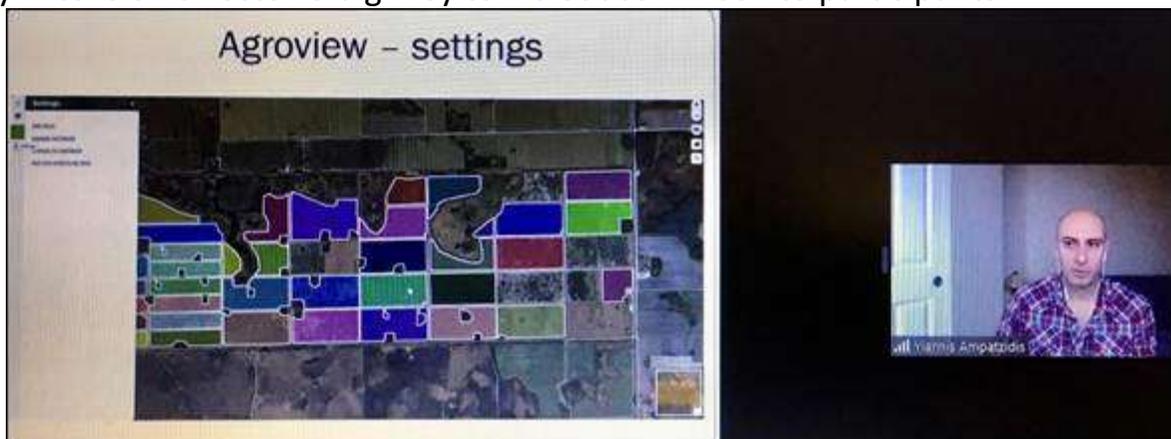
RESEARCH RESUMES DURING COVID-19: We continue to strive to be prudent and provide the best service possible while keeping our clientele and our staff safe during this uncertain time. While the center is not officially closed, its operations continue to be reduced to essential services for now. We ask that our grower clientele continue to contact faculty and staff via e-mail addresses provided on our web site:

<https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/>. This being said, we are happy to report that UF faculty located on and off the main campus have been approved to restart field experiments as soon as their projects are approved by UF/IFAS administration. This also means that SWFREC faculty can resume data collection in our fields and cooperative grower fields, as well as experiments in their laboratories and greenhouses/screenhouses.

While many faculty and staff will continue to work remotely, some will slowly begin to work at the center. We are currently working on a center-wide virus testing and sanitation plan that will be put in place upon approval by the UF VP for Research. Along with this progress, while grower meetings continue to be offered solely virtually for now, we look forward to in-person meetings resuming as conditions warrant.

Virtual Seminar Draws 35 Participants

Yesterday's Vegetable Grower Meeting focused on Precise Technology Applications in Agriculture. SWFREC precision ag engineer Dr. Yiannis Ampatzidis presented "**Emerging Technologies for Vegetables.**" His talk focused on smart technologies for vegetable crops to help improve sustainability and reduce production costs and environmental impacts (photo below). Additional presentations included "Growing pains—Is Precision Ag Technology Worth the Effort?" by Scott Berden, precision ag specialist, US Sugar, and "Using Soil Moisture Sensors for Irrigation Decision Making" by Dr. Charles Barrett, regional specialized extension agent, water resources, UF/IFAS North Florida Research and Education Center, Suwannee Valley. The program also enabled new UF/IFAS Hendry County Extension director Craig Frey to introduce himself to participants.



New Grower Meeting Set for June 18

A virtual Vegetable Growers Meeting focused on soil fumigation will be offered on June 18, 10:00am-12:00pm. To see a detailed agenda and connection information, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/events-agendas/2020-06-18-Vegetable-Growers-meeting-online.pdf>.

Grower-related Coronavirus Information Continues to Be Published

Associate director of stakeholder relations Gene McAvoy has been busy with media interviews in light of COVID-19. Click on the links below to see the most recent articles and reports that include his comments and expertise:

- An article titled “As Coronavirus Pandemic Spikes Orange Juice Sales, a Florida Citrus Grower Gets Squeezed” appeared on the USA Today web site. The article was written by Fort Myers News-Press reporter Andrew West and includes information from McAvoy. To read the story and view an imbedded video story, click here: <https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/2020/05/12/florida-citrus-florida-oranges-coronavirus/3093436001/>.
- McAvoy was interviewed live during a news report on WPEC, Palm Beach County’s CBS Channel 12 TV station for a segment titled “The New US: The Pandemic’s Impact on Food.” To watch the report, click here: <https://cbs12.com/news/coronavirus/the-new-us/the-new-us-the-pandemics-impact-on-food>.



- McAvoy wrote a guest column for the Fort Myers News-Press titled “Growers and Food Banks are Rallying in This Time of Crisis.” To read the article, click here: <https://www.news-press.com/story/news/2020/05/09/coronavirus-florida-food-banks-growers-produce-underserved/3068405001/>.
- An article that appeared on the Vegetable and Specialty Crop News web site features comments from McAvoy about watermelon production affected by COVID-19. “Watermelon Supply Down; Prices Stay High for Farmers,” written by AgNet Media’s Clint Thompson, can be viewed here: <http://vscnews.com/watermelon-supply-prices-farmers/>.



SWFL Fresh: Taste the Local Difference

SWFL Direct to Market Producers can now list their business profile on the SWFL Fresh web site. “SWFL Fresh: Taste the Local Difference” is a brand created by UF/IFAS Extension, the SWFL Regional Planning Council, and Eat Local Lee to connect consumers with local producers. If you are a producer selling any direct to market products, create your profile by clicking the

website and scrolling down to “Producers Register Now!”: www.swflfresh.com. For more information or to be involved in future development of this brand, contact Jessica Ryals, food systems agent, UF/IFAS Collier County Extension, Naples, at jessicaryals@ufl.edu.

Extension Publications Provide Virus Info

To read articles written by UF/IFAS faculty and staff about the Coronavirus, you can visit the Electronic Data Information Source here: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_covid19.

Pesticide License Renewal Grace Period Extended—Classes to Be Offered Soon

Florida agriculture commissioner Nikki Fried has extended the timeframe for reporting and renewing restricted-use pesticide licenses by an additional sixty days, effective April 20, 2020. SWFREC associate director of stakeholder relations Gene McAvooy plans to begin offering virtual training classes for those who need to renew their licenses; watch for announcements soon. Please note that UF/IFAS does offer a number of online resources for obtaining credits as well. Click here for more information: <https://ifas-pest.catalog.instructure.com/>.

Graduate Student Residence Progress Photos



Peer-reviewed Journal Articles

- **Effect of Essential Nutrients on Roots Growth and Lifespan of Huanglongbing Affected Citrus Trees** has been published in *Plants* (9(4): 483. 2020). Post-doctoral associate Dr. Alisheikh Atta, center director and soil scientist Dr. Kelly Morgan, and post-doctoral associate Dr. Said Hamido are first-third authors, respectively. To read the full article, click here: https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/soil-water/2020-04-Atta-Morgan-Essential-Nutrients_HLB-Plants.pdf.
- **Agroview: Cloud-based Application to Process, Analyze and Visualize UAV-collected Data for Precision Agriculture Applications Utilizing Artificial Intelligence** has been published in *Computers and Electronics in Agriculture* (174. 2020. 105457). Precision ag engineer Dr. Yiannis Ampatzidis, engineer and research technologist Victor Partel, and engineer Lucas Costa are first-third authors, respectively. To read the full article, click here: https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/precision-ag-eng/2020-04-Ampatzidis_Agroview_Computers_Electronics_Agriculture.pdf.

Extension Publication

Antibiotics in Crop Production is now available on the UF/IFAS Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS) web site. Ph.D. student Leigh Archer, plant physiologist Dr. Ute Albrecht, and plant pathologist Dr. Pam Roberts are first-third authors, respectively. To read the full article, click here: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs1366>.

Upcoming Events

June 16, 2020, 1pm online

2020 UF/IFAS Virtual Ag Best Management Practices (BMPs) Summit: Precision and Variable Rate Spraying and Fertilizer Application

Open to extension agents and growers. SWFREC precision ag engineer Dr. Yiannis Ampatzidis is the speaker

Extension agents register for IST 31849

To link to seminar online: <http://zoom.us>, click “Join a Meeting,” and enter this code: 187 845 490

June 23, 2020, 1pm online

2020 UF/IFAS Virtual Ag Best Management Practices (BMPs) Summit: Panel—Successful BMP Implementation and Why It Worked

Open to extension agents and growers. SWFREC associate director of stakeholder relations Gene McAvoy is a panelist

Extension agents register for IST 31849

To link to seminar online: <http://zoom.us>, click “Join a Meeting,” and enter this code: 187 845 490