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July 1, 2021

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

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Spotlight on . . . Weed Science Program Sprouts Education



It's quite common for SWFREC weed scientist Dr. Ramdas Kanissery to receive questions from growers seeking information about weed control in their citrus groves and

vegetable fields. During a recent meeting of citrus growers and managers, in fact, he was asked about a good herbicide program.

“Utilizing a pre-emergent program in addition to a post-emergent program will help growers fight weeds in the long run,” Dr. Kanissery says. “And yes, glyphosate (also known as Roundup) has been out there—it is easily available and cost-effective—but we need to start thinking about alternatives. We have some options out there, such as glufosinate. We should be alternating products, like using glyphosate one season, then glufosinate the next. By alternating, we can fight weed resistance and tolerance and reduce the adverse impact of herbicides as well.”

Rotating herbicides with different mode of action is the key in managing resistant/tolerant weeds

| Action Ingredient | Example | Mode of action |
|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Glyphosate | Roundup, Glifosol, etc. | EPY 101 |
| Fluroxypyr | Granroam | EPY 102 |
| Carfentrazone | Aim | EPY 103 |
| Glufosinate | Blay-Zel, Scout, etc. | EPY 104 |

[\(See more\)](#)

Faculty Earn Promotions

Two SWFREC faculty members have just received confirmation of their promotions! Precision ag engineer Dr. Yiannis Ampatzidis (UF/IFAS Agricultural and Biological Engineering Department) and entomologist Dr. Jawwad Qureshi (UF/IFAS Entomology and Nematology Department) have each been promoted to associate professor with tenure. Congratulations, Dr. Ampatzidis and Dr. Qureshi!



Scientists to Share Research at Expos

The Citrus Expo and Vegetable and Specialty Crop Expo events are slated for Wednesday, August 18, and Thursday, August 19, respectively, at the Lee Civic Center in North Fort Myers. Seven SWFREC faculty members will make presentations.

August 18

2:20pm: Soil microbiologist Dr. Sarah Strauss, **“Soil Health and Microbes: How They Fit Together and Why They’re Important”**

3:20pm: Citrus horticulturist Dr. Fernando Alferéz, **“Solving Preharvest Fruit Drop by Understanding Abscission in HLB-Affected Trees: A Hormonal and Nutritional Approach”**

4:40pm: Plant physiologist Dr. Ute Albrecht, **“Update on Rootstock Trials on Florida Central Ridge and Flatwood-type Sites”**



August 19

10:15am: Ag economist Dr. Kim Morgan, **“Managing Farm Business Risks and Protecting Your People During a Global Pandemic”**

2:15pm: Vegetable pathologist Dr. Pam Roberts, **“Update on Emerging and Chronic Disease Challenges in Southwest Florida Watermelon Production”**

3:15pm: Center director and soil and water scientist Dr. Kelly Morgan, **“Improved Soil Test-based Recommendations Using Artificial Intelligence”**

3:30pm: Vegetable horticulturist Dr. Phillip Williams, **“pH and Phosphorus Tomato Fertility in Southwest Florida”**



Congressman Tours Vegetable Farm

Earlier this month, Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, whose district includes Hendry County and most of Collier County, joined representatives of Florida Farm Bureau for a tour of C&B farms in Clewiston. SWFREC associate director for stakeholder relations Gene McAvoy participated in the tour, which also included a roundtable discussion with area growers about issues impacting southwest Florida vegetable producers.

Congressman Diaz-Balart was presented a Friend of Farm Bureau Award for his dedication to and longtime support of Florida agriculture.



From left: Chad and Amanda Jamerson, Gene McAvoy, Jarad Plair, Congressman Marion Diaz-Balart, Pablo Sanchez, Paul Meador, and Chuck Obern.

Project Update Included in Magazine

An article included in the summer 2021 issue of Citrograph magazine provides an update on a research project being conducted in part by plant physiologist Dr. Ute Albrecht. She is third author of **“Measuring Scion and Rootstock Tolerance to HLB in the Greenhouse.”** Citrograph is the official publication of the Citrus Research Board, based in California, which is funding the project. To read the full article, click here: https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/plant-physiology/2021-Summer-Albrecht_Citrograph.pdf.



Article Highlights Ag Day Visit


For its 2021 “Ag Day,” Leadership Lee County brought 35 class members to the center this past spring to learn about the economic impact of ag in southwest Florida and the types of research being conducted at SWFREC. Speakers included associate director for stakeholder relations Gene McAvoy, weed scientist Dr. Ramdas Kanissery, and precision ag engineer Dr. Yiannis Ampatzidis.

The article titled “Center Assists Leadership Lee with AG Day 2021” is included in the spring issue of Agribusiness Today, Florida Gulf Coast University’s Center for Agribusiness newsletter. It spotlights the group’s stop at SWFREC: “The class experienced four demonstrations highlighting the recent advances in AG technology including “smart” weed and tree sprayers, a weed steamer, and drone capabilities. These technologies focus on reducing the amount and costs of the agrichemicals needed to produce crops most efficiently.”


Spring 2021

Center Assists Leadership Lee with AG Day 2021


Thirty-five Leadership Lee class members “studied” the region’s progressive food producing operations, on March 19th, as the highlight of the Chamber of Southwest Florida’s traditional “AG Day” field trip. Chamber Executive Director, David Miller, called on FGCU’s Center for Agribusiness leaders Jaime Weisinger, Mitch Hutchcraft and Ron Hamel to assist in putting this year’s “AG Day” program together. Center Director, Fritz Roka, and staff members, Dr. Alex Magnier, Ron Hamel and Ashley White participated in the day’s educational event.




Gene McAvoy highlights economic importance of AG at UF/IFAS SWFREC



Yiannis demonstrating drone technology at UF/IFAS SWFREC



Jaime describing the tomato industry in Immokalee



Weed control at CCLP Gopher Ridge Grove

Refereed Journal Articles

Kunwar, S., Grosser, J., Gmitter, F. G., Castle, W. S., & Albrecht, U. (2021). Field Performance of ‘Hamlin’ Orange Trees Grown on Various Rootstocks in Huanglongbing-endemic Conditions, HortScience horts, 56(2), 244-253. <https://journals.ashs.org/hortsci/view/journals/hortsci/56/2/article-p244.xml>.

Costa, L., Archer, L., Ampatzidis, Y., Casteluci, L., Caurin, A.P., Albrecht, U. Determining leaf stomatal properties in citrus trees utilizing machine vision and artificial intelligence. Precision Agric 22, 1107–1119 (2021). <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11119-020-09771-x>.

Nevins, C.J., Strauss, S.L. and Inglett, P.W. (2021), Biological soil crusts enhance moisture and nutrients in the upper rooting zone of sandy soil agroecosystems . J. Plant Nutr. Soil Sci., 183: 615-626. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jpln.202000218>.

Castellano-Hinojosa, A., Meyering, B., Nuzzo, A., Strauss, S.L., Albrecht, U. Effect of plant biostimulants on root and plant health and the rhizosphere microbiome of citrus trees in huanglongbing-endemic conditions. Trees (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00468-021-02133-8>.

“Pest of the Month: Cowpea curculio” appears in the June issue of Florida Grower magazine. Associate director for stakeholder relations Gene McAvoy is the author. To read the article, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/mcavoy/2021-06-McAvoy-Pest-of-the-month-FL-Growers.pdf>.

Handbooks Available

The 2020–2021 Vegetable Production Handbook of Florida and the 2020-2021 Florida Citrus Production Guide are now available! To pick up a copy, visit SWFREC (please knock on the front doors) and the UF/IFAS Hendry County Extension office, 1085 Pratt Blvd., LaBelle, FL 33935, Office: (863) 674-4092. The books will also be available at any future in-person meetings and workshops.

In addition to the hard copies, the handbooks are available online (with printable sections): vegetable <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv292> and citrus <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cg101>.



SWFL Fresh: Choose Local, Choose Fresh

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

Upcoming Events

July 13, 10am-12pm—In-person
SWFREC Foundation Board Meeting
SWFREC

July 14, 2021, 10-11am—via Zoom
Citrus Squeezer Seminar

“Fresh Fruit Options for Florida Growers in the 20s” by Dr. Fred Gmitter, UF/IFAS Citrus REC, Lake Alfred
“Processing Sweet Orange Options for Florida Growers in the 20s” by Dr. Jude Grosser, UF/IFAS Citrus REC, Lake Alfred
Click here to register, then you will receive an e-mail with seminar connection info:
https://ufl.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcocOqvj4iGteNboWpnSdH6wrD1_x6cyXd.

July 27, 10am-12pm –In-person
SWFREC Citrus Advisory Committee Meeting
SWFREC

August 10, 10am-12pm—In-person
SWFREC Vegetable Advisory Committee Meeting
SWFREC

August 18, 8:45am-5pm
Citrus Expo

Lee Civic Center, North Fort Myers

For seminar lineup and to register, click here: <https://citrusexpo.net/>.

Three SWFREC faculty will make presentations. See the above article “Scientists to Share Research at Expos.”

August 18, 5:30-9pm
FGCU Alico Arena, Fort Myers

Gulf Citrus Growers Association Citrus and Agricultural Industry Celebration.

Invitations and sponsorship opportunities will be mailed soon.

August 19, 8:45am-5pm
Specialty Crop Expo

Lee Civic Center, North Fort Myers

For seminar lineup and to register, click here: <https://citrusexpo.net/>.

Four SWFREC faculty will make presentations. See the above article “Scientists to Share Research at Expos.”

September 8, 9am-5pm
UF/IFAS Florida Tomato Institute and Food Safety Workshop

LaBelle Civic Center, LaBelle

The morning program will include industry and research updates. SWFREC faculty members are expected to be among the presenters. The afternoon program will include sponsor new product updates and food safety workshop/T-GAP renewal.

Registration will be available soon. It will be free for employees of Florida tomato producers and packers, sponsors, and presenters. The cost for other attendees will be \$100. Lunch will be sponsored and catered by the Hendry County Cattlemen’s Association.

Julie A. Carson
Marketing and Communications Specialist
UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center
2685 SR 29 North
Immokalee, FL 34142
P: 239-658-3462
F: 239-658-3469
carsonj@ufl.edu
<http://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu>