



February 24, 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:  

UF Top Public University for Ag



The University of Florida ranks #1 among public universities in a recent “2020 Best Colleges for Agricultural Sciences in America” study. Conducted by Niche, a Pittsburgh, PA-based data science company that serves as a review and search platform for education, the study compares the top ag science degree programs in the US, including animal sciences, horticulture, aquaculture, agronomy, crop science, and turf management. Only Cornell University, a private institution, ranks higher than UF overall. Go Gators!

Citrus Hall of Famer Passes



Credit: Ernie Neff, Citrus Industry

Dr. Gene Albrigo, a longtime professor of citrus horticulture at the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center (CREC) in Lake Alfred, passed away earlier this month at the age of 79. His tenure at CREC spanned 50-plus years, and though he officially retired several years ago, he continued to commute to the center from his home in Daytona Beach Shores a couple days a week to further the center's research work. His research covered many facets of citrus production. One of the most notable is DISC (Decision Information Systems for Citrus), a model to help citrus growers pinpoint flowering time based on chilling hours and crop load. DISC is still in use today. Albrigo was inducted into the Florida Citrus Hall of Fame in 2018.

Notice: Possible Graft Incompatibility

Recently, some apparent graft compatibility issues affecting the new citrus rootstock US-1283 and particular scions were noticed. To read a brief statement about this, click here: https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/plant-physiology/2020-02-14-Albrecht_Notice-possible-graft-incompatibility.pdf. For further information, contact SWFREC plant physiologist Dr. Ute Albrecht (ualbrecht@ufl.edu) or Dr. Kim Bowman (Kim.bowman@usda.gov), research geneticist with USDA ARS in Fort Pierce.

Spotlight on: Cover Crop Research

A UF/IFAS field day this past November in central Florida has directed a great deal of attention to the use of cover crops to improve soil health in citrus groves in the throes of citrus greening disease. The event, "Citrus Soil Health: Fertility, Cover Crops, and Compost" included a talk by SWFREC soil microbiologist Dr. Sarah Strauss titled "**What Makes a Healthy Soil.**" Since that event, numerous articles have been published about the research that Dr. Strauss and other UF/IFAS scientists are conducting, including:

- Ernie Neff, with Citrus Industry magazine, posted an article in early January that stresses the importance of cover crops to citrus. "(They) are a year-round input into the soil," Dr. Strauss explained. "Once you plant the seeds, those plants are staying in the soil continuously and providing a lot of benefits that compost may or may not provide without repeated applications." To see the article and listen to additional comments from Dr. Strauss, click here: <http://citrusindustry.net/2020/01/01/soil-cover-crops-and-compost/>.

- Florida journalist Nano Riley authored an article in January for Civil Eats, a daily news source about the American food system that brings together 100-plus contributors who discuss sustainable agriculture, titled “Can Cover Crops Save Florida’s Citrus?” “Soil is a microbiome, much like the gut, and different varieties of plants supply different nutrients,” Dr. Strauss explained. Riley notes that Dr. Strauss and other researchers are finding that some cover crops create more biomass and increase organic matter in soil. To see the full article, click here: <https://civileats.com/2020/01/22/can-cover-crops-save-floridas-citrus/>.
- Frank Giles, editor of Florida Grower magazine, wrote a cover story for the February issue titled “A Tale of Two Citrus Groves—A Look at Different Approaches to Soil Health That Have Brought Orange Plantings Back from the Brink.” It focuses on information discussed at the November field day and features two citrus growers who hosted participants in their groves. “Strauss conducted a study over the summer in SW Florida to determine how certain mixes of cover crops perform and germinate,” Giles writes. “She noted germination rates were pretty good and similar across the board, but (cover crop) brown top millet was the clear winner when it came to providing biomass.” To see the full article, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/soil-microbiology/2020-02-Strauss-FloridaGrower.pdf>.

Food Safety Workshops Coming to Naples

Three UF/IFAS Extension grower workshops related to food safety will be offered in April at the Collier County Extension office in Naples. SWFREC food science state specialized extension agent Matt Krug will be among the speakers at these events:

- **Beyond Basic Produce Safety: A Hands-on Analysis, April 23.** A one-day course targeted at those who have already attended a food safety training and are looking for a more in-depth and hands-on experience. Cost is \$35. For more information and to register, click here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/beyond-basic-produce-food-safety-a-hands-on-analysis-naples-registration-88678386441>.
- **Build Your Own Farm Food Safety Plan, April 24.** A one-day interactive course that covers the various third-party audit options and their respective food safety plan requirements and templates. Cost is \$35. For more information and to register, click here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/build-your-own-farm-food-safety-plan-naples-registration-88728061019>.

- **Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training, April 28.** A one-day course for fruit and vegetable growers and packers who fall under the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule. Cost is \$25. For more information and to register, click here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/produce-safety-alliance-grower-training-course-naples-registration-83991457711>.

Operation Clean Sweep

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services announces the 2019-2020 Operation Clean Sweep program, a mobile pesticide collection effort that provides a safe way to dispose of cancelled, suspended, and unusable pesticides. The free service is available to farms/groves, greenhouses, nurseries, golf courses, and pest control entities. For more information, including how to sign up, click here: <https://floridadep.gov/waste/permitting-compliance-assistance/content/operation-cleansweep-pesticides>.

Upcoming Events:

March 19, 2020, 8:30am-1:30pm

Grower Workshop/In-service Training: Beneath the Citrus Canopy: Weeds, Roots, and Microbes

SWFREC

Presentations will include “**Understanding Effective and Tree-Safe Weed Management in Citrus**” (weed scientist Dr. Ramdas Kanissery), “**The Importance of Rootstocks for Florida Citrus Production**” (plant physiologist Dr. Ute Albrecht), and “**Building Healthy Soils for Citrus**” (soil microbiologist Dr. Sarah Strauss). Hands-on training will also be conducted. For complete agenda, CEU availability, and registration information, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/events-agendas/2020-03-18-IST-Grower-Meeting.pdf>.

April 8, 2020, 7:30am-6:30pm

Certified Crop Advisor Workshop

SWFREC

For holders of a Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) license ONLY. Registration information will be sent via email to CCAs soon.

April 17, 2020, 10:00am-1:00pm

SWFREC Citrus Advisory Committee Meeting

SWFREC

To RSVP, contact Jennifer at 239-658-3415 or jderleth@ufl.edu.

April 21, 2020, 10:00am-1:00pm
SWFREC Vegetable Advisory Committee Meeting

SWFREC

To RSVP, contact Jennifer at 239-658-3415 or jderleth@ufl.edu.

May 1 & 2, 2020, 7:30am-1:30pm
30th Annual Farm Safety Day

SWFREC

Same program is offered both days. For more information and registration details, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/events-agendas/2020-05-0102-Farm-Safety-Day.pdf>.

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>

***** NOTICE *****

To unsubscribe from the IFAS-Announce-L list:

For those in UF/IFAS, uncheck the box in your Directory profile, <https://directory.ifas.ufl.edu/mydirectory/> For those outside IFAS, <http://lists.ifas.ufl.edu/cgi-bin/wa.exe?SUBED1=IFAS-ANNOUNCE%2BL&A=1>