



June 30, 2020

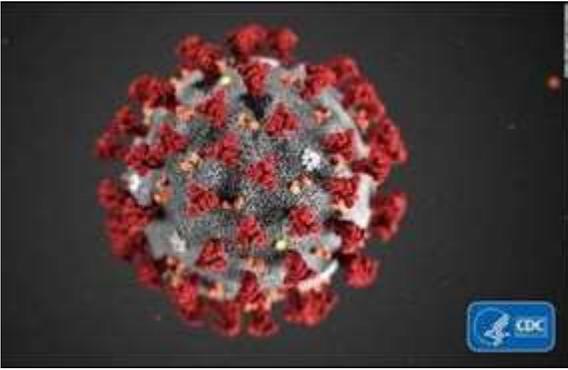
Welcome to SWFREC Update E-news! This newsletter is distributed biweekly and contains news about the center and its faculty and staff, program research updates, and upcoming events.

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

Social media:  

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## SWFREC COVID-19 Update

The UF Research Resumption Plan is nearing its completion. With that, SWFREC is busily resuming data collection, which was put on hold in March at the onset of the Corona virus, both at the center and on cooperative grower properties. As projects proposed by SWFREC faculty continue to be approved by UF/IFAS administration, research in greenhouses,

screenhouses, and laboratories is in full swing and vegetable fields are being prepared for new plantings (see photos below).

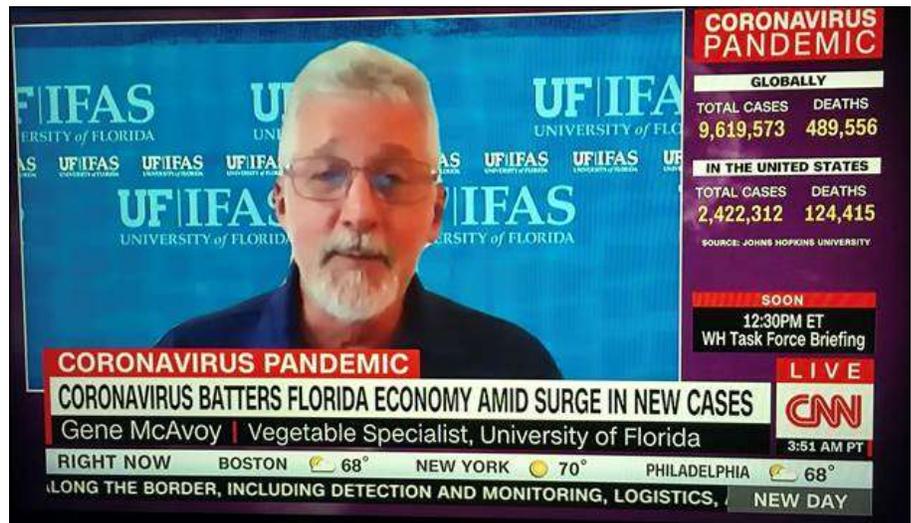
Some SWFREC faculty and staff continue to work remotely, but several have returned to work at the center on a staggered-schedule basis. We have in place a center-wide safety plan that includes hand sanitizing stations and the requirement to wear masks. In continuing to strive to be prudent and provide the best service possible while keeping our clientele and our staff safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, grower clientele should continue to contact faculty and staff via e-mail addresses provided on our web site: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/>.

While grower meetings have been offered solely virtually for nearly four months, we are beginning to plan in-person meetings, using proper social distancing protocol, in the coming weeks.



## SWFREC Faculty Talks Ag via National Media

Associate director for stakeholder relations Gene McAvoy was featured on a CNN report last week about the Corona virus and its impact on Florida. The segment included information about the state's unemployment issues, a halt to construction projects, and the devastating effects to



the agricultural industry, which McAvoy addressed. The segment also was picked up by multiple news affiliates, such as this NBC station in Richmond, Virginia:

<https://www.nbc12.com/video/2020/06/26/coronavirus-batters-florida-economy-cases-surge/>.

## Virtual Sessions Feature SWFREC Faculty

Two SWFREC representatives were part of the UF/IFAS 2020 Virtual Ag Best Management Practice Summit sessions:

- Precision ag engineer Dr. Yiannis Ampatzidis (photo below) presented “Precision and Variable Rate Spraying and Fertilizer Application” in mid-June. Fifty-plus growers and industry representatives participated.
- Associate director for stakeholder relations Gene McAvoy was one of three panelists for the session last week titled “Successful BMP Implementation and Why it Worked.” Nearly 80 growers and industry representatives participated.



## Grower Meeting Draws 60 Participants

A virtual SWFREC vegetable growers meeting in mid-June focused on soil fumigation and featured four experts. To see the presentations via the **new SWFREC Vegetable Growers Resources web page**, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/resources/vegetables/>.

### **Former SWFREC Student Wins Award**

Asmita Shukla, who graduated with her UF agricultural and biological engineering Ph.D. in 2014 under the guidance of committee chair Dr. Sanjay Shukla, SWFREC water resources engineer, was recently named winner of the 2020 American Water Resources Association A. Ivan Johnson Young Professionals award. The honor recognizes future leaders of water resources research, management, and education. Asmita currently works for the Southwest Florida Water Management District in Brooksville as lead hydrologic data analyst.

### **Trade Journal Article**

Associate director for stakeholder relations Gene McAvoy's **Pest of the Month** column in the June issue of Florida Grower magazine focuses on Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus. To read the article, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/mcavoy/2020-06-McAvoy-Pest-of-the-month-FL-Growers.pdf>.



### **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](http://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](mailto: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](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 McAvoy 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



## Upcoming Events

**July 14, 2020, 10:00am-12:00pm**

**SWFREC Foundation Board Meeting**

This will be an in-person meeting with proper social distancing in the auditorium. This will also be available online via Zoom. Committee members have been notified of connection info.

**July 21, 2020, 10:00am-12:00pm—online only**

**SWFREC Vegetable Advisory Committee Meeting**

Committee members have been notified of connection info.

**July 21-23, 2020, 2:30-5:30pm each day—online**

**Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training**

SWFREC food science state specialized extension agent Matt Krug will be among the speakers.

Cost to Attend: \$25. Please register at: [https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A\\_psa072120.eventbrite.com&d=DwIFaQ&c=sJ6xIWYx-zLMB3EPkvcnVg&r=3Vsbpss3RtV58RXhAGohxw&m=w\\_Cy6Rf\\_cOESWjqPaDwmjf\\_nx7DsnmCrPEDcgLrnFa4&s=4mfHsEiPxvIW40fbYD4PgghwaMggjTUiqNbtQ6qGrzQ&e=](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_psa072120.eventbrite.com&d=DwIFaQ&c=sJ6xIWYx-zLMB3EPkvcnVg&r=3Vsbpss3RtV58RXhAGohxw&m=w_Cy6Rf_cOESWjqPaDwmjf_nx7DsnmCrPEDcgLrnFa4&s=4mfHsEiPxvIW40fbYD4PgghwaMggjTUiqNbtQ6qGrzQ&e=)

July 28, 2020, 10:00am-1:00pm

**SWFREC Citrus Advisory Committee Meeting**

This will be an in-person meeting with proper social distancing in the auditorium. This will also be available online via Zoom. Committee members have been notified of connection info.

**CANCELLED: August 12-13**

**Citrus/Vegetable Specialty Crop Expo**

Lee Civic Center, North Fort Myers, FL

**PLEASE NOTE:** Virtual seminars for citrus, vegetable, and specialty crop growers, including many that would have been presented at Expo, will be available in August. More details to come.

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