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October 20, 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.

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VP Angle Visits SWFREC

UF/IFAS Vice President of Agriculture and Natural Resources Dr. Scott Angle visited SWFREC in early October (pictured below left with center director Dr. Kelly Morgan). Dr. Angle started his new post in mid-July and prior to his visit to Southwest Florida had been introduced to area growers and SWFREC faculty via a virtual SWFRE Foundation meeting in July.



Dr. Angle hosted a lunch meeting with 18 local growers. Topics including phosphorus BMPs, farm labor, and marketing were discussed. Following the grower meeting, he had a tour of the center with Dr. Morgan and a meeting with SWFREC faculty members. He also visited a citrus grove and vegetable farm to get an up-close look at local commercial operations. Dr. Angle is conducting similar meetings around the state to improve his knowledge of local grower issues and practices as quickly as possible.

Squeezer Targets Citrus Growers

Thirty-plus citrus growers and other industry representatives participated in a recent virtual citrus meeting organized by Mongi Zekri and SWFREC. If you could not attend this meeting, a link to a video of the presentations is provided: <https://youtu.be/vG4v3tcbaAQ>.



Horticulturist Dr. Fernando Alferez presented **“Protected Citrus Growing Systems: From Healthy Trees to High Quality Fruit.”** He provided an overview of the different screening/netting systems employed around the world to protect citrus trees against disease and to improve fruit quality and yield. He also addressed horticultural considerations successful with these systems in Florida, considering geographical and climatological differences across the state.



Entomologist Dr. Jawwad Qureshi presented **“Entomological Considerations for CUPS and IPCs.”** He presented Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP) protection using Citrus Under Protective Screen (CUPS) and Individual Protective Covers (IPC), focusing on monitoring for pests, pest problems, and managing pests.

Phosphorus Research Featured in News Story



Water resources engineer Dr. Sanjay Shukla’s work with a specialty crop grower in Clewiston to recycle phosphorus is featured in a WINK-TV story by environmental reporter Stephanie Byrne. The segment focuses on Dr. Shukla’s research conducted in cooperation with Chuck Obern of C&B Farms. To watch the video, click here: <https://www.winknews.com/2020/09/28/uf-researcher-works-with-clewiston-farmer-to-recycle-phosphorous/>.

SWFREC Pandemic Ag Safety Education Program is Highlighted in an Article, TV News Report, and NPR Segment

- The article “Keeping Farmworkers Safe from COVID-19” appears on the Citrus Industry News web site and includes information about the UF/IFAS Farm Labor Supervisor Training Program’s recent efforts to educate managers about how to keep their farmworkers safe during the Coronavirus pandemic. The article puts forth information from Dr. Kimberly Morgan, the new ag economist at SWFREC, and Gene McAvoy, SWFREC associate director for stakeholder relations. To read the article, click here: <https://citrusindustry.net/2020/10/16/keeping-farmworkers-safe-from-covid-19/>.
- A FOX-TV news story about the program included an interview with program coordinator Carlene Thissen, one of the primary speakers during the educational training sessions. To watch the video by reporter Sandra Rodriguez, click here: <https://www.fox4now.com/news/local-news/covid-19-safety-training-for-farm-labor-supervisors>.
- A recent episode of Gulf Coast Life, a radio segment on the NPR station located at Florida Gulf Coast University, spotlighted the importance of farmworker safety during the pandemic now that the fall growing season is well underway. Thissen was one of the speakers during the program and highlighted the value of the free UF/IFAS COVID-19 safety trainings. To hear host Andrea Perdomo’s show, click here: <https://cpa.ds.npr.org/s399/audio/2020/09/gl092320.mp3?dl=1&siteplayer=true&dl=1>.

Refereed Journal Articles

- **“Root Samples Provide Early and Improved Detection of *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* in Citrus.”** Nature Scientific Reports, October 2020. Former entomologist Dr. Phil Stansly and senior biological scientist Barry Kostyk are third and fourth authors, respectively. To read the article, click here: https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/entomology/2020-10-Stansly-Scientific_Reports_Publication.pdf.
- **“Biological Soil Crusts Enhance Moisture and Nutrients in the Upper Rooting Zone of Sandy Soil Agroecosystems.”** Journal of Plant Nutrition and Soil Science, 183: 615-626. Ph.D. student Clayton Nevins and soil microbiologist Dr. Sarah Strauss are first and second authors, respectively. To read the article, click here: https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/soil-microbiology/2020_Nevins_Strauss_Plant_Nutrition_Soil_Science.pdf.
- **“Water and Soil Nutrient Dynamics of Huanglongbing-affected Citrus Trees as Impacted by Ground-Applied Nutrients.”** Agronomy journal, 10: 1485. Post-doctoral research associate Dr. Alisheikh A. Atta, center director and soil scientist Dr. Kelly Morgan, post-doctoral research associate Dr. Said A. Hamido, and research coordinator Dr. Kamal A. Mahmoud are first, second, third, and fifth authors, respectively. To read the article, click here: https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/soil-water/2020-10-Alisheikh-Morgan-Hamido-Mahmoud_Agronomy.pdf.
- **“Food and Agricultural Transportation Challenges Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic.”** Choices, Agricultural and Applied Economics Association, volume 35, quarter 3. Natural resource ag economist Dr. Tara Wade is second author. To read the article, click here: https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/nat-res-econ/2020-Walters_Wade_Suttles-Choices_Q3_V35.pdf.

Trade Journal Articles

SWFREC faculty, staff, and students co-authored two articles included in the October issue of Citrus Industry magazine’s special “Spotlight on Soil Health” section:

- **“Understanding the Fate and Persistence of Herbicides in Soils.”** Weed scientist Ramdas Kanissery and master’s student Biwek Gairhe are first and third authors, respectively. To read the article, click here: https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/weed-science/2020-10-Kanissery_Citrus-Industry.pdf.
- **“Enhancing Soil Health with Cover Crops.”** Soil microbiologist Dr. Sarah Strauss, post-doctoral associate Dr. Antonio Castellano-Hinojosa, weed scientist Dr. Ramdas Kanissery, and natural resource economist Dr. Tara Wade are first, second, fourth, and fifth authors, respectively. To read the article, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/soil-microbiology/2020-10-Strauss-CastellanoHinojosa-Kanissery-Wade-Citrus-Industry.pdf>.



Associate director for stakeholder relations Gene McAvoy authored the “Pest of the Month” column for the October issue of Florida Grower magazine. **“Asian Bean Thrips”** provides information about the identification, survival and spread, and management of this pest. To see the article, click here: <https://www.growingproduce.com/vegetables/avoid-getting-tripped-up-by-asian-bean-thrips/>.

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.

Graduate Student Residence Progress

--- Expecting a late-October / early November completion date ---

The residence will house eight graduate students, which will enable them to continue their educational programs and conduct research at the center.

SWFREC plans to host growers and media for tours of the Dr. Philip A. Stansly Graduate Student Residence (named for the former longtime SWFREC entomologist) when it is safe to do so considering the pandemic.



Upcoming Events

October 21, 2020, 10:00am-12:00pm

Farm Labor Supervisor Training: COVID-19 Farm Labor Crew Leader—Protecting Your Farm Labor Workers (online only) English and Spanish instruction simultaneously via separate sessions. For more information and instructions on how to register, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/events-agendas/2020-09-FLS-COVID-Flyer-English.pdf>.

October 20-22, 2020, 2:30-5:30pm <https://psa102020.eventbrite.com/>.

November 4-6, 2020, 2:30-5:30pm <https://psa110420.eventbrite.com/>.

December 1-3, 2020, 2:30-5:30pm <https://psa120120.eventbrite.com/>.

Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training

Virtual courses for fruit and vegetable growers and packers who fall under the FSMA Produce Safety Rule. Cost to Attend: \$25. Please use the registration links above for each session. SWFREC food science state specialized extension agent Matt Krug will be among the speakers and will present “**Postharvest Handling and Sanitation.**”

October 27, 2020, 10:00am-12:00pm

SWFREC Citrus Advisory Committee Meeting—online only

Zoom connection: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/92729688334>

November 12, 2020, 10:00am-12:00pm

Vegetable Growers Meeting—online only

Program and connection details coming soon.

November 18, 2020, 8:30am-12:00pm

Florida Cucurbit Grower Conference—online only

For program details and to register (free), click here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/florida-cucurbit-growers-conference-tickets-121437022403?aff=ebdssbeac>

November 19, 2020, 10:00-11:00am

Citrus Squeezer—online only

Zoom connection: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/99502736414>

“Effect of Various Irrigation Rates on Growth of High-density Plantings of Young Trees”

Post-doctoral research associate Dr. Said Hamido and center director and soil scientist Dr. Kelly Morgan, UF/IFAS SWFREC

In November 2017, eight-month-old citrus trees were transplanted at different densities with four irrigation treatments (very low, low, medium, and high) of recommended rates for young citrus trees. Between 2017 and 2020, tree height, trunk diameter, leaf area, canopy volume, root growth, nutrient concentrations, stem water potential, and water use were evaluated. Results concluded that the highest irrigation rate increased the trees’ height, trunk diameter, canopy volume, root growth, root lifespan, stem water potential, and nutrient uptake.

“Manual Pruning for High-quality Citrus: Not all Varieties are Pruned Equal”

Citrus horticulturist Dr. Fernando Alferez, UF/IFAS SWFREC

Modern manual pruning is a mix of science and art and is the result of centuries of accumulating knowledge. This will address the basics of citrus hand pruning: How, why, and when to prune by hand and types of pruning. Presentation will emphasize varietal differences that will dictate the way to prune each variety for better yield and quality, as pruning principles are totally different depending on the variety. Two case studies will illustrate those differences: Satsuma mandarins and Navel oranges, as they behave differently and require radically different manual pruning.

December 15, 2020, 10:00-11:00am

Citrus Squeezer—online only

Program and connection details coming soon

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