



Social media:

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

April 23, 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.

In This Edition:

[Spotlight on . . . Longtime Citrus Leader Remembered](#)

[HR Staffer Wins New IFAS Diversity Award](#)

[Pepper Trial Results Released](#)

[Newsletter Spotlights Vegetable Study](#)

[Faculty Present Citrus Research](#)

[Engineer Appointed by Associations](#)

[Precision Ag Program Continues to Gain Press](#)

[Annual Report Features SWFREC Service](#)

[Trade Journal Articles](#)

[EDIS Article](#)

[New Handbooks Available](#)

[SWFL Fresh: Choose Local, Choose Fresh](#)

[Extension Publications Provide Virus Info](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

Spotlight on . . . Longtime Citrus Leader Remembered



Norman Todd, a pillar in the Florida citrus industry for 70-plus years, passed away in late February at the age of 88.

In addition to being an enthusiastic proponent of the citrus industry in southwest Florida, Mr. Todd was instrumental in the establishment of the South Florida Agricultural Council, a group of citrus, vegetable, sugar cane, and cattle growers and managers that pledged its support to the UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center (SWFREC). He was elected

chairman of this group in 1997 and was instrumental in a large number of activities to improve the citrus and agriculture industries in Florida.

“Todd’s citrus career was prolific,” wrote Paul Rusnak, senior online editor of Florida Grower magazine. “He managed thousands of acres of citrus in more than 20 Florida counties and was involved in numerous research committees and production programs.

“He led a statewide referendum among citrus growers to establish the citrus box tax. He was known as the ‘Godfather’ of the box tax, which has raised millions of dollars for UF/IFAS research stations.”



[See more](#)

SWFREC HR Staffer Wins New IFAS Diversity Award



SWFREC human resources specialist Rebecca Decker has been named the staff recipient of the inaugural UF/IFAS Diversity Difference Maker Award! The office of Dean for Research Dr. Rob Gilbert developed this award, recognizing one IFAS staff member and one IFAS faculty member to honor individuals who are contributing to a climate of diversity and inclusion within the research organization.

Dr. Gilbert's office requested that each IFAS unit leader and center director submit nominations. Becky was nominated by the SWFREC Awards Committee. The award sought information about employees who have helped create a diverse and inclusive environment within the UF/IFAS research realm that encourages full participation by all groups; participated in training to learn how to incorporate a more inclusive and affirming environment in their workspace/program; and implemented or participated in a diversity program, committee, or activity. Specifically, Becky's nomination highlighted her work with graduate students, faculty, and visiting scholars at SWFREC, many of who arrive to the center from countries across the globe.

Becky will be recognized for her award during the 14th Annual Florida Agricultural Experiment Station Research Awards Ceremony, which will take place virtually on May 14th.

Congratulations, Becky!

Pepper Trial Results Released

Results from a UF/IFAS 2020 Mini Sweet Pepper Trial conducted at Old Bailey Farms in Bonita Springs have been released.

Details: Varieties planted were replicated four times in 26 plant plots in a randomized complete block design. Fertilization and pest management was grower standard. Above average rainfall resulted in tremendous bacterial spot pressure which highlighted the value of resistant varieties in Florida.

IFAS project investigators include Craig Frey, Hendry County Extension director and multi-county commercial horticulture specialist; Ann Hartman, ag assistant, Everglades Research and Education Center (EREC); Gene McAvoy, associate director for stakeholder relations, SWFREC; Dr. Richard Raid, plant pathologist, EREC; Jessie Watson, biological scientist, SWFREC; and Dr. Phillip Williams, vegetable horticulturist, SWFREC. The statistics analysis and report were compiled by Dr. Williams.

Special thanks to JJ Black and Mike Clevenger for hosting the trial. Due to COVID-19 concerns, a field day did not take place. To see the full results, click here: https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/veg-hort/2021-04-09-FINAL_Report-Pepper_Varieties-Fall_2020.pdf.

Newsletter Spotlights Vegetable Study

Craig Frey, UF/IFAS Hendry County Extension director and multi-county commercial horticulture agent, has added a new section called "Research Highlights" to his monthly South Florida Pest and Disease Hotline newsletter. February's spotlight is on SWFREC vegetable horticulturist Dr. Phillip Williams' research. To read "**Sulfur Amendments to Lower Soil pH**," click here: <http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/hendryco/2021/02/17/sulfur-amendments-to-lower-soil-ph/>.

Faculty Present Citrus Research

Three SWFREC faculty members made presentations during the virtual UF/IFAS Extension Florida Citrus Growers' Institute earlier this month:

- Entomologist [Dr. Jawwad Qureshi](#): **"Applied Biological Control Research for Managing Asian Citrus Psyllid"**
- Citrus horticulturist [Dr. Fernando Alferez](#): **"Individual Protective Covers' (IPCs') Influence on Tree Performance, Fruit Production, Pests, and Diseases"**
- Weed scientist [Dr. Ramdas Kanissery](#): **"Keeping Weeds in Check - Updates for Tree-Rows and Row-Middles"**

To see PDFs and video recordings of these and other presentations, click here: [2021 - Welcome to the Citrus Agents Website - University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences - UF/IFAS \(ufl.edu\)](#). UF/IFAS multi-county citrus agent [Dr. Mongi Zekri](#) served as a moderator for part of the program.

Engineer Appointed by Associations

Ag and biological engineer [Dr. Sanjay Shukla](#) was elected Chair of the Hydrologic Science Academic Cluster (HSAC) for 2021. The HSAC for graduate studies is a unique interdisciplinary program designed to broaden the skills of science and engineering graduate students who are interested in all aspects of water (occurrence and quantity, distribution, circulation, quality, and management/policy use). The HSAC program emphasizes broad and rigorous training in a wide range of areas of expertise.

In addition, Dr. Shukla was invited and appointed as Associate Editor of the Journal of Environmental Quality (JEQ), a bimonthly journal published by the American Society of Agronomy (ASA), Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA). JEQ publishes original research, reviews and analyses, and (environmental issue articles that address anthropogenic impacts on water, soil, and the atmosphere and pertain to some aspect of environmental quality in natural and agricultural ecosystems. His tenure started in January and will be for two years.

Precision Ag Program Continues to Gain Press

An article published in late January by Florida Trend magazine (and later picked up by such publications as the Tampa Bay Times) highlights Agroview, a program developed in part by precision ag engineer [Dr. Yiannis Ampatzidis](#) that can count and evaluate citrus trees in a grove.

"Smart Machines: AI Technology's Impact on Florida's Business Sectors" by Amy Keller focuses on the fact that "AI can't replace humans, but the technology is making inroads in more and more business sectors. . . . Here's a closer look at what companies and researchers across Florida are doing with AI technology and why the experts say it will never completely replace humans."

Agroview is featured in the article's "Agriculture" section under a title called "Gaps in Groves." It highlights the program's ability to utilize aerial and ground images to count trees and assess their health conditions, a process that when done manually—as has typically been the process prior to AI's influence—proves quite time consuming and expensive.

To read the full article, click here: [Smart Machines: AI technology's impact on Florida's business sectors - Florida Trend | Feature](#).



Annual Report Features SWFREC Service

The Immokalee Foundation's 2019-2020 Impact Report includes SWFREC as a valued community partner. In the "Education and More" section, the document includes a quote from center director Dr. Kelly Morgan about SWFREC's community involvement:

"As an integral part of the Immokalee community, UF/IFAS SWFREC has always done what we can to support efforts to assist the area, its residents, and agriculture in general. Our partnership with The Immokalee Foundation has brought to fruition any number of successful accomplishments, from hosting students for educational internships at the center to helping to distribute food to those in need during the Coronavirus pandemic volunteer effort. We appreciate and look forward to our faculty, staff, and graduate students continuing to support the Immokalee community."

To check out the annual report, click here (scroll to page 16 for SWFREC's mention): [Impact Report - The Immokalee Foundation](#).

Trade Journal Articles

"**Herbicide Adjuvants in Citrus Weed Control**" appears in the April 2021 issue of Citrus Industry magazine. Weed scientist Dr. Ramdas Kaniserry is the author. To read the article, click here and scroll to page 16: <https://www.mirabelsmagazinecentral.com/DigitalEdition/index.html?id=7e8cf62e-61b3-4f8b-8d99-1ca782673f1a>.

"**Biological Control of the Asian Citrus Psyllid**" appears in the March 2021 issue of Citrus Industry magazine. Entomologist Dr. Jawwad Qureshi is the author. To read the article, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/entomology/2021-03-Qureshi-Citrus-Industry.pdf>.

"**Pest of the Month: Bean Leafroller**" appears in the March 2021 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/2021-03-McAvoy-Pest-of-the-month-FL-Growers.pdf>.

"**Stem Pitting Disease Caused by Citrus Tristeza Virus**" appears in the February 2021 issue of Citrus Industry magazine. Citrus pathologist Dr. Ozgur Batuman is third author. To read the article, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/citrus-pathology/2021-02-Batuman-Citrus-Industry.pdf>.

"**Pest of the Month: Spinach Downy Mildew**" appears in the February 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/2021-02-McAvoy-Pest-of-the-month-FL-Growers.pdf>.



EDIS Article

"**Bacterial Spot of Pepper**" is now available on the UF/IFAS Extension Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS) web site. SWFREC research assistant scientist Camille McAvoy and vegetable pathologist Dr. Pam Roberts are first and second authors, respectively. To read the article, click here: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/PP/PP36200.pdf>.

New 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

April 27, 1pm

UF/IFAS Extension 2021 Virtual Agricultural Best Management Practices Summit

Speakers will include SWFREC center director and soil scientist Dr. Kelly Morgan (“The Role of Sulfur in Improving Nitrogen and Phosphorus Efficiency”). To register: <https://bit.ly/3sHILFB>.

April 28, 10-11am

Citrus Squeezer (via Zoom) - “Cover Crops in Citrus: Initial Results and Considerations”

SWFREC soil microbiologist Dr. Sarah Strauss will discuss the results from two years of large-scale cover crop field studies in commercial groves and will focus on why we are interested in cover crops in citrus, some of the challenges with planting cover crops in citrus, and lessons we have learned so far.

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlkf-6srjwrH9XILtlyqP1yrXillrVDwwuD>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

May 10-11, 9am-6pm

SWFREC Ag Tech Expo (Virtual event)

Among the speakers: UF/IFAS Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources Dr. J. Scott Angle, SWFREC precision ag engineer Dr. Yiannis Ampatzidis, ag and biological engineer Dr. Sanjay Shukla, and citrus pathologist Dr. Ozgur Batuman. For detailed agenda and registration info, click here: [2021-05-AgTechExpo2021-Flyer-Agenda.pdf](https://www.citrusshow.com/2021-05-AgTechExpo2021-Flyer-Agenda.pdf).

May 12-13, 7am-5pm

Florida Grower Citrus Show (In-person event)

Fort Pierce

SWFREC speakers will include plant physiologist Dr. Ute Albrecht and precision ag engineer Dr. Yiannis Ampatzidis. To see the full agenda and to register, click here: <https://www.citrusshow.com/>.

May 18, 1pm

UF/IFAS Extension 2021 Virtual Agricultural Best Management Practices Summit

Speakers will include SWFREC precision ag engineer Dr. Yiannis Ampatzidis (“Emerging Technologies and Artificial Intelligence for Best Management Practices”) To register: <https://bit.ly/3sHILFB>.

May 19, 10-11am

Farm Labor Supervisor COVID-19 Safety UPDATES: How to Reduce Risks and Protect Your People (ENGLISH, via Zoom)

For more information and free registration, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/events-agendas/2021-05-FLS-COVID-Flyer-English.pdf>.

May 20, 1-2pm

Farm Labor Supervisor COVID-19 Safety UPDATES: How to Reduce Risks and Protect Your People (ENGLISH, via Zoom)

For more information and free registration, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/events-agendas/2021-05-FLS-COVID-Flyer-English.pdf>.

May 25, 10-11am

Farm Labor Supervisor COVID-19 Safety UPDATES: How to Reduce Risks and Protect Your People (SPANISH, via Zoom)

For more information and free registration, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/events-agendas/2021-05-FLS-COVID-Flyer-Spanish.pdf>.

May 26, 1-2pm

Farm Labor Supervisor COVID-19 Safety UPDATES: How to Reduce Risks and Protect Your People (SPANISH, via Zoom)

For more information and free registration, click here: <https://swfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdf/events-agendas/2021-05-FLS-COVID-Flyer-Spanish.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>