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Social media:



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

Welcome to SWFREC Update E-news! This issue focuses solely on our recent Open House! Beginning in January 2023, the newsletter will be distributed monthly and contain news about the center and its faculty and staff, program research updates, and upcoming events.

## Spotlight on . . . Open House Touts SWFREC Research

More than 300 people participated in an opportunity to learn about agriculture in southwest Florida at the 2022 SWFREC Open House on November 30! And the theme, “Before the Bounty: The Science of Crop Production,” was front and center among the various activities conducted by SWFREC faculty, staff, and graduate students:







- Narrated tours of the farm featured 45-minute, rolling trolley rides along vegetable fields and the citrus grove. Among the highlights: utilization of cover crops, such as ryegrass, sunnhemp, and daikon radish, to improve soil health; evaluation of cultural, biological, and chemical methods of pests and diseases that have significant economic impact on vegetable production; installation of “CUPS” (citrus under protective screen) to protect young citrus trees from the Asian Citrus Psyllid, the vector of HLB disease or citrus greening.



- Attendees of laboratory tours were treated to show- and tell-type presentations in four program labs: Citrus Pathology (identifying several common diseases of citrus trees and using new ways to deliver chemicals into plants), Entomology (pest management in citrus and vegetable production systems through cultural, biological, and chemical methods of pest control), Plant Diagnostic Clinic (learning how scientists determine what might be making a plant sick), and Plant Physiology (education about roots and rootstocks—the hidden part of a citrus tree— and learning about the wonders of liquid nitrogen).







- Science demonstrations by lab personnel and students presented up-close views of current research being conducted by eight SWFREC programs: Soil Microbiology, Citrus Pathology/HLB, Precision Agriculture, Weed Science, Entomology, Plant Physiology, Citrus Horticulture, and Water Resources.







The event, which included lunch, attracted everyone from growers and other SWFREC clientele to industry representatives, homeowners, and elementary and middle-school students and their chaperones. In addition to the long list of activities, visitors also learned about area companies and services, such as UF/IFAS Hendry County Extension, Taste of Immokalee, Collier County Farm Bureau, and The Culinary Accelerator. And, as folks departed, they were gifted with broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and collard green plant seedlings to take home—courtesy of Barnett-Partin Plants, Inc.







The Open House was deemed a great success, of course in large part due to the participation and support of our many generous sponsors: Ag-Tronix; B & L Ace Hardware; Collier County Farm Bureau; Cooperative Producers, Inc.; Creel Tractor Company; Everglades Equipment Group; Florida's Natural; Florida Soil Builders; Glade and Grove Supply Co.; Kennco Manufacturing; Magna-Bon; Southwest Florida Service and Supply; Tellus; TriEst Ag Group; Wedgworth's; and Valent. Thank you all for your support!

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



Credits: Numerous photos courtesy of Tyler Jones, UF/IFAS Photography Services.

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