

# Florida Agriculture

## e-news

A PUBLICATION FOR OUR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

Florida Farm Bureau Federation | [www.FloridaFarmBureau.org](http://www.FloridaFarmBureau.org)

## Florida Serves as the 2013 Sunbelt Expo Spotlight State

In 1513, Juan Ponce de Leon and his convoy of explorers brought cattle, horses, hogs and citrus to La Florida, establishing a foundation for Florida's agricultural heritage long before the rest of America was settled.

Five hundred years later, agriculture remains the strongest pillar of Florida's economy, generating more than \$100 billion in economic impact and supporting more than two million jobs.

This year's Sunbelt Ag Expo visitors will have the opportunity to explore the impact that agriculture has had on Florida over the last five centuries by visiting the highlight exhibit, Florida Agriculture: Then and Now, presented

by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Visitors can discover "Fresh from Florida" industries such as cattle, timber, fruit, vegetables, greenhouse plants, row crops, aquaculture and, of course, the state's signature crop - citrus. The exhibit includes hands-on activities such as picking oranges, branding cattle and determining a tree's age.

Each commodity in the exhibit has played a significant role in Florida's past and will continue to propel the state's vibrant industry into the future.

There are other opportunities to learn about Florida agriculture and its 500-year history at the expo. Be sure to look for the *Florida Agriculture: 500 Years in the Making* logo displayed at select booths throughout the expo to discover the Sunshine State's unique products and services.

The University of Florida's exhibit will showcase Florida's most precious resource, water, and convey innovative approaches the agricultural

producers use to conserve water.

This is an invitation to discover the diversity of Florida agriculture and its influence on the state for the past five centuries.

Join us in celebrating Florida Agriculture: Then and Now. Tickets can be purchased in advance at a discounted rate at [sunbeltexpo.com](http://sunbeltexpo.com).



### Sunbelt Ag Expo

**Oct. 15-17, Moultrie, GA**

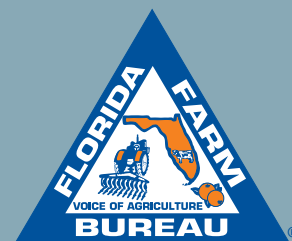
**100,000 + visitors**

**Learn about agriculture**

**[Sunbeltexpo.com](http://Sunbeltexpo.com)**

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# COUNTY SPOTLIGHT

## Escambia County

**E**scambia County Farm Bureau President James D. Cunningham, known by those close to him as Jimmy, has been serving on the Escambia County Board of Directors for more than 30 years.

His love for agriculture originated in 1956 when he began farming with his father. Jimmy, his son and his brother have maintained the family tradition. The three Cunninghams own a cattle operation together.

**725:** Farms

**81,977:** Acreage in Farms

**\$1.4 billion:** Revenue Generated by Agriculture & Related Enterprises

**27,835:** Jobs Provided

*Sources: 2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture, UF/IFAS*



*Escambia County Farm Bureau President Jimmy Cunningham.*

Every 18 months Escambia County Farm Bureau hosts a farm tour along with their local Extension agent and the Escambia County Natural Resources Conservation

Service office. The tour, which rotates between spring and fall each year, has become an important tradition.

“We are very proud of our farm tour,” said Cunningham. “We have a lot of legislative officials and administrative officials that attend the farm tour and it has been evident of late that we retain close ties with our county commissioners and legislative delegation.”

Escambia County Farm Bureau also supports and participates in the spring livestock show that is hosted by the Gulf Coast Agriculture and Natural Resource Association in April. This year’s event brought together 60 FFA and 4-H youth participants who showed various livestock.

Providing agricultural education to urban communities is important in Escambia County. The county displays billboards during Farm-City Week and participates in Fall Harvest Days, which welcomes inner city children to the rural community and introduces them to farming.



## *Jimmy's FAVORITE RECIPE* **Crawfish Etoufee**

### **Ingredients** (serves 4)

- 2 lb crawfish tails, boiled, cleaned and deveined and their fat (about 20 lb live crawfish)
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 scallions with their green leaves, chopped
- 2 ribs celery, finely chopped
- 1 small green pepper, chopped
- 1 stick butter
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp flour
- 2 cups water
- Cayenne to taste
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

### **Directions**

- Melt the butter in a saucepan, add the flour and cook over low heat, stirring constantly to make a light brown roux. Add the onion, scallions, celery, green pepper and garlic. Cook until the vegetables are soft.
- Add the crawfish fat and water. Season with cayenne, salt and black pepper. Simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the crawfish and simmer for 10 minutes longer. Let it set for 30 minutes before serving. Serve in preheated soup bowls over a bed of hot steamed rice. For garnish, sprinkle chopped green scallion leaves on top.

# Ag Talk

## Extension Activities Improve Honey Bee Production

The University of Florida's Honey Bee Research and Extension Lab (HBREL) works to improve the health and productivity of honey bee colonies in Florida and globally by investing in research projects, offering Extension programs and leading instruction.

The main Extension program is entitled "Partnering with Beekeepers to Improve the Sustainability of Beekeeping." This program provides a yearly Bee College, the Master Beekeeper Program, a newsletter, *The Melitto Files*, and a library of information for beekeepers in Florida, the U.S. and worldwide.

HBREL staff and students also provide Extension presentations and workshops on honey bee-related topics at various public events.

Our websites [www.ufhoneybee.com](http://www.ufhoneybee.com) and [www.afbee.com](http://www.afbee.com) contain a wealth of information, including our Video Field Guide to Beekeeping series. We also host a citizen science project,

found at [www.ufnativebuzz.com](http://www.ufnativebuzz.com), which focuses on native pollinators and their habitats.

We have more than 75 beekeeping documents posted at [http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic\\_beekeeping](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_beekeeping). We are consistently updating and adding more documents as they become available.

Our newest Extension program is the South Florida Bee College. This event, set for Aug. 16-17, offers classes for gardeners, farmers, naturalists, county agents and anyone else interested in honey bees. The only prerequisite is your interest in the subject.

To register for the program, visit [www.southfloridabeecollege.eventbrite.com](http://www.southfloridabeecollege.eventbrite.com)

HBREL's Extension programming helps educate the public about



(Contributed by Jeanette Klopchin, UF/IFAS Laboratory Manager, Extension Technician)

honey bees, trains beekeepers on new and advanced topics in beekeeping and increases the number of beekeepers and the quality of their knowledge.

Florida now boasts more than 3,000 registered beekeepers – a 200 percent increase in the past five years.

Our beekeeping community nets nearly \$20 million dollars in honey production each year and adds value to the production of seven major vegetable crops, citrus, melons and berries.

We hope that you consider exploring our website, reading our documents and attending one of our Extension events.

### DIGITAL DOWNLOAD



#### Water Quality Index for Agricultural Runoff

This water quality app, developed by the USDA, assesses runoff from agriculture lands. The app is available [free online](#). A smartphone app is in development.



## COMMODITY CORNER

### Tropical Fruits

Warm oceans surround the southern tip of Florida, producing a climate ideal for the growth of tropical fruits. Many of these fruits are not grown anywhere else in the continental United States.

Fruits range from familiar offerings like coconuts, mangoes and bananas to more exotic fruit such as kumquats, dragon fruit and guava.



Economic Impact  
\$137 million annually

Acres Planted  
12,281

85%  
in Miami-Dade  
County

Source: USDA 2009 Census of Agriculture



# Tractor and Equipment Incentive Program

Case IH, the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) and American Farm Bureau, Inc., (AFBI) have partnered to provide Farm Bureau members an incentive discount – from \$300 to \$500 – when purchasing qualifying Case IH products and equipment from participating dealerships.

Florida members can receive the manufacturer's incentive discount when an eligible tractor or implement is acquired.

There is no limit to the number of incentive discounts that members can use as long as it is no more than one discount per unit acquired and the acquisition(s) is/are made for their personal and/or business use.

A current Farm Bureau membership verification certificate must be presented to the Case IH dealer in



advance of product delivery to receive the incentive discount. Certificates may be obtained by visiting [fbadvantage.com](http://fbadvantage.com) and selecting the Case IH offer.

## New App for Smartphones Locates Tractor Rollover Victims

More than 250 people lose their lives in the U.S. each year due to tractor rollovers. Many victims die because they cannot call for aid by phone.

In some instances isolated rollover sites do not have reliable mobile telephone connections to emergency personnel. Victims might be seriously injured or trapped by equipment so they cannot reach for a phone.

Once the app detects a rollover, it automatically forwards an email and phone message with the GPS coordinates to emergency personnel or family members.

The Vehicle Rollover Prevention Education Training Emergency Reporting System app (VRPETERS) can be used on any mobile device.

According to the researchers, Bulent Koc and Bo Liu, VRPETERS is not yet available for general sale. They are currently looking for a marketing partner.



University of Missouri researchers have developed a new application for smartphones to help solve this problem and, hopefully, reduce the number of fatalities. The app uses GPS navigation systems to locate farmers who have rolled their tractors.

## FPL Promotes Power Line Safety to Laborers and Public

Florida Power & Light Company has developed a new power line safety poster to help businesses, laborers and the public to stay safe while landscaping and doing other work outside homes and businesses. The poster is available to download in English, Spanish and Creole at the company's website page [www.FPL.com/safety](http://www.FPL.com/safety).



## FFBF Fall Advisory Committee Meeting Dates

- Apiculture : Aug. 16
- Aquaculture : Aug. 29
- Beef : Aug. 2
- Citrus : Aug. 15
- Dairy : Aug. 20
- Envir. Horticulture : Aug. 14
- Forestry : Aug. 15
- Labor : Aug. 21
- Oversight : Sept. 10
- Sod : Aug. 13
- Sugar : Aug. 16
- Tax : Aug. 1
- Trade : Aug. 13
- Vegetable : Aug. 12
- Water/Nat. Resources : Aug. 8

For more information, contact Tiffany Gay at [tiffany.gay@ffbf.org](mailto:tiffany.gay@ffbf.org).

# Ag Policy

## Will They or Won't They?

The U.S. Senate passed a comprehensive immigration reform bill which encompassed a foreign worker program containing many of the provisions Florida Farm Bureau supports, such as an at-will worker visa program, reduced housing liability and transportation costs and a lower, predictable wage rate than the current H-2A calculation. The bill also includes unprecedented goals for border security and a mandatory e-verify program phased in after the new visa program launches.

While this bill contains positive worker reforms to supply agriculture with its critical workforce needs, it is not likely to pass the U.S. House of Representatives. However, that's not to say the U.S. House will not undertake its own process for pursuing desperately needed reform. We need

you to contact your U.S. Representative and let him or her know how much foreign worker reform will help agriculture and, being the second-largest economic contributor to the state, how it will improve Florida's economy.

The U.S. House is deciding now whether to take up a set of bills more in line with their beliefs to match the Senate-passed bill. They will be in their districts for most of August and the first week of September. Members are strongly encouraged to attend townhall meetings or drop in to general public appearances to respectfully ask their representatives if they support agricultural worker



reforms and discuss our situation. Other topics regarding immigration reform may be what the congressman wants to talk about, but let him or her know that we need to be discussing the very real consequences of not having adequate labor supply to our small businesses.

To find your representative's contact information, [click here](#), follow a few quick steps and the contact tab will appear. A webform available for comments and a local phone number will be posted for questions about townhall meetings or other engagements.

## Land Conservation Program Accepting Easement Applications

Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam is urging Florida's agricultural land owners to consider applying to the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program. The goal of the program is to acquire perpetual agricultural conservation easements that ensure lands will be preserved in agricultural use while providing for the protection of natural resources. The program will be receiving easement applications through Aug. 29.

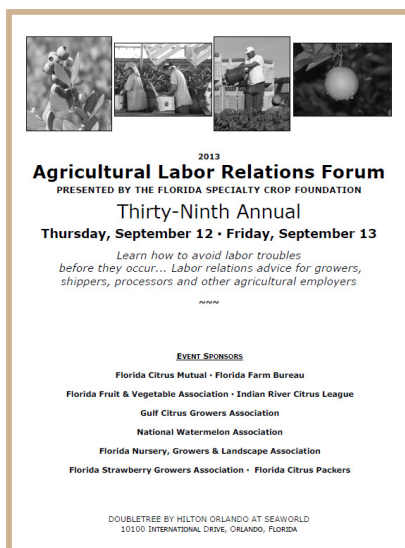
For information on the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program visit: <http://www.floridaforestservice.com/>.

## 39th Annual Agricultural Labor Relations Forum Sept. 12-13

Presented by the Florida Specialty Crop Foundation

Growers, shippers, processors and other agricultural employers come together to learn how to avoid labor troubles before they occur.

Location at Doubletree by Hilton Orlando at SeaWorld.



Click the icon to download the Labor Forum agenda and registration form.



# In Tallahassee

## Legislative Update

Water use in Florida is a controversial and complex issue that will continue to be a significant challenge in the future as Florida's population continues to grow. This year, Florida will pass New York as the third most populous state in the country, and balancing the needs of production agriculture, industry, utilities and public use will continue to be one of the most important issues we face as a state. Ensuring that agriculture has a voice in the water supply planning process is more critical now than ever before.

During the 2013 Legislative Session, Florida Farm Bureau supported legislation that gives the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) a seat at the table during the water supply planning process. Additionally, this bill allows FDACS to collaborate with federal agencies and universities to provide accurate data on



agricultural acreage and crop water use and mandates that these data must be considered. This bill ensures that when water allocations are made, agriculture will be on a level playing field with municipalities, utilities and public consumption in the water supply planning process.

We thank the sponsors of SB 948: Sen. Denise Grimsley (R-Sebring) and Rep. Travis Hutson (R-Palm Coast). This legislation was a Farm Bureau priority and was strongly supported by Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam. This bill was signed into law by Gov. Rick Scott on June 14.

## District 1 News

### Santa Rosa County Students Receive \$1000 Scholarships

Santa Rosa County Farm Bureau awarded John Atkins and Lauren Griswold of Jay each a \$1000 scholarship.



Atkins is a graduate of Jay High School and will be pursuing a degree in Wildlife Management at the University of Florida and Pensacola State University.

Griswold graduated first in her class at Central High School and will be attending the University of Alabama's pre-medical studies program this fall.

*Lauren, left, and John proudly display their scholarships.*

## Calendar of Events

**August 2-4,** Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference, Kissimmee. For more information, visit <http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/smallfarms/index.html>.

**August 16-17,** South Florida Bee College, Davie. For more information, visit [http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/honeybee/extension/SFbee\\_college.shtml](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/honeybee/extension/SFbee_college.shtml).

**August 23,** FFBF YF&R Discussion Meet and Excellence in Agriculture Competition Application Deadline.

**Sept. 12-13,** 39th Annual Agricultural Labor Relations Forum, Orlando. [Click here](#) to download the agenda and registration form.



*August is Water Quality Month*



Scan this QR Code for magical membership discounts!

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