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## **Contents**

- New Course from EDEN is OnLine
- March 2008 Advisory Board Meeting
- Through the Grapevine: Joan Dusky, John Haven
- Photos from March: SART in Action
- Article Link: "Do We Decon Dogs?"
- Gulf Sturgeon Begin Entering Suwannee
- Sign-Up for Dairy Disaster Assistance Resumes
- Melbourne Zoo to Sponsor TLAER Course
- Christy Returns to Florida DOACS
- Three Exotic Plant Diseases – In Review
- NASAAEP Notes & Activities
- Alleged Dog Fighting Ring Surfaces in Ocala

## ***New EDEN Animal Agrosecurity and Emergency Management Course***

A new *Animal Agrosecurity and Emergency Management Course* is being offered through EDEN, the Extension Disaster Education Network. This on-line course will be available to the primary audience of Extension educators and agents, as they strive to improve preparedness for animal issues in disasters or potential disasters in their communities. But it is also available to anyone interested in animal biosecurity and emergency management.

*Animal Agrosecurity and Emergency Management* will give you the knowledge and skills to teach others in your community how to:

- Apply emergency management principles to animal emergencies.
- Recognize threats, identify vulnerabilities and establish an action plan for animal disasters.
- Partner with interagency representatives in an interdisciplinary effort to address animal emergency issues.

Materials provided with this EDEN course are available for use at workshops and/or community awareness presentations. They include ready-to-use presentations, applied activity guidelines including scenario-based exercises and printable documents suitable for handouts.

According to Carol Lehtola, Assistant Professor, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, IFAS/UF, the new EDEN *Animal Agrosecurity and Emergency*

Management course is available on-line on the EDEN website at <http://www.eden.lsu.edu/LearningOps/AnimalAgrosecurity/default.aspx>.

## March 2008 Advisory Board Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the March 5 Florida SART Advisory Board held at the Marion County 4-H Farm southeast of Ocala are now posted on the SART web site at <http://www.flisart.org/SART/memberdoc/minutes03-05-08.pdf>. A complete after-action report on the 48-hour “planned response to a local disaster” (a hazardous chemical release) at which nearly 100 people participated is being compiled for release at a later date. It is expected to be available for study through this web site. The link to the *Ocala Star-Banner* newspaper feed is <http://www.ocala.com/apps/pbcs.dll/section?Category=news1020&bcpid=301941310&bclid=301794139&bctid=1443716718>.

### Through the Grapevine

I'd say the March training event was very valuable and accomplished all of our key objectives. The event was to 1) test our equipment and the needs of being self contained, 2) test the Incident Management Team in managing and supporting almost 100 people - our past real deployments have typically been 25 or fewer people - this scale would prepare the IMT to handle a disease outbreak response or catastrophic hurricane response and 3) engage the EARS and HSUS teams with the UF College of Veterinary Medicine VETS team, and the Vet Corps reserve veterinarians, in a real patient care event and to discover flaws in the workflows and documentation.



Joan Dusky led the assessment discussion following the SART training exercise.

All three objectives were accomplished - and all participants walked away with ideas on how to improve their performance next time, knowing that next time could be for real. It also provided an opportunity for people across different agencies to work and play together (there was some late night karaoke) and to develop relationships that will be valuable in future deployments.

Joan Dusky, Associate Dean, IFAS, UF  
John Haven, Director, College of Veterinary Medicine, UF

## Photos from March: SART In Action



David Perry served as Incident Commander for the training exercise.



Volunteers helped decontaminate pups.



After the bath, time to walk to the Vets, also volunteers, for a check-up.



After his bath a brisk walk to the temporary kennel.



Almost one hundred people – mostly volunteers – participated in the SART training exercise near Ocala that simulated an accidental hazardous chemical release.



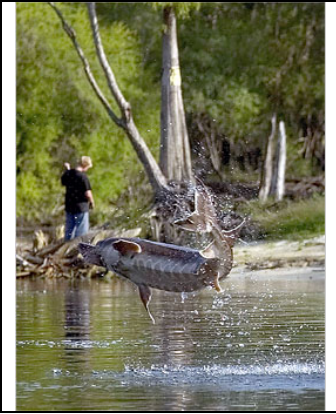
As temporary working shelters come down behind them, FSA's Tim Manning explained exercise objectives to Linda Harrison, Captain, FWCC.

## Internet Article Link: "Do We Decon Dogs?"

Florida SART and its partner organizations may be well ahead of the information in this article, which is a year old, but the legal background presented by Spencer Hall, MD, JD, will certainly be of interest:

[http://www.jems.com/news\\_and\\_articles/articles/Do\\_We\\_Decon\\_Dogs.html;jsessionid=9710B8F61609BB6919A694F26BE50A96](http://www.jems.com/news_and_articles/articles/Do_We_Decon_Dogs.html;jsessionid=9710B8F61609BB6919A694F26BE50A96).

## Gulf Sturgeon Begin Entering Suwannee



Under the “Just thought you ought to know” heading, Gulf sturgeon have once again begun their migration into the Suwannee River, prompting warnings to boaters about the deadly, though not especially ferocious jumping fish. Scientists are not quite sure why sturgeons leap but they insist the fish are docile and do not jump, as some boaters claim, to “protect their turf.”

Increasing river traffic and lower water levels, which concentrate boats and fish into a smaller area, compounds the problem. In almost all collisions, the victim has been knocked unconscious. In March 2007, Sharon Touchton was riding a jet ski when a sturgeon hit her. A surgeon later reattached three of her fingers severed in that collision, but she lost a fourth and a tooth, suffered skull fractures under her eyes and almost bit off her tongue.



Sharon Touchton's injuries resulted from being struck by a Suwannee River sturgeon.

The hard-plated sturgeon can grow to seven feet in length and weigh as much as 170 pounds. They are notorious for leaping unexpectedly into the air. According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, this acrobatic maneuver sometimes causes them to colliding with boats and passengers. In 2007, nine people were injured in collisions with the large fish, and one man drowned when the boat he was riding in swerved to avoid a flying fish and the man fell into the water, the commission reported.

Sturgeon typically spend eight to nine months in the Suwannee spawning. This Florida river appears to support the largest viable population of these fish.

## Sign-Up For Dairy Disaster Assistance Resumes

Eligible dairy producers who suffered production losses between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2007 may now apply to receive benefits under the Dairy Disaster Assistance Program III. Producers can sign up at local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) service centers through May 5.

Authorized by the *U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007*, the program provides \$16 million in benefits to dairy producers for production losses due to natural disasters. To be

eligible, a producer's operation must be in a county designated a major disaster or emergency area by the president or declared a natural disaster area by the secretary of agriculture. Producers in contiguous counties are also eligible. Producers in counties declared disaster areas by the president may be eligible, even though the loss was not covered by the declaration, if an FSA Administrator's Physical Loss Notice covered such losses.

FSA began enrolling producers in DDAP-III in late 2007 and early 2008, then temporarily halted sign-up pending the completion of rulemaking, which began with a proposed rule for public comments. Based on those comments, FSA made minor changes to the proposed DDAP-III rules. These changes are explained in the final DDAP-III regulations, which were published in the March 4 Federal Register.

For more information contact Stevin Westcott (202) 720-4178, Keith Williams (202) 720-4623 or Cynthia Portalatin (352) 379-4562 [cynthia.portalatin@fl.usda.gov](mailto:cynthia.portalatin@fl.usda.gov).

### **Zoo Schedules TLAER Course with Haz Mat Training**

According to Deb Anderson, the Melbourne/Brevard Zoo is offering a four-day hands-on certificate training class in Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue (TLAER) with a day of hazardous materials decontamination training at the end. ("On the last rescue day," Anderson says, "there is a night drill so that day can run from 7:30 a.m. until past 11:00 p.m. It's intense!")



The Brevard Zoo in Melbourne.

Dates are May 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. The course runs all day each day at the zoo, 8225 N. Wickham Rd., Melbourne, FL 32940. Target audience – rescue personnel, veterinarians, vet techs, zoo keepers – those who may need to work with farm, zoo or even wild animals. The registration fee is \$300; the proceedings on paper is an additional \$30; and the T-shirt is \$15.

For additional information including costs, contact Deb Anderson (Sunday-Thursday) at (321) 254-9453 x 250 or [danderson@brevardzoo.org](mailto:danderson@brevardzoo.org). The site [www.TLAER.org](http://www.TLAER.org) has additional materials of interest about instructors Tomas and Rebecca Gimenez.

## Christy Returns to Florida DOACS



Florida's Greg Christy, DVM-DOACS, spent most of 2007 with DHS in Washington, D.C.

Greg Christy, DVM, spent the past year working for the Department of Homeland Security in Washington, D.C., returning to Florida DOACS on February 11<sup>th</sup>. His assignment as a liaison between federal, state and industry food and agriculture stakeholders was in the Office of Infrastructure Protection. "I have had the wonderful opportunity to promote state interests while working on federal projects that affect our food and agriculture sector," Christy said.

Christy worked on joint projects with DHS, USDA and HHS including the Presidential Working Group on Import Safety and updating the National Response Plan. He also participated in activations of the National Operations Center (NOC) and the National Infrastructure Coordinating Center (NICC), as well as administration of the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) web portal.

As a Food and Agriculture Sector Specialist, Christy ([christg@doacs.state.fl.us](mailto:christg@doacs.state.fl.us)) noted that his assignment "...allowed me to travel and speak on DHS issues that impact our states." Speaking opportunities included the national conferences for the U.S. Animal Health Association and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture.



The citrus psyllid

### Florida's Exotic Plant Diseases - In Review

According to a training module posted in late 2006, three exotic plant diseases threaten Florida's agriculture. Can you name these three diseases? Hint: one involves oranges and grapefruit, one involves soybeans and one involves nursery plants. Thus, the effects of unchecked infestations would have a ripple effect not only on Florida's economy (and our dining habits) but on the nation's economy as a whole. Scroll down at this link for the Lesson Plan, PowerPoint Presentation and Student Workbook: [www.flsart.org/library/index.htm#PD4](http://www.flsart.org/library/index.htm#PD4).

## Current NASAAEP Notes

NASAAEP, the National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs, has made strides through its network of committed participants. Here are a few notes from its recent conference call/meeting:

1. Dr. Karina Burger says announced that one of Basic Animal Rescue Training (BART) course *Companion Animal Life Support* has been accepted by DHS. They hope to get additional courses approved in the future. This approval allows Homeland Security Grant Funding received by states and local jurisdictions to be used towards attending this training and to pay for overtime/backfill expenses. Dr. Burger will send more detailed information to participants.
2. Update on the recent Rocky Mountain Regional Conference on Biodefense and Emergency Animal Response (BEAR): 95 people attended from nine states. The conference provided both training and an excellent networking opportunity.
3. A Regional Animal AgroSecurity Conference is scheduled for May 21-22, 2008 in Denver, CO. It will be hosted by Extension Disaster Education Conference (EDEN), Colorado State University and the Colorado Department of Agriculture. This conference is open to extension, agricultural, veterinary and emergency management/response personnel across the western U.S. The registration brochure can be accessed at [www.cosart.org/documents/RegionalAnimalAgroSecurityConference.pdf](http://www.cosart.org/documents/RegionalAnimalAgroSecurityConference.pdf).
4. The Interim NASAAEP Board is expected to be forthcoming with what should be the final versions of the incorporation documents soon. A September NASAAEP meeting is in the works. (Kevin Dennison, [KevinDennison@colovma.org](mailto:KevinDennison@colovma.org))

## Alleged Dog Fighting Ring Surfaces in Ocala

Michael Vick is serving time for operating a dog fighting ring, but his fall from celebrity appears to have fazed few supporters of the underground dog fighting business.

Busted by his aunt, an Ocala man has allegedly been running a dog fighting ring off and on for several years. When Joe VanHoose of the *Ocala Star-Banner* inquired at the Marion County Courthouse, it appeared that the man, Willie Lee Lewis, Jr. has been arrested 21 times and charged with 26 felonies since 1990. Many charges were later dropped, but Lewis has served a combined six years in prison over the years for grand theft and for possessing and selling cocaine. For additional information about this incident of dog fighting, visit the *Ocala Star-Banner* web site at [www.ocala.com/article/20080314/NEWS/803140335/1001/NEWS01](http://www.ocala.com/article/20080314/NEWS/803140335/1001/NEWS01).



A badly scarred pit bull in a cage at the Marion County Animal Center. (Star-Banner photo)

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If you have a story or photo that you would like to have considered for publication in *The SART SENTINEL*, please contact the Editors.