



*Vol. 4, No. 5, May 2008*

## **Contents**

- Florida Man Dies From Africanized Honeybee Stings
- Devastating Agroterror Strike Could Happen Here
- Franklin County EM Hosts Animal Decontamination Training
- Boosting AgERT Awareness & Training
- Through the Grapevine: AgERT Course Participants
- FASCAT – New APHIS Agriculture Assessment Tool
- NASAAEP News
  - September Summit: Companion Animals
  - NCSU Credentialed Responder Program
- Suwannee County Holds Safety Expo
- About Bulletins and Responding to Bulletins
- Ag Safety News & Notes
- Exercise Tests National Veterinary Stockpiles
- Through the Grapevine: Craig Fugate
- Alachua County Coalition Promotes Low Cost Sterilization
- About the SART Sentinel

## Okeechobee County Man Dies From Africanized Honey Bee Stings

On April 8<sup>th</sup> Robert Davis of Okeechobee County died after being stung more than 100 times by Africanized honeybees (AHB). He was Florida's first human AHB fatality, but there have been more than 17 others in the U.S. since 1990.

Africanized honeybees are cousins of the European honeybee, which pollinates 1/3 of our food and 3/4 of Florida's agricultural crops.

Today, FDACS monitors more than 500 AHB bait traps. Since their 2002 discovery in Florida, AHB have been identified in all Florida counties south of Marion County.

How does one protect from AHB bites? The motto of a Florida governmental working group formed in 2006 is: **Bee Aware...look, listen and run.** Running to some protective structure such as a house or car is the best defense...or simply running away (as fast as possible – it may take several hundred yards for the swarming, aggressive bees to lose interest). Even jumping into a pool or lake is not safe as the bees tend to swarm over the water longer than most people can hold their breath!

So what if you see a nest? Stay away and call a licensed pest control company to identify and remove it. Never try to remove a nest on your own. For a list of licensed pest control operators go to [www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/plantinsp/ahb.html](http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/plantinsp/ahb.html).



The European Honey Bee and the Africanized Honey Bee, the so-called "killer bee," are quite difficult to tell apart. Can you tell which is which?

(Photos courtesy Texas A&M University and <http://library.thinkquest.org>)



### To prevent stings:

- Eliminate potential AHB nesting sites. Check walls and eaves of structures. Plug or screen holes.
- Stay alert for bees. Watch for them in work areas before using power equipment, because noise tends to excite AHB.
- Hire a licensed and experienced pest control company to remove the bees and the comb. DO NOT attempt to remove it yourself.
- Never use "wasp and hornet spray" on honeybees. Honeybees are not on the label of most of these products. They do kill honeybees, but they also cause the release of alarm pheromone that stimulates the colony to attack.
- If bees chase you, run and get inside a car or building. Run as far as possible or necessary!
- If allergic, always have a bee sting kit available. (These require a physician's prescription.)
- Immediately seek medical attention if stung.

Remember that managed European honeybee colonies are critical to Florida agriculture. These more gentle honeybees should not be confused with the highly defensive Africanized honeybee.

For more information, contact the FDACS DPI helpline at (888) 397-1517, your county extension office <http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/map/index.html> or visit [www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi](http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi) or [http://afbee.ifas.ufl.edu/about\\_the\\_bee.shtml](http://afbee.ifas.ufl.edu/about_the_bee.shtml). Prepared by Denise Feiber FDACS/DPI (352) 372-3505 x 102/235-0036 mobile [feiberd@doacs.state.fl.us](mailto:feiberd@doacs.state.fl.us) and Dr. William Kern, Jr. UF/IFAS (954) 577-6329/249-0775 mobile [whk@ufl.edu](mailto:whk@ufl.edu).

### A devastating agroterror strike could happen here!



Whenever an armed force uses an essentially civilian resource as a tool of aggression, it becomes a terrorist act. Perhaps Sherman's Civil War "March to the Sea" was fundamentally terrorist in nature; or the Russian Army's "scorched earth" policy in response to Napoleon's invasion; or the eradication of Afghanistan's principal cash crop, the opium pink poppy flower (a derivative becomes heroin). Perhaps it is a matter of perspective, whether one is giving or receiving....

The Western Institute of Food Safety and Security (WFISS), UC-Davis will offer introductory agroterrorism courses at three Florida locations. AWR-151 is the first of six WFISS agroterrorism courses, funded and certified by DHS. The course is Free and includes lunch.

#### **AWR-151** Awareness - Understanding the Dangers of Agroterrorism

A 4-hour course – builds awareness of the threat to our food supply, the economy and the ag infrastructure.

- Potential Impacts
- Recognition of Response and Recovery Resources
- Response and Coordination Strategies for Local, State, Federal, and Private Entities

- Identification of Individual Roles Within A Local Response Team

### When and Where

June 17: Seffner (Hillsborough County) – Registration at 7:30 AM, Workshop from 8:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

June 18: Belle Glade (Palm Beach County) – Registration at 9:30 AM, Workshop from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

June 20: Homestead (Miami-Dade County) – Registration at 8:30 AM, Workshop from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

### Sign-up

<http://wifss.ucdavis.edu/agroterrorism/classes/classesbydate.php>  
[mvicino@wifss.ucdavis.edu](mailto:mvicino@wifss.ucdavis.edu)

Sponsors: Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Agricultural Emergency Preparedness and University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension: John P Terry, Office of Agricultural Emergency Preparedness (850) 410-6756 [terryj1@doacs.state.fl.us](mailto:terryj1@doacs.state.fl.us)

## Franklin County Emergency Management Hosts Animal Decontamination Training

By Haven B. Cook

On April 26, 2008, the Franklin County Emergency Management facility in Apalachicola hosted specialized training for dealing with animals coming out of a disaster area that might be contaminated with hazardous substances such as oil, chemicals or sewage. The training was organized and presented by the **Big Bend Disaster Animal Response Team** to help prepare members for incidents involving hazardous materials. The trainers included three individuals with extensive experience and education in hazardous materials:

- A Senior Health Specialist at Florida State University,
- A Biological Scientist with the Department of Health who specializes in the health considerations of people living next to hazardous waste sites and
- a retired Fire Chief from Franklin County.

The training consisted of two hours of classroom lectures about hazardous material recognition, signs and symbols, hot zone/warm zone definitions, grey water containment, personal protective equipment, and the design and set up of decontamination stations for animals.

After lunch, training continued with two hours of hands-on experience washing dogs that had been “contaminated” by a variety of unidentified (but wholly organic) substances. Fourteen participants dressed out in protective equipment and entered the “warm zone” where the training scenario required them to decontaminate dogs

rescued from an area flooded by a coastal storm surge. The dogs were washed in special containment bins designed to drain and capture all contaminated runoff.

Rescued dogs were actually adoptable and friendly dogs from the **Franklin County Humane Society**, which sponsored the training.



## Boosting **AgERT** Awareness and Training

“Just wanted to provide you with the **AgERT** (Agriculture Emergency Response Training) dates for the rest of this year,” writes Gordon Harman, APHIS Liaison to the Center for Domestic Preparedness. “We have openings.”

Class 08-09      June 8-13  
Class 08-10      July 27- 1 August  
Class 08-11      August 24- 29  
Class 08-12      September 14-19

You may be eligible to train at FEMA’s Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) in Anniston, Alabama. CDP is the only federally chartered DHS Weapons of Mass Destruction training center. For additional information, visit <http://cdp.dhs.gov>.

Our June 8-13 class (including travel days) has an opening for a Veterinarian or experienced Animal Health Technician, notes R. Gordon Harman, APHIS Liaison to CDP at (256) 847-2350 office or (301) 332-8390 BlackBerry; [harmanr@cdpemail.dhs.gov](mailto:harmanr@cdpemail.dhs.gov) or [Robert.G.Harman@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Robert.G.Harman@aphis.usda.gov).



Marianne Patton, left, instructs emergency hospital staff on how to handle a patient injured by a dirty bomb without contaminating hospital staff and patients during a recent training session at the Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, Alabama.

Photo courtesy CDP

## Through the Grapevine

"The [AgERT] course was outstanding, excellent in all respects and this is by far the best course that I have attended at the CDP. The practical aspects of the training were considerably better than similar courses that I have attended in the hazardous materials – fire-fighting arenas. All of the training and the exercises were tied together."

Jim Overfield, Adjunct Science Professor  
Volunteer Hazmat Technician and Firefighter, Kentucky

"I really enjoyed the AgERT course. The disease part was a good refresher and the HAZMAT part, including wearing and functioning in the Level B and C gear, was very enlightening, as was the day at Auburn University. I benefited from seeing how our incident commander, who was a firefighter, communicated with and briefed the team, and in general managed the response. It really gave a renewed appreciation for our 'traditional' responders."

James H. Wright, DVM, MPVM  
Regional Zoonosis Veterinarian, Texas

## New Tool to Assist States with Identification of Critical Agriculture Systems



The Food and Agriculture Sector Government Coordinating Council, in conjunction with DHS recently launched what is known as the Food and Agriculture Criticality Assessment Tool (FASCAT) to help states assess and identify critical food and agriculture systems. With an acronym like FASCAT, it's a name you'll remember and hopefully a resource states will utilize, says Hallie Zimmers, APHIS' Interim State Liaison. Ultimately, this identification process will assist states in requesting grant money to support food and agriculture infrastructure.



So what is FASCAT exactly? According to Zimmer, it's an easy-to-use on-line tool for evaluating a state's food and agriculture sector. It helps prioritize key systems, and characterize the risks they face. Because food and agriculture issues are generally the responsibility of several agencies within a state, FASCAT can provide a common platform to support a multi-agency effort to evaluate infrastructure. In fact, each state's Homeland Security Advisor (HSA) has been encouraged to initiate just such a multi-agency effort.



FASCAT is the first step in a larger effort to implement "vulnerability assessments" and develop protective and mitigation strategies that allow states to focus limited resources on preventive, protective and response planning capabilities.



Developed in coordination with the University of Minnesota’s National Center for Food Protection and Defense, FASCAT is being tested in 20 states, but any state can use it. After a year, the University of Minnesota will analyze the data and update or modify the tool as necessary. Information related to FASCAT was recently shared with HSAs.



For more information about FASCAT, including the tool itself and a video tutorial, visit [www.foodshield.org](http://www.foodshield.org) or [www.ncfpd.umn.edu](http://www.ncfpd.umn.edu). A list of HSAs can be found at [www.dhs.gov/xgovt/editorial\\_0291.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xgovt/editorial_0291.shtm).

## NASAAEP News

National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs  
Notes from the Monthly Networking Conference Call – May 14, 2008

A. September 11-12, 2008 summit on companion animal issues:

1. A logistical planning committee was established by USDA APHIS Animal Care and NASAAEP.
2. Location: The Maritime Institute, Baltimore, MD
3. A broader “focus group” will be established soon to provide input about meeting content.
4. Travel days the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup>. (APHIS Animal Care will provide travel and lodging funding for one representative from each state. Each state will be asked to identify that agency or organization that is the key contact for APHIS Animal Care on companion animal issues and provide a representative for the meeting.)

B. According to Dr. Jimmy Tickel, North Carolina State University has developed a credentialed responder program for the entire junior year class in the DVM program at the College of Veterinary Medicine. The



The Maritime Institute, Baltimore.

The program is incorporated in the core curriculum for veterinary students, one element in a semester-long class. The curriculum includes ICS 100, ICS 200, NIMS 700 (via independent study), biosecurity, HAZMAT awareness, PPE training, and two scenario discussions involving a foreign animal disease outbreak and a natural disaster.

Tickel says students ranked the initial offering very high. The NCSU program produces graduate veterinarians who are essentially pre-trained for veterinary medical reserve corps programs. It may also help generate interest in non-practice careers as well as food animal medicine.

► Thanks to Kevin Dennison, DVM, Colorado Veterinary Medical Foundation (303) 318-0447 [KevinDennison@colovma.org](mailto:KevinDennison@colovma.org) for keeping us informed about this national effort.

## Suwannee County Holds Public Safety Expo

According to Johnny Wooley, Suwannee County Emergency Management Director, his county's May 17 Public Safety Expo held at the coliseum complex in Live Oak from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm was a success. "We try to have some event each year prior to hurricane season, but this was our first exposition with an *all-hazard* public safety theme. So I think we had a good turnout," Wooley said, "with between 200 and 225 people attending."

The "all-hazard" focus was indeed broad, from hurricane warnings to forest fire evacuation planning. To help promote interest, the county's public elementary schools held a poster contest the week prior to the Expo.



## Broadcast Bulletins...And Response

A month ago, we individually received – because we are part of the SART mailing list – a Flash Email about a nuclear incident/training exercise. In response, many of us went immediately to the Florida SART web site member page and sent a response email to all Sunshine State SART members and participants. Our responses were primarily of the "I received your email" variety. As a consequence, many mailboxes were filled with such member notices, notices that simply indicated receipt of the Flash Email.





Although this indicates beyond any doubt that we in the Florida SART program are an alert and responsive group, it would perhaps be best, suggests ESF 17 Coordinator Joe Kight, that we withheld such statewide responses to informational or test-only mailings...unless a response is specifically requested or one is involved as a participant in the exercise and then the response should go directly to an individual rather than to the entire SART community.



IFAS' Carol Lehtola, a professor in the University of Florida's Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering/IFAS, publishes a monthly newsletter. It is posted at <http://www.flagsafe.ufl.edu/snn/snn-08-04.html> and past issues are archived at [www.flagsafe.ufl.edu](http://www.flagsafe.ufl.edu). Plenty of great stuff!

- Thoughts & Quotes (getting one's attention for safety)
- Talking About Disaster: Guide for Standard Messages
- Trauma Intervention Programs
- May is National Safe Digging Month
- June is National Safety Month
- NIOSH Pubs Now in Spanish
- Africanized Honey Bees
- Helmet Safety – It's That Time of Year
- CPSC's New Monthly E-Newsletter
- New SART Training Materials – First Aid for Cats & Dogs

Carol notes that three sites have special interest for members of the Florida agricultural community. They are:

- Florida Ag Safety <http://www.flagsafe.ufl.edu>
- Disaster Handbook <http://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu>
- National Ag Safety Database <http://www.cdc.gov/nasd>

► Carol's motto is "Be Aware! Be Alert! Be Alive!" She can be reached at (352) 392-1864 x 223 or [clehtola@ufl.edu](mailto:clehtola@ufl.edu).

## APHIS & California Hold Exercise Testing National Veterinary Stockpiles



APHIS' Veterinary Services staff and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) held an exercise March 17-19 to test the National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS), which provides animal vaccines and necessary equipment to states in the event of a foreign animal disease outbreak. The exercise simulated a highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak and tested APHIS' ability to deliver NVS materials and equipment while testing the CDFA ability to receive, store, stage, deliver, and recover NVS assets. CDFA also had the opportunity to test their Incident Command Structure.

To make the exercise as real as possible APHIS sent four 18-wheel semi-trucks to the West Coast. Two trucks contained simulated shipments of vaccines and anti-virals, while the other two trucks contained equipment.

According to Hallie Zimmers, APHIS' Interim State Liaison/Legislative & Public Affairs, the exercise was a success with both APHIS and California performing well. Most importantly, the exercise confirmed that APHIS could effectively distribute materials requiring refrigeration in a timely manner. An "after action report" will be available later this month. Please contact Zimmers if you're interested in receiving a copy: (202) 720-0378 (phone) or [hallie.zimmers@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:hallie.zimmers@aphis.usda.gov).



<b>P O T A T O E S</b>	<p>APHIS' Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) and Canada's Food and Inspection Agency (CFIA) are finalizing guidelines to allow safe and continued trade if a potato cyst nematode, the pale cyst nematode or golden nematode, is found in potato fields in the US or Canada.</p> <p>Previous guidelines (10/06) focused on table stock potatoes; the latest version requires surveys in seed potato fields.</p> <p>The detection of golden nematodes in seed potatoes in Alberta (11/07) highlighted the need to strengthen protocols. Draft guidelines specify actions affected states/provinces can take to allow safe trade with minimal restrictions. Guidelines were recently shared with states and industry. The target date for finalizing the guidelines was 4/28/08.</p>
<b>A V I A N F L U</b>	<p>From 2007-08, APHIS' sampled 50,000 wild birds for the <i>national avian influenza surveillance plan</i>. Because wild birds must be captured, handled and swabbed, sampling them for avian influenza (AI) is time consuming and labor intensive. To optimize sampling, the APHIS Wildlife Services (WS) program has developed new techniques for discovering AI virus in water. Waterfowl that are AI infected shed the virus into water via their feces. Experimental and field studies have shown that AI can be detected in water samples.</p> <p>In 2008, WS scientists hope to develop a sampling protocol and begin routine sampling of water in areas of suspected AI activity.</p>

## Through the Grapevine

At the Governor's 2008 Hurricane Conference in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida Division of Emergency Management Director Craig Fugate warned that a major hurricane was not a question of "if another hurricane will hit, but when...and the need to be prepared to survive alone for a few days after the storm is more important than ever. If we can't do that, everything else we do will fall flat on its face," he said. "If the great Miami hurricane hits today, it will dwarf the cost of Katrina. The message is simple. We've got to be survivors." Fugate noted that estimates of such a hurricane disaster could cost more than \$160 billion.

### Alachua County Coalition Promotes Low Cost Pet Sterilization Clinic

SART's own Julie Levy, DVM, Professor at the UF College of Veterinary Medicine and president of *No More Homeless Pets*, is working with a coalition of Alachua County residents to open a clinic for low-cost pet sterilization. The goal is to reduce the local pet

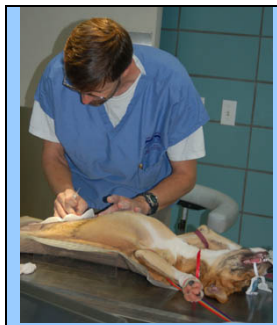


Thousands of animals that would make great pets await adoption - or euthanasia - at animal shelters in Florida.

R. Sapp Photo

overpopulation, which ultimately leads to euthanasia and more work for Alachua County Animal Services. At this time, local philanthropist Gladys Cofrin has pledged \$200,000 to the effort and the Alachua County Commission will be asked to match a similar amount. County funds would be replenished with higher license fees for unsterilized pets. The total cost is estimated to be \$500,000.

Levy notes that such a clinic has



Alternatives to increasing numbers of unwanted pets are not pretty. Sterilization is part of the solution.

R. Sapp Photos

proven successful in counties similar to Alachua, which have large low-income populations, rural areas and many free-roaming animals. Additionally, the clinic would reduce the risk of rabies and dog bites. Alachua County Animal Services

Director David Flagler notes that non-neutered male dogs are the most likely to bite. Animal Services could then spend more time on safety issues, nuisance mediation, cruelty investigations, education, and animal rehabilitation.

(Some notes as quoted by Cindy Swirko in the *Gainesville Sun*, May 15, 2008)

## About the SART Sentinel

Editor: Rick Sapp, PhD, Technical Writer, Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry [[rsa5@cox.net](mailto:rsa5@cox.net)]

Associate Editor: Joe Kight, State ESF-17 Coordinator, Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry [[kightj@doacs.state.fl.us](mailto:kightj@doacs.state.fl.us)]

*The SART SENTINEL* is an E-mail newsletter prepared monthly by Rick Sapp and the members of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team. Past issues of the *Sentinel* are archived on the Florida SART Web Site, [www.flsart.org](http://www.flsart.org).

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