



Vol. 4, No. 10, October 2008

Contents

- Agroterrorism Courses Still Open
- Tampa Bay Area Disaster Medical Symposium Huge Success
- Oklahoma Shares Micro-Chip Justification Statement
- Florida EMAC Team Assists Following Hurricane Ike
- APHIS Opens Emergency Planning & Response Web Site
- DART Training Report
- Through the Grapevine: Basic AgERT Training
- Report on National Pet Sheltering Meeting
- Pandemic Flu Handout Available on Florida AgSafe Web Site
- Exotics in the News: The Caribbean Crazy Ant
- Not Such A Crazy Question – What would you do?
- Through the Grapevine: Climate Change and Wildlife Planning
- About the SART Sentinel

[\[top\]](#)

Florida Agroterrorism Courses Are Still Available

FDACS' Office of Agricultural Emergency Preparedness has partnered with the Western Institute of Food Safety and Security (WIFSS) to sponsor DHS Certified Agroterrorism Courses during October 2008. Although this cycle of AWR 151 "Awareness: Understanding the Dangers of Agroterrorism" courses is complete, there still may be time to take AWR 152. (While AWR 151 is recommended, it is not a required pre-requisite for AWR-152.)



AWR-152 "Preparedness: Principles of Preparedness for Agroterrorism and Food Systems' Disasters"

- Tuesday, October 14 in Homestead from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
- Wednesday, October 15 in Belle Glade from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
- Thursday, October 16 in Seffner from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

To register or for additional information go to the WIFSS websites:

Registration: <http://wifss.ucdavis.edu/agroterrorism/classes/classesbydate.php>

Course Information:

http://wifss.ucdavis.edu/agroterrorism/classes/course_desc.php

All courses are free notes Art Johnstone, Director of the Office of Agricultural Emergency Preparedness. Johnstone may be reached at his office (850) 410-6758 or via his mobile phone (850) 251-4184.

[\[top\]](#)

Tampa Bay Area Veterinary Disaster Medical Symposium



Front row L-R: John Haven, Dr. Ruth-Anne Richter, Judy Baum, CVT, Leslie Jones, Dr. Jo Ann Daniels, Dr. Tery Spencer, Connie Brooks. **Second row L-R:** Dr. Jan Hasse, Laura Bevan, Raquel Aluisy, Dr. Cynda Crawford, Rosemary Lyons. **Third row L-R:** Dr. Greg Christy, David Perry, Dr. Welch Agnew, Ronnie Graves. Photo courtesy *FVMA Advocate*.

More than 230 people attended the day-long Veterinary Disaster Medicine Symposium hosted by SPCA-Tampa Bay in Largo. Themed “Preparing Practices & Clients for Disasters,” the event was supported by a \$5,000 grant from the AVMA.

The Symposium vividly demonstrated how to grow an oak tree from an acorn. Here were some of the steps in that process – steps that can be replicated in your county or neighborhood.

1. Terry Spencer discovers that grant funding is available for local disaster preparation symposiums.
2. Spencer takes action and alerts the Pasco County Animal Response Team and County SART group, which agree to apply for a grant.
3. Jo Ann Daniels volunteers to help develop the idea and write the grant.
4. A Task Force is formed with representatives from three counties: Terry Spencer (PART), Jo Ann Daniels (PART), Connie Brooks (SPCA-Tampa Bay), Raquel Aluisy (CHAART) and Judy Baum, CVT (Bay Area DART).
5. The small seminar idea grows into a day-long symposium:
 - a. for veterinarians, technicians and shelters from nine counties around Tampa Bay (Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Polk, Sumter, Hernando, Citrus, Manatee and Sarasota),
 - b. with demonstrations of animal rescue equipment from the UF VETS Team, Florida Vet Corps, Sumter County DART Logistics, Bay Area DART and Pinellas County Ani-mobile, and
 - c. with displays by commercial vendors.
 - d. PART, CHAART and Bay Area DART volunteers agree to assist by demonstrating intake, processing, loading and transporting of animals affected by a disaster.

6. Phil Hinkle, FVMA Executive Director, is contacted. FVMA enthusiastically supports the project.
7. The FVMA executive board offers to assist with registration and promotional materials. It also offers continuing education credit to affiliated attendees.
8. SPCA-Tampa Bay Executive Director Beth Lockwood and Operations Director Connie Brooks offer a venue and logistical support.
9. SPCA-Tampa Bay Marketing Director Nora Hawkins creates promotional materials and a program.
10. Rosemary Lyons, Education Coordinator-Pasco County Animal Services, contacts a caterer and invites vendors and sponsors to set up booths/tables.
11. FDACS provides speakers and links Symposium proceedings to the SART website (www.flsart.org).
12. Terry Spencer serves as moderator. Speakers for small, exotic and large animals include Jo Ann Daniels, Jenifer Chatfield, Ruth-Anne Richter and Judy Baum.

In summary, at a cost of \$25 for veterinarians and \$15 for others – with a box lunch and six FVMA hours of continuing education credit – the seminar concept [spending all day Sunday learning how to protect your practice and your clients' pets] proved to be popular with veterinarians, technicians and animal shelter/rescue workers.

A special 'Thank You' is due to Welch Agnew (FACA and Pinellas County Animal Services), Greg Christy (FLSART), Raquel Aluisy (CHAART), Jan Hasse (FVMA Disaster Response Committee Chair), John Haven (UF VETS Team), Ronnie Graves (Sumtner County DART), Cynda Crawford (UF VETS Team), Laura Bevan (HSUS), Tiffany Mahaffey (ASPCA) and David Perry (FDACS – Florida SART).

Disaster response command was organized by Leslie Jones and included demonstrations from Ronnie Graves, John Haven, Connie Brooks, DeWayne Taylor, Tiffany Mahaffey and Janine Cianciolo.

Participating sponsors and vendors included the FVMA Foundation, Jean Hink, UF-IFAS – Cooperative Extension Pasco County, 24 Petwatch, Butler Animal Health Supply (provided breakfast!), Merial Limited and Merritt Veterinary Supplies.



Attendees at the Tampa Bay Area Medical Disaster Symposium toured disaster response vehicles. **Above:** Ronnie Graves, Sumter DART, discusses a halter system used to rescue large animals. **Below:** David Perry, FDACS, poses with a practice horse, which when full of water weighs 600 pounds. (Photos courtesy *FVMA Advocate*)

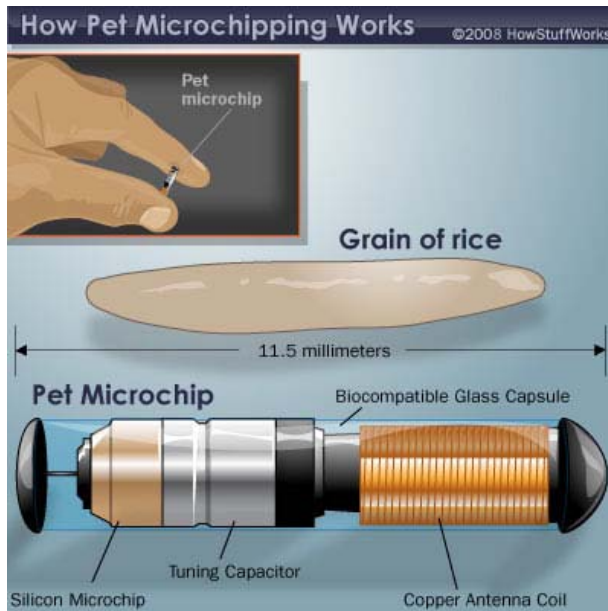


(Courtesy *FVMA Advocate*)

[\[top\]](#)

**Statement of Justification by the
Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management
“Purpose for the Micro Chipping of Sheltered Animals in Disaster”**

1. **Reunification:** The Micro Chipping can be done upon intake of animals submitted by the individual and is linked to the owner through this information. In the event that the animal is brought into the shelter and the owner is unknown the chip will then associate the animal with the disaster and area. When the unclaimed animal is adopted the new owner's information then can be updated to link the animal to its new owner.



2. **Tracking:** When animals are unclaimed and are not adopted they are often relocated to another facility. These facilities are often in another city as well as other states. In the event of an individual looking for one of these animals the micro chip can track this animal to its new location and can aid in the reunification process. This is also the case if an animal has to be removed from the shelter for medical or temporary foster care.

3. **Distinguishing Factor:**

Established shelters have regulations and standards for the animals under their care that do not apply to animals displaced by disaster. For instance, most shelters will only keep an animal for 2-5 days before euthanizing or placing in adoption. Most municipal shelters euthanize >80% of unidentified dogs and cats. Micro chipping all disaster animals brought into a shelter distinguishes them from the general population and will help prevent accidental euthanasia. It is easy at times to confuse animals with similar traits, those with micro chips would not be confused with a similar shelter animal.

4. **Universal:** A nationwide standardization for the reading of micro chips in pets will be implemented by 2009. At present most scanners will read both commonly used formats. All implanted microchips will be the consistent with the same technology. (There is a national movement to have all animals micro chipped, moving from the standard animal tags that hang on collars. Hanging ID tags can be easily lost and micro chips can absolutely ensure that the animal can be unified with their people.)

Sent by Linda Soos-Davis, Oklahoma (linda.soos-davis@oem.ok.gov)

[\[top\]](#)

Difficult On-The-Ground Images Emerge Following Hurricane Ike



An FDACS team assisted with agricultural damage assessments following landfall of Hurricane Ike on September 13th in Galveston, Texas. Incident commander was David Perry. Team members were Dana DeJarnatt, Jason Duval, Julie Hinote, Gary Painter, and Bruce Vickers. Early photos indicate the storm's power.

From the 9/18 Situation Report: Major problems in Hardin County were down power lines. In south Jefferson County, major storm surge had crossed Hwy. 73 resulting in livestock and animal deaths. Dead fish scattered in the ditch by the thousands. Cattlemen are trying to move remaining free roaming cattle as there is no feed or fresh water. Teams assisted cattlemen in moving some of the stressed and stranded cattle to better conditions. Teams will continue with recovery in priority regions determined by the Incident Commander. Teams are still on generator power and are self-contained. (Barge in picture is 15-18 miles from the coast in the middle of 73.)

In a *Special to the SART Sentinel*, the editors interviewed Team Leader David Perry upon his return to Florida. "Our mission," Perry said, "was to find the large concentrations of animal carcasses. Because the storm surge from Ike was so great and the land is so flat, animals too numerous to count were drowned. We saw cows in trees, and many live animals half-buried in ditches had to be euthanized. It wasn't a pretty picture. After we located the animals or carcass concentrations, commercial disposal companies were hired to pick them up.

“The EMAC team from Florida left on the 15th and returned on the 22nd. We were expected to be fully self-contained, and we were. We camped in our SART trailers in the parking lot of a PetSmart.

“I thought we did a very good job. We did what they asked us to do and then came home. They wanted us to be quick, but thorough. It was only the second time that a self-contained EMAC team – the first involving Agriculture – has been sent to the field and both were from Florida.”

[\[top\]](#)

APHIS Launches Emergency Preparedness/Response Web Site



April 2008 (AP): Cattle are treated for fever ticks near Laredo, Texas. USDA's "Tick Rider" force keeps watch over a 700-mile buffer zone along the Rio Grande from Brownsville to Del Rio, inspecting foreign strays and native ranch animals for the fever tick, a parasite that can transmit disease to cattle and could spread to the entire southeastern U.S. if not controlled.

USDA/APHIS has launched a new Emergency Preparedness and Response web site to supply critical information about the wide range of services the agency provides when planning for and during emergencies. The site provides resources and contact information for situations as diverse as a hurricane or tornado or even dealing with a pest or disease outbreak.

While some emergency-related information was previously available on the APHIS web site, it was spread across multiple program areas. The new site brings everything together, from information on ESF-11 or pet sheltering or pest and diseases responses: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/emergency_response/.

The new APHIS site links emergency contact information for the State Veterinarians, State Plant Regulatory Officials, ESF-11 coordinators, Animal Care representatives and biotechnology representatives.

[\[top\]](#)

Gainesville DART Training Report

Reporting from an airport on the way to assist with Hurricane Ike recovery, Laura Bevan reported on the recent Disaster Animal Response Team (DART) training “Introduction to Animals in Disaster” held at Santa Fe College in Gainesville.

Bevan, who is Southeast Regional Director for the Humane Society of the United States, noted that Humane Society University (www.humanesocietyu.org) teamed with Florida Wildlife Care of Gainesville to sponsor the training. While all 29 enrollees completed the course and received a certificate, only two of the four scheduled instructors were able to finish, one falling to influenza and another called for hurricane response. That left Bevan and Diane Webber, HSUS Chicago Area Director of Emergency Sheltering, as primary instructors.

“Our priorities with this introductory course were to emphasize the need for a personal or family disaster plan,” Bevan told the *Sentinel*, “to introduce the concept of shelter planning and to recommend ways to get involved in animal care and response issues. HS University is planning a follow-up course, by the way, ‘Animal Sheltering Operations Boot Camp,’ in February 2009 in either Gainesville or Largo.”



Florida Wildlife Care, Gainesville.

For information about Florida Wildlife Care (www.floridawildlifecare.org) contact Leslie Straub lesliestraub@floridawildlifecare.org or (352) 371-4443.

[\[top\]](#)

Through The Grapevine WMD Basic Agriculture Emergency Response Training

R. Gordon Harman, APHIS Liaison to the Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, Alabama recently sent a note about “AgERT-Agricultural Emergency Response Training” at that federal facility (<https://cdp.dhs.gov>): November 16-22 and November 30-December 6. For information, contact Harman at (256) 847-2350 office and (301) 332-8390 BlackBerry; harmanr@cdpemail.dhs.gov or harmanr@cdpemail.dhs.gov.

[\[top\]](#)

Pet Sheltering Meeting Is Sandwiched Between Hurricanes Gustav and Ike

After Hurricane Gustav but before Hurricane Ike made landfall, APHIS and the fledgling National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs (NASAAEP) co-sponsored a national meeting on pet sheltering: September 10-11, Baltimore, Maryland. Tentatively referred to as the “National Summit on Companion Animal Emergency Management” the meeting provided a forum to educate state emergency responders about federal and non-governmental resources available to assist with pet sheltering during an evacuation. State responders with experience managing pet sheltering during disasters also shared best practices and lessons learned.



The Emergency Pet Shelter at Louisiana State University houses more than 840 animals that await their owners. (Photo: Katie Goode, American Red Cross)

Prior to the meeting, APHIS Animal Care sent six employees to Louisiana to assist with pet sheltering following Gustav. Approximately 1,200 animals were sheltered and Animal Care helped assess sheltering facilities, provide recommendations on animal husbandry and help state officials find resources. Earlier in the summer, Animal Care had held a test exercise with Louisiana and knowledge of refrigerated trucks was used to transport animals during Gustav.

Animal Care also responded to Hurricane Ike. Ten Animal Care employees worked as liaisons to Texas operations, provided subject matter expertise to FEMA, conducted needs assessments in the field, and helped regulate facilities.

In both states the number of animals brought to shelters was lower than anticipated, although it was difficult to obtain accurate counts of animals sheltered statewide. Shelter volunteers had many responsibilities and animals arrived and were picked up continuously. Animal Care will work with states to look at ways to streamline this process in the future.

APHIS News for States, October 2008

[\[top\]](#)



Pandemic Flu Handout Available on Florida Ag Safe Web Site

How does your parakeet's sneeze translate to the death of thousands, even millions of people? Impossible, you think? "Pandemic Flu – What You Need to Know" is a half-page flyer developed by the UF's Carol Lehtola for use as a quick 'tip-sheet' hand-out at local preparedness and health events. It describes in easy-to-understand terms, what Pandemic Influenza is, explains the danger, and the basic steps for protecting oneself. The flyer can be printed directly from <http://www.flagsafe.ufl.edu/publications/pan-flu-1.pdf>.

For more details about a Pandemic Flu outbreak of Avian Influenza see the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) Web site at http://www.eden.lsu.edu/Issues_View.aspx?IssueID=A59E222E-12A4-4964-AC7C-42E9E01F846A.

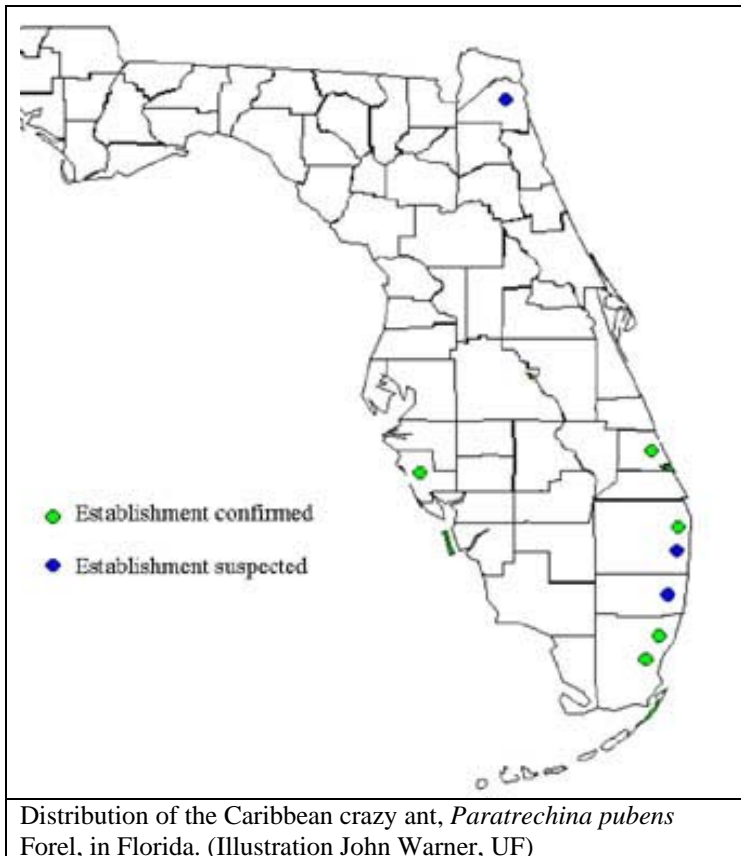
[\[top\]](#)



Florida Exotics in The News Caribbean Crazy Ants

Although it has lived in Florida since the 1950s, the Caribbean "crazy ant" has recently received significant press as a pestilential Sunshine State newcomer. Called crazy ants for their "quick and erratic movement," this insect swarms by the millions.

- The bad news is that "Pest control operators using liquid and/or granular broad-range insecticides appear unable to control this nuisance ant."
- The good news is this ant doesn't bite.



According to Phil Koehler, professor of entomology in UF/IFAS Department of Entomology & Nematology, crazy ants are “protein feeders.” Thus, they eat any living thing in their path – and remember that they swarm by the millions – that cannot escape: plant juices, other insects, bird hatchlings, picnic baskets....

Is such an ant of interest or concern to SART?

Koehler, as quoted in the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, says USDA “has not recognized Caribbean crazy ants as a threat to livestock or crops.” Yet imagine the outcry when the first child is

killed in its outdoor playpen – not to mention the litter of puppies born under the front porch – or the thousands of birds devoured; birds that would normally dine on agriculturally harmful insect pests. Is there a secondary, perhaps indirect, dark side to the crazy ant as the sheer number of exotics on this fragile peninsula mounts? And if you were an enemy of the U.S., an enemy intent on perpetrating long term harm, would the introduction of exotic species such as the Caribbean crazy ant contribute to the success of your mission?

For additional information about the crazy ant and other exotic creatures of concern in Florida please check out the IFAS web site at <http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu>.

[\[top\]](#)

Not Such a Crazy Question

In a slightly-off-the-subject discussion of Robert James Waller essays and science fiction writing, the *Sentinel's* editors and Dr. Carol Lehtola of the U.F. dropped into a universe of possibilities.



“A few years ago,” Lehtola said, “we got an inquiry on NASD¹ about handling anhydrous ammonia (NH₃) and how one could use a propane tank to store it – hmmm! We weren’t sure what to do. Was this person building an underground meth² lab, or what? We finally found out that he was doing research for his boss who wrote science fiction and needed to find a way to freeze and preserve some mythical sci-fi beast! Anhydrous, which becomes a vapor at -28 F degrees, would certainly be cold enough although it would probably cause significant tissue damage to the alien.”

“And this brings up an interesting question. Do any of the SART responders ever encounter meth labs in the field? There was a barn fire in Iowa a while back where the barn was being used for a meth lab. If so, that would make for an interesting article sometime.”

FDACS’ David Perry, a frequent Incident Commander following disasters, with experience for example in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina and Texas after Hurricane Ike, says that to his knowledge no response team has run across a meth lab, but there are numerous other possibilities for danger as well including hostile groups of individuals and escaped exotic animals.

What to do if one encounters a dangerous or hostile situation? David’s suggestion is to get out of the area as quickly as possible and to then alert law enforcement authorities.

¹NASD: National Ag Safety Database (www.cdc.gov/nasd/)

²Meth or methamphetamine or speed is highly addictive.

³Photos of “meth lab [and] cleanup” courtesy S.D. Dept. Environmental & Natural Resources.

Through the Grapevine Climate Change and Wildlife Planning

“Predicted rise in sea level will affect nearly all ecosystems in [Florida]. Based on models, substantial portions of the Everglades could be flooded by 2060, which could severely affect species such as the already critically endangered Florida panther and the snail kite, which are found nowhere else in North America. May areas will be directly affected and others will feel the indirect impact of changing ecosystems and migrating species as they adjust to a possible dynamic and receding coastline. Essentially all ecosystems will be affected by climate change, either directly or indirectly, as both flora and fauna migrate northward.”

Doug Parsons, Partnership Coordinator
Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission

[\[top\]](#)

About the SART Sentinel

Editor: Rick Sapp, PhD, Technical Writer, Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Divis of Animal Industry [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]

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.

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

[\[top\]](#)