



THE SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA STATE AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE TEAM

Advisory Board Meeting – November 5

Florida SART will hold its next full **Advisory Board Meeting** on November 5 in the large conference room at the Alachua Regional Service Center, 14101 Hwy. 441, Suite 200, Alachua. The meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. and should be completed by 2:00 p.m.

Advisory Board meetings are an opportunity for the agriculture responder community and its affiliates to compare notes and ideas, and to meet their counterparts in other agencies – federal, state and local – before a crisis situation requires immediate cooperation. Additional information will be posted in the *Sentinel* as it becomes available. (Should your schedule conflict with the date and time of the Advisory Board meeting, minutes are posted on the Florida SART web site at <http://www.flsart.org/jsp/member/OperationsMeetingMinutes.jsp>.

The Year of No Hurricanes ... ?

Preseason predictions prepared us for an "extremely active" or "above-normal" 2013 Atlantic hurricane season. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicted seven to 11 hurricanes would form.

The season thus far – and September is the traditional peak of weather activity – has been negligible. If you are in the path of a killer storm, that is a relief. If you believe that seasonal tropical storms are part of the natural weather cycle and necessary to preserve the eco-balance in the Caribbean-Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Seaboard, then the continuing lack of activity is a delicate mystery. After all, a typical June-November hurricane season, based on 63 years of accurate weather records, has seven hurricanes.

"If the first hurricane of 2013 forms after 8 a.m. on Sept. 11, it would set a record for the latest 'first' hurricane to arrive in the satellite era (1967 and later)," says Dennis Feltgen, spokesman with the National Hurricane Center www.nhc.noaa.gov in Miami. He says the current record holder is 2002's Gustav, which formed on September 11 of that year.

U.S. hurricane records actually date to 1851, but because storms spend much of their lifetime over the open ocean — some never hitting land — many systems were missed. In the modern era, no years have experienced no hurricanes. The record latest "first" hurricane formed on October 8, 1905.

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Satellite image of hurricane Fran, a large, destructive hurricane that made landfall near Cape Fear, North Carolina on September 5, 1996. Fran was the sixth named storm the 1996 hurricane season. It was so destructive that the name "Fran" was retired from use. (Satellite image by NASA)

Why no hurricanes?

Apparently, dry air and wind shear blowing west from Africa, Feltgen says. Strong winds blowing west off of the Sahara Desert have helped bring dry, dusty air into the Atlantic this summer, which can tend to decrease hurricane formation, AccuWeather reports. Wind shear — strong winds that roar from different directions at various levels of the atmosphere — can tear developing hurricanes apart.



Time to relax?

"We are only at the midpoint of the six-month hurricane season, and have just entered the peak of the season (mid-August through late October)," Feltgen warns. "It is a mistake to believe that the second half of the season will necessarily resemble the first half."

Extensive Training Slate is Offered

The Florida State Agricultural Response Team (FL SART) is collaborating with several training partners to offer a series of six DHS-certified Agroterrorism Prevention courses in Florida. All courses are open to U.S. citizens and are free of charge through DHS grant funding. Training partners include the Western Institute for Food Safety and Security, University of California Davis, the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium, the University of Florida-Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences and the Regional Domestic Security Task Forces.

[AWR 151](#)

[Understanding the Dangers of Agroterrorism](#)

The course goal is to increase awareness among local and regional emergency response teams about the potential targets and impacts of agroterrorism. The course stresses the importance of responding to incidents of intentional contamination as well as natural disasters using the "all hazards" approach. *This training has been approved for 3.5 CEUs for Certified Environmental Health Professionals.*

[September 25 in Immokalee](#)

8:00 am registration, 8:30 - 12:30 pm training

IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Ctr., 2685 State Road 29 N

[September 26 in Brooksville](#)

8:00 am registration, 8:30 - 12:30 pm training

Hernando County Emergency Operations Center, 18900 Cortez Blvd.

AWR 152

Principles of Preparedness for Agroterrorism and Food Systems' Disasters

The course goal is to prepare participants with the skills and knowledge to recognize agroterrorism vulnerabilities. Topics include identifying targets, developing prevention, protection and mitigation strategies, employing the principles of building multi-disciplinary response teams, and identifying the roles of the local, state and federal agencies prior to and during an agricultural or food system disaster. *This training has been approved for 6.5 CEUs for Certified Environmental Health Professionals.*

[September 19, 2013 in St. Augustine](#)

8:00 am registration, 8:30 - 5:00 pm training

St. Johns County Health Dept., 1955 US 1 South, Suite 100

[November 6 in Brooksville](#)

8:00 am registration, 8:30 - 5:00 pm training

Hernando County Emergency Operations Center, 18900 Cortez Blvd.

[November 7 in Immokalee](#)

8:00 am registration, 8:30 - 5:00 pm training

IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center, 2685 State Road 29 N

AWR 153

Principles of Detection and Diagnosis, Strategies and Technologies

The course goal is to inform members of frontline response teams about the importance of early detection and diagnosis, proper sample collection and the steps involved in an agroterrorism-related outbreak investigation. The course includes strategies to improve and increase detection and diagnosis efficiency as well as the epidemiological and criminal investigation process. *This training has been approved for 4.5 CEUs for Certified Environmental Health Professionals.*

[November 21, 2013 in St. Augustine](#)

8:30 am registration, 9:00 - 4:00 pm training

St. Johns County Health Dept., 1955 US 1 South, Suite 100

[December 11 in Brooksville](#)

8:30 am registration, 9:00 - 4:00 pm training

Hernando County Emergency Operations Center, 18900 Cortez Blvd.

[December 12 in Immokalee](#)

8:30 am registration, 9:00 - 4:00 pm training

IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center, 2685 State Rd. 29 N

AWR 154

Principles of National Incident Management System (NIMS), Team Building and Risk Communication

The course goal is to describe the operational features of NIMS, understand how NIMS is essential for community preparedness, outline the logistics of the Incident Command System (ICS), understand methods of team building and explain principles of risk communication. This course meets all of the NIMS/ICS training requirements for FEMA IS-700 NIMS. *This training has been approved for 6.0 CEUs for Certified Environmental Health Professionals.*

[September 18, 2013 in Daytona Beach](#)

8:30 am registration, 9:00 - 5:00 pm training

Volusia County EOC, 3825 Tiger Bay Rd.

AWR 155

Principles of Frontline Response to Agroterrorism and Food Systems' Disasters

The goal of this course is to demonstrate how an effective frontline emergency response can reduce or mitigate the effects of an agricultural emergency, an act of agroterrorism or other food systems disaster. This course includes a plan that can be used as an "all hazards" approach against a wide variety of potential problems and occurrences within the agricultural community. *This training has been approved for 5.0 CEUs for Certified Environmental Health Professionals.*

November 22, 2013 in Daytona Beach

8:30 am registration, 9:00 - 5:00 pm training

Volusia County EOC, 3825 Tiger Bay Rd.

If you have questions regarding any of these courses, or about registration, contact Art Johnstone at ajohnstone@grantpartnersinc.org or (850) 251-4184. To register you're your name, agency/company name, e-mail address and telephone number to ajohnstone@grantpartnersinc.org. Be sure to specify which course(s)/location(s) you want to attend.

Case Study – Outbreaks & Outcomes FMD in UK and Uruguay



The experiences of the United Kingdom (UK) and Uruguay, which suffered similar FMD outbreaks in 2001, show a striking contrast in control strategies and outcomes. The countries have similar numbers of cattle and numbers of herds.

In the UK, the index farm did not report problems as they appeared and ended up shipping infected pigs well after the outbreak began. Early in the outbreak, farmers did not have accurate information and biosecurity practices were inadequate. As a result, the country depopulated about 10,000 farms and slaughtered an estimated 6 million to 10 million animals, resulting in economic impacts that continue today. U.K. officials depopulated uninfected farms adjacent to infected farms; a practice that Pam Hullinger, a veterinarian at the University of California-Davis, says probably was not necessary and would not be used in the US.



In Uruguay, the rapidly spreading outbreak infected herds on 28 farms in the first five days. Animal-health officials quickly implemented a “ring-vaccination” program. Within a week however they found that 131 farms were infected and switched to a national cattle-vaccination program. In cooperation with the government, farmers administered two rounds of more than 12 million doses of the vaccine to susceptible animals across the country. Only 7,000 animals were destroyed, and the country was recognized by the World Organization for Animal Health as FMD-free by May 2003. The outbreak endured for four months, compared to seven months in the UK. Most of Uruguay’s beef exports resumed within one year. The national vaccination program continues today.

“FMD: Prepare early, respond quickly” by John Maday, Managing Editor, Drovers CattleNetwork (Updated: 07/02/13). Read the complete story from *Bovine Veterinarian* (www.bovinevetonline.com) at http://www.bovinevetonline.com/bv-magazine/FMD-Prepare-early-respond-quickly-213880411.html?view=all&goback=%2Egde_3906897_member_260879753#sthash.Omn9NaaJ.dpuf

Shelly Phillips, DVM, MPH, DACVPM with USDA/APHIS/VS in Nashville prepared this summary. Kendra Stauffer, DVM DACVPM, Area Emergency Coordinator, USDA/APHIS/VS passed it along for SART.

Radiological Seminar/Tabletop Exercise is Planned

Kim Sharkey, a planner with Florida Division of Emergency Management, says FDEM’s Radiological Emergency Preparedness Section is providing a two-day seminar and tabletop opportunity this November 5-6. It will be held at the Okeechobee County Emergency Operations Center which is situated – along with Glades, Highlands and Osceola Counties – within the 50 mile radius or “Ingestion Pathway Zone (IPZ)” of the St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant www.fpl.com/environment/nuclear/about_st_lucie.shtml. Following a radiological emergency at the plant, there is a

chance of significant indirect effects for all IPZ counties: regional food embargoes, an influx of evacuating citizens and generalized public concern even leading to panic.



A two-day seminar and tabletop exercise this November 5-6 will be held at the Okeechobee County Emergency Operations Center [O. Mitchell Smeykal, Director, 707 NW 6th St. Okeechobee, FL 34972 (863) 763-3212] which is situated within the 50 mile radius or "Ingestion Pathway Zone (IPZ)" of the St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant.

Day 1 will address ingestion pathway planning and response, radiation and contamination considerations, and agricultural issues.

Day 2 will include a tabletop exercise conducted by Florida State University's Center for Disaster Risk Policy, where a simulated incident will test capabilities and planning.

We invite County EM Directors and other pertinent local responders – Ag Extension Agents, County Health Departments, Transportation, Public Works, Public Information Officers, Local Law Enforcement, Fire Departments, Environmental Protection, and local government – to participate. Each day will begin at 9:00 am and should be concluded by 4:00 pm.

For questions, contact Kim Sharkey Kimberly.sharkey@em.myflorida.com or Roger Rankin Roger.rankin@em.myflorida.com (850) 212-0887.

Florida SARC Presents Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Classes

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition is teaching "Small Animal Emergency Sheltering - Awareness Level" to promote effective response for animals during disasters. Registration is required, but due to a grant from Florida Emergency Management and Homeland Security there is no fee to attend. This course is certified by the Florida Department of Emergency Management, course code FL-003-RESP.



FEMA Pets definition: Household Pet – A domesticated pet, such as a dog, cat, bird, rabbit, rodent, or turtle that is traditionally kept in the home for pleasure rather than for commercial purposes and can travel in commercial carriers and be housed in temporary facilities. **Household pets do not include** reptiles (with the exception of turtles), amphibians, fish, insects/arachnids, farm animals (including horses), and animals kept for racing purposes. (Photo Virginia Office of Emergency Services)

Course Topics include:

Personal Preparedness, Deployment Preparedness, Daily Care and Feeding, Animal Behavior, Assisting in Shelter Set Up, Proper Cage Cleaning and Disinfection, Stress Management, Zoonotic Diseases, Personal Safety, Overview of the Incident Command System and more.

DATE & TIME: Wednesday, October 9 – 8:00 am to 6:00 pm

LOCATION: Greater Jacksonville Fair and Expo Center, 510 Fairground Pl., Jacksonville, FL 32202

DATE & TIME: Saturday, October 19 – 8:00 am to 6:00 pm

LOCATION: Panhandle Animal Welfare Society, 127 West Hollywood Blvd., Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548

DATE & TIME: Saturday, November 9 – 8:00 am to 6:00 pm

LOCATION: Cat Depot, 2542 17th St., Sarasota, Florida 34234

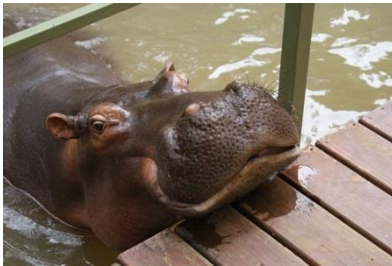
For information and registration go to <http://www.flsrc.org/Training.html> or contact Melissa Forberg training@flsrc.org (352) 658-1224, Pam Burns pamburnssarc@gmail.com or Consie Von Gontard training@flsrc.org.

Under the Radar

FWC Exotic Pet Amnesty Program

As a responder, the last thing you want to encounter in a collapsing house is some peculiar animal that you have never seen before and have no experience with and perhaps have never heard a mention of. One-Two-Three good reasons to support a program sponsored by SART partner FWC www.myfwc.com/nonnatives.

The Exotic Pet Amnesty Program reduces the number of nonnative species being released into the wild by pet owners who can no longer care for their pets or no longer wish to keep them. Another goal of the program is to foster responsible pet ownership. One-day-only Amnesty Day events are held around the state to provide the opportunity for people to surrender their exotic pets (no dogs or cats) free of charge with no penalties.



Current exotic pet owners and anyone interested in acquiring a nonnative pet [as a nonnative, exotic pet adopter] can come and talk to experts to learn more about that animal's needs.

Saturday, September 21 – 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Sawgrass Nature Center, 3000 Sportsplex Dr., Coral Springs

Sponsored by:

Sawgrass Nature Center <http://sawgrassnaturecenter.org/>

Everglades Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area

www.evergladescisma.org/

Contact:

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Rebecca Harvey (561) 213-8391 RGHarvey@UFL.edu

Jenny Novak (850) 617-9554 Jenny.Novak@MyFWC.com

Liz Barraco (954) 577-6409 Liz.Barraco@MyFWC.com



Saturday, October 5 – 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Gulfarium Marine Adventure Park, 1010 Miracle Strip Pkwy. SE, Fort Walton Beach

Sponsored by:

Gulfarium Marine Adventure Park <http://www.gulfarium.com/>

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

<http://www.myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/nonnatives/>

Contact:

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Liz Barraco (954) 577-6409 Liz.Barraco@MyFWC.com

Saturday, November 16 – 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Florida Panther Festival, <http://www.floridapantherfestival.com/index.html>

North Collier Regional Park, 15000 Livingston Rd., Naples

Sponsored by:

SW Florida Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area

www.floridainvasives.org/southwest/

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A Note from Cat Depot

Corey Roscoe, volunteer and education manager at Cat Depot in Sarasota, wants to remind potential animal responders about the Florida SARC Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Awareness Level Training to be held at Cat Depot on Saturday, November 9.

The class gives participants the knowledge needed to work in an emergency animal shelter. Certified by Florida DEM (course code FL-003-RESP) passage of the one-day course is required before potential volunteers can respond as part of an organized effort to help companion animals in Florida during a disaster.



In other news, Cat Depot now has a 20-foot animal trailer, purchased with grant funding from ASPCA. The trailer provides a solution to animal displacement issues in disasters, as well as more specific animal rescues. It can also be used for transport, temporary housing, adoption events and as a spay/neuter recovery vehicle. The heated and air conditioned trailer includes collapsible variable size cages and is powered by two generators. It can house up to 120 small animals and is an integral part of Cat Depot's Emergency Disaster Plan to enable Cat Depot to continue its emergency response rescue work, as well as be prepared during a disaster, locally or nationally.

Cat Depot, 2542 17th Street, Sarasota, FL 34234; Phone (941) 366-2404; Internet www.catdepot.org.

Responders – Watch Where You Step, Wade, Swim

Travis Gill, a Pensacola Beach alligator hunter, was trolling for gators in August when he located a 13.5-foot, 645-pound reptile. He and his three assistants hooked it with a treble hook and a harpoon and then wrestled it for three hours before killing it with a bang stick. Because the gator was so large, they couldn't haul it into their boat. Instead, they towed it to land to load him.



Large as it was, Gill's gator was half a foot smaller than the Florida record. Tres Ammerman of Orlando pulled a 14-foot, 3.5-inch animal out of Brevard County's Lake Washington in November 2010. Ammerman also towed the gator to land.

Arnold Brunell, the Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission wildlife biologist who inspected Ammerman's gator, said it broke the state record for length, set in 1997 by a 14-foot, 5/8-inch male from Lake Monroe in Seminole County. Even at 654 pounds, Ammerman's gator isn't the heaviest ever caught. The heaviest weighed 1,043 pounds and was caught in 1989.

Florida AG EXPO Coming in November

Now in its eighth year, the Florida Ag Expo is the only show offering Florida fruit and vegetable growers the opportunity to get the latest information on new production trends and techniques, sample new varieties and see new field trials. Tomato, strawberry, pepper and cucurbit growers will discover great new ideas for increasing their yields and their business.

The program at the Florida Ag Expo on Wednesday, November 6 (7:30 am – 4:00 pm) includes updates on new varieties, diseases, crop inputs, weeds, marketing, protected agriculture and more. The Florida Ag Expo also features an expansive exhibit area where industry suppliers spotlight the latest product and service innovations.

Registration is FREE for growers and includes the educational program, trade show and field trials. The Ag Expo takes place at the state-of-the-art University of Florida/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center, 14625 CR 672, Wimauma (813) 634-0000. Meals provided with pre-registration. For additional information and registration: <http://www.cvent.com/events/2013-florida-ag-expo/event-summary-bbe0016923464097b86fb6b9c2000456.aspx>.

Whither Florida Oysters? Apalachicola Bay Oyster Situation Report

"The bay is a national treasure, and its demise would sever critical links among our modern society, nature and our heritage."

If you have enjoyed an occasional Florida oyster from Apalachicola Bay and wonder about the apparent collapse of that industry, read the Executive Summary of a report dated April 2013 and available online through the Florida Sea Grant program.

In the report, the UF Florida Oyster Recovery Team and various stakeholders review the history of oyster harvesting in the bay and current plans to restore this resource. Notable results:

- Anticipates a low abundance of legal, 3-inch oysters into 2015.
- No evidence of contamination from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the seafood sampled from Apalachicola Bay.
- Significant shell parasitism by clams, polychaete worms, sponges and other organisms.

The report recommends continuous monitoring, sampling and educational efforts, plus enforcement of size restrictions, seasons, spatial restrictions and illegal harvest.



“While tangible evidence of illegal activity is not available, it is clear from our simulation models that lack of compliance with current regulations could greatly reduce the likelihood of Apalachicola Bay oyster populations returning to historic population levels, regardless of management action taken.” Read more www.flseagrant.org/images/PDFs/tp200_apalachicola_oyster_situation_report.pdf.

About the SART Sentinel

The SART Sentinel is an e-mail newsletter prepared monthly by 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.

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