THE SENTINEL
NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA STATE AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE TEAM

The CDC has recently unveiled a new Website that advises readers about the diseases people can catch from pets, farm animals, and wildlife.

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CDC Unveils Redesigned Healthy Pets Healthy People Website

Last month, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched its redesigned Healthy Pets Healthy People website, with expanded information about diseases people can catch from pets, farm animals, and wildlife.

Users can now search alphabetically by animal and learn which zoonotic diseases they may carry. It is a unique "one-stop shop" where people can learn simple actions to protect themselves – and their pets.

The redesigned website offers:

- An alphabetized list and description of diseases that can spread from animals to humans.
- A list of animal species with the description of diseases associated with the animal.
- Specific groups of people that may be more susceptible to diseases from animals.
- Tips for preventing illnesses acquired from pets and other animals.
- Detailed information about the health benefits of owning a pet

Approximately 75 percent of recently emerging infectious diseases affecting people began as diseases in animals. In recent years, CDC has responded to many illness outbreaks associated with people's contact with animals. These include Ebola, avian influenza, and salmonella.

(Continued *CDC Website*, page 2.)

Lisa Hinton, a fifth generation Floridian, has been named the 2015 Woman of the Year in Agriculture

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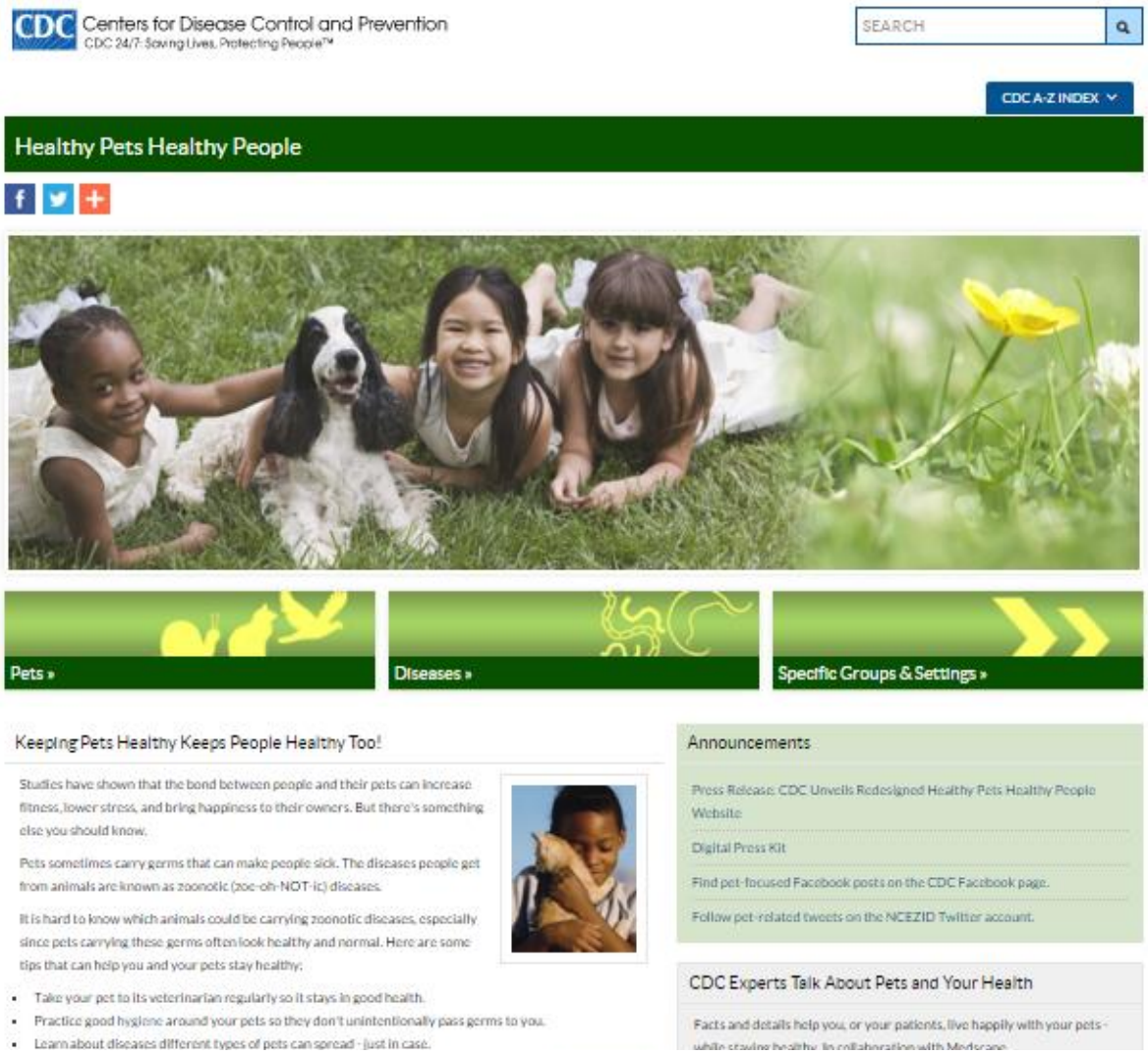
CDC Website (continued)

CDC officially launched the redesigned website on October 4th to coincide with World Animal Day, a day that celebrates the importance of animals and the bonds that people share with them.

"Pets play an important part in many of our lives. CDC recognizes the health benefits of keeping pets and the importance of the human-animal bond," said Heather Bair-Brake, M.S., D.V.M., CDC veterinarian. "The Healthy Pets Healthy People website was created to educate pet owners about some of the risks associated with animals and to provide tips on how they can be safe with their pets."

Through the "Animal Tales" section, visitors can read stories that explore the rich connections between animals and people. The Animal Tales offer a closer look at how animals are positively affecting human lives. As the stories unfold, they provide tips and valuable information on how to protect against diseases that can spread from pets and other animals. The redesigned website also includes specific precautions that people with weakened immune systems, children, and pregnant women should take when interacting with animals. The content, which is geared toward a broad audience, includes images, little-known facts, and videos.

Check out the redesigned site at: www.cdc.gov/healthypets.



USDA and Alvin and the Chipmunks Team Up to Reduce Foodborne Illness

In an effort to educate children and their families about the importance of food safety, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Ad Council are joining 20th Century FOX to launch a series of public service advertisements (PSAs) featuring Alvin and the Chipmunks. The PSAs use footage from the upcoming film *Alvin & the Chipmunks: The Road Chip* to introduce viewers to four steps to food safety: clean, separate, cook and chill.

An estimated 1 in 6 (48 million) Americans get sick from foodborne illness each year, resulting in roughly 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Children are among the most vulnerable to food poisoning because their immune systems are still developing, so caregivers need to take extra precautions when preparing food for children under five.

The partnership includes TV, radio, out-of-home and web advertising. Parents and children can also find kid-friendly activities that further reinforce the food safety steps by visiting FoodSafety.gov.

"Young children are at a higher risk for foodborne illness, and keeping them safe is a top priority for FSIS," said Deputy Under Secretary for Food Safety Alfred Almanza. "These familiar characters offer USDA a great opportunity to communicate this valuable public health message in a way to get the attention of children and parents."

The new PSAs are an extension of USDA and Ad Council's Food Safe Families campaign, which aims to raise awareness about the risk of foodborne illness and encourage families to learn and practice key steps that will help everyone stay safe from foodborne illness through the following safe food handling behaviors:

- **Clean**: Wash hands with soap and warm water before and after handling raw food. Clean all surfaces and utensils with soap and hot water. Wash all produce under running water before eating, cutting, or cooking.
- **Separate**: Use separate plates and utensils to avoid cross-contamination between raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs and foods that are ready to eat (like already cooked foods or raw vegetables).
- **Cook**: Cook foods to the safe temperature by using a food thermometer.
- **Chill**: Chill foods promptly if not consuming immediately after cooking. Don't leave food at room temperature for longer than two hours, or 1 hour if temperature is above 90°F.

Consumers can see these new PSAs and learn more about key food safety practices at Foodsafety.gov.

Enrollment Open: Awareness Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Class

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition has upcoming opportunities for their *Awareness Level Small Animal Sheltering class.*

When disaster strikes, the team of trained volunteer responders will be there to shelter and protect Florida's companion animals.

This Awareness Level class gives students the knowledge necessary to work in an emergency animal shelter. This class provides expertise and practical experience required to become a professional disaster animal responder. The Awareness Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering class is certified by the Florida Department of Emergency Management and is required to respond in Florida to help companion animals during a disaster.

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

For more information about the courses, and to register, please visit: http://flsarc.org/Training.html

November 8th Course - Tampa

When: Sunday November 8, 2015 from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Where: Hillsborough County Emergency Operations Center, 2711 E Hanna Avenue, Tampa, FL 33610

November 14th Course – Panama City

When: Saturday November 14, 2015 from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM CST
Where: Bay County Emergency Operations Center, 700 Highway 2300, Panama City, FL 32409

State Makes Gains Against Fruit Flies in South Florida

Florida has made significant strides in its effort to eradicate the largest outbreak of Oriental fruit flies in the state's history. This according to an agriculture official speaking at a Florida Senate panel last month.

Since Aug. 26, a record 165 of the insects have been found in part of Miami-Dade County that is mainly agricultural land, with an estimated 2,000 growers, nurseries and other businesses affected.

FDACS has responded with a series of measures --- including aerial spraying earlier this month --- designed to quell the threat before it further affects Florida's $1.6 billion agriculture industry.

"This came at a very bad time, in a very bad place --- but we're on it," Trevor Smith, the department's director of plant industry, told the Senate Agriculture Committee. "We're all over it."

Read more at:
http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Plant-Industry/Pests-Diseases/Exotic-Fruit-Flies/Oriental-Fruit-Fly-Information

Federal Officials Seize Adulterated Crab Products for Food Safety Violations

On Tuesday, Oct. 20, 2015, U.S. Marshals seized about 5,000 cases of ready-to-eat frozen Jonah crab products processed by Rome Packing Company Inc. (Rome Packing). FDA investigators determined the products have been prepared, packed and held under unsanitary conditions and may present a risk to human health.

During an FDA inspection of Rome Packing in Lakeville, Massachusetts, from November 2014 through January 2015, investigators observed poor sanitary practices and found that the company's cooking process for crabs did not maintain adequate temperatures to prevent the growth of pathogens such as *Listeria monocytogenes* (*L. mono*). FDA investigators collected environmental swabs during the inspection and confirmed the presence of *L. mono* in the manufacturing area. The presence of *L. mono* in the processing environment may indicate colonization in other areas of the facility.

"The FDA made several efforts to help Rome Packing correct processes, but the company failed to take adequate corrective measures," said Melinda K. Plaisier, the FDA's associate commissioner for regulatory affairs. "In this case, we had to intervene and seize this adulterated food to prevent it from reaching consumers."

The FDA used a bacterial typing tool called whole genome sequencing (WGS) to link the samples collected in the facility. WGS technology can show the relationship among isolates of bacterial pathogens found in the environment, a food source, or a person who became ill from consuming contaminated food.

L. mono is a pathogenic bacterium that can contaminate foods, which may result in a sometimes life-threatening illness called listeriosis. People with compromised immune systems, the elderly, pregnant women and developing fetuses are particularly susceptible to listeriosis. *L. mono* grows under refrigeration and wet conditions, resists diverse environmental conditions, and can survive for prolonged periods of time.

Rome Packing is currently not operating or producing food. No illnesses have been reported to date.

Florida Forest Service Sends Crews to Battle Texas Wildfire

The Florida Forest Service, a division of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, has sent 16 wildland firefighters to assist wildfire suppression efforts on the Hidden Pines Fire in Bastrop County, Texas. The fire has burned more than 4,300 acres, destroying nine homes and threatening hundreds more.

"Florida Forest Service wildland firefighters are an elite group of selfless public servants committed to the protection of life, property and natural resources. This commitment extends beyond Florida's borders as we work to provide support to our partners across the country," said Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam.

The 16 Florida Forest Service wildland firefighters from North Florida will join other firefighters in Texas, where they will use a range of firefighting equipment, including bulldozers, to contain the wildfire by creating a fire break or fire line around the fire perimeter. The Hidden Pines Fire is currently only 25-percent contained.

"Thanks to sustained low to moderate wildfire danger levels in Florida, we have been able to continue to assist our partners in other states," said Jim Karels, Florida State Forester. "In doing so, our wildland firefighters build upon their skills and expertise in preparation for when Florida's wildfire activity hits its peak in the spring."

So far this year, the Florida Forest Service has sent nearly 550 firefighters and personnel to assist wildfire suppression and management efforts in 11 other states.

The Florida Forest Service manages more than 1 million acres of public forest land while protecting 26 million acres of homes, forestland and natural resources from the devastating effects of wildfire.

Learn more about the Florida Forest Service programs at http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Florida-Forest-Service.

SART Equipment Deployments and Contacts

SART has deployed Mobile Animal Response Equipment (MARE), livestock panels, and Large Animal Technical Rescue Trailers (LATR) at strategic locations in each RDSTF region as a region-wide asset.

If a person/organization is in need of this equipment, prior approval must be obtained from the Emergency Management Director in the requesting county.

A request may then be made with the contacts below to obtain the equipment for use. Any questions or concerns may be directed to Joe Kight at (850)410-0920 or David Perry (352)572-3397.

For more information, please visit http://flsart.org/RegionalEquipment/

Lisa Hinton Announced as 2015 Woman of the Year in Agriculture

Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam in October announced that Lisa Hinton, a fifth generation Floridian, has been named the 2015 Woman of the Year in Agriculture. Lisa Hinton has dedicated herself to the advancement of Florida agriculture, agriculture education and youth programs. The award, now in its 31st year, recognizes women who have made outstanding contributions to Florida agriculture.

"Lisa Hinton is a true advocate for Florida agriculture and the programs she has implemented and the individuals she has inspired will have a lasting impact on Florida agriculture for generations to come," said Commissioner Putnam. "I am proud to recognize her as the 2015 Woman of the Year in Agriculture, and I want to thank her for her years of dedicated service and contributions to agriculture and to all of Florida."

Hinton had an immeasurable impact on Florida's youth programs while serving as the Director of Agribusiness for the Florida State Fair. Hinton placed a high priority on livestock education and her philosophy of "we're raising kids not animals" led to the development of the Champion Youth Program at the Florida State Fair. The program has gained national recognition as a valuable teaching tool for the future contributors to the agriculture industry. In addition to the Champion Youth Program, Hinton also played a role in developing and implementing other important programs, such as the Youth Steer Futurity that showcases Florida cattle, Ag-Venture and the Youth Livestock Show Ethics Certifications.

As a result of her dedication to Florida agriculture, education and youth programs, Hinton was inducted into the Florida 4-H Hall of Fame in 2002 and the Florida Federation of Fairs Hall of Fame in 2009.

The Woman of the Year in Agriculture award is sponsored by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Florida State Fair Authority and presented to the recipient during the 2016 Florida State Fair in Tampa.

Please login and update your membership information online at:
http://flsart.org

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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