THE SENTINEL
NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA STATE AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE TEAM

ARS discoveries are providing vital information to help fight this economically devastating disease, which affects cattle and other cloven-hoofed animals.

Taking Aim at Deadly Swine Diseases

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) scientists are stepping up their efforts to help fight deadly swine viruses that are prevalent in other countries and pose a threat to the United States.

Microbiologist Manuel Borca with the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Foreign Animal Disease Research Unit, located at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center in Orient Point, N.Y., is developing vaccines, diagnostic tests and other strategies to help control classical swine fever (CSF).

The highly contagious disease has been eradicated in the United States, but is still present in wild boars in Europe, where it can infect domestic pigs.

All pigs within close proximity of an infected animal must be destroyed to prevent spread of the disease.

Borca and his colleagues are developing CSF virus strains for vaccines that would make it possible to differentiate between animals that have been vaccinated and animals infected with a wild type of the virus.

In patented research, Borca introduced a genetically manipulated marker virus that can be distinguished from a wild virus.

The marker virus produces early immunity against CSF within the first week after vaccination.

Scientists also have developed a PCR (polymerase chain reaction) assay that detects the CSF virus in infected animals before signs of the disease appear.

(See *Swine Disease*, page 2)

Special Features of this Issue:

- *Florida Forest Service Receives National Award During Prescribed Fire Awareness Week*
- *AVMA Governmental Relations Division Prepares for Annual Fly-In*
- *'60 Minutes' Exposes Italy's Olive Oil Fraud*

Congratulations, and happy birthday to the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine for celebrating 40 years of excellence!

See page 6 for the story.

Swine Disease (continued)

Another disease of major concern is African swine fever (ASF), which is spreading in European and Asian countries. There is no cure or vaccine for this virus, which kills all infected pigs within a week.

Scientists at Plum Island have renewed efforts to help control ASF. In the past, they identified several genes that, if eliminated, would reduce the virus' ability to cause disease, and used the technique to develop less virulent viruses that protected animals against ASF.

Today, Borca is using this same approach to develop genetically modified viruses that could lead to vaccines to protect against the ASF strain that is killing thousands of animals in the Republic of Georgia and the Caucasus region. Testing is under way to discover if these viruses will make good vaccine candidates.

ARS is USDA's principal intramural scientific research agency.

For more information, please visit http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/2013/131216.htm

Aerial view of Plum Island, an 840-acre island located 1.5 miles off the northeastern tip of Long Island, New York. The island is home to ARS's Foreign Animal Disease Research Unit, where ARS scientists collaborate with colleagues from the Department of Homeland Security and USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to protect America's livestock from foreign animal diseases.

Kermit, Inc. Issues Allergy Alert on Undeclared Soy and Anchovies in Various Barbecue Sauces

Kermit, Inc. of DeLand, Florida is recalling products co-packed for Peddlin' Rooster because of an undeclared allergen on the label. The undeclared allergen is soy and anchovies as an ingredient in Reduced Sodium Worcestershire Sauce and Organic Ketchup.

The products only come in clear glass bottles in the sizes indicated by each product. Each product contains a "Best By" date. The recall is for all of the individual products with any "Best By" date prior to November 1, 2017.

No illnesses have been reported to date in connection with this problem.

For more information, please visit http://www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/ucm481230.htm?source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Florida Forest Service Receives National Award During Prescribed Fire Awareness Week

Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam announced last month that the Florida Forest Service has received the Wildfire Mitigation Fire Service Leadership award for its record-breaking prescribed fire program. This award comes just as Florida recognizes Prescribed Fire Awareness Week, which is from Jan. 24 through Jan. 30.

"The Florida Forest Service has worked tirelessly to protect Florida's citizens, natural habitats, and property through its prescribed fire program, and it is wonderful to see the Florida Forest Service recognized as a model for the nation," stated Commissioner Putnam.

The Wildfire Mitigation Awards are the highest commendation for innovation and leadership in wildfire preparedness and mitigation, and they are awarded by the National Association of State Foresters, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the National Fire Protection Association and the USDA Forest Service.

During the previous year, the Florida Forest Service treated more than 246,000 acres of state forests with prescribed fire, the highest number ever reported by a state forestry agency in United States history.

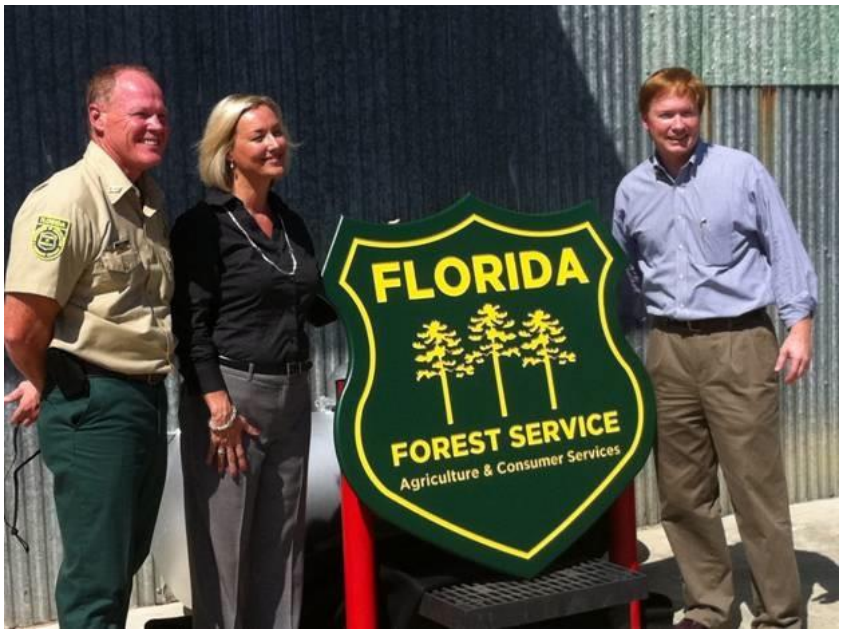
In addition to its efforts on state forest lands, the Florida Forest Service also oversees the issuance of prescribed burning authorizations and administers Florida's Certified Prescribed Burn Manager program.

Currently, there are more than 1,600 certified prescribed burn managers who manage more than 2.3 million acres of agricultural and natural lands annually with prescribed fire.

The Florida Forest Service has developed a prescribed fire program that encompasses a long-term, sustained approach to reducing wildfire risk, providing for resiliency across Florida's landscapes and keeping our forests healthy," said Jim Karels, Florida State Forester.

The Florida Forest Service, a division of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, manages more than one 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 Florida Forest Service programs.



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

February 6th Course - Tampa

When: Saturday February 6, 2016 from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Where: Hillsborough County Emergency Operations Center, 2711 E Hanna Avenue, Tampa, FL 33610

Stay up-to-date of all Florida State Agricultural Response Team news and information at www.FLSART.org!

AVMA Governmental Relations Division Prepares for Annual Fly-In

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Governmental Relations Division is teaming up with SAVMA to host a joint 2016 legislative fly-in that will bring veterinary students and veterinarians to Washington, D.C., to participate in a two-day workshop. The 8th AVMA Legislative Fly-In will take place Feb. 28- March 1 in Washington, D.C.

Students from around the country will bring their pride to the nation's capital.

The event will introduce participants to the legislative process and brief them on the federal legislation that impacts the veterinary profession. AVMA's Governmental Relations team will spend the first day of the workshop educating participants on high-priority legislation before setting them loose on Capitol Hill to meet with their elected officials.

The participants will focus their meetings with elected officials and their staff on a couple of high-priority pieces of legislation for the veterinary profession: our opposition to the Fairness to Pet Owners Act (H.R. 3174/S.1200) and our support of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

Check out this video recap of the 2015 Legislative Fly-in, where 66 students hailing from 26 veterinary schools from around the country hit Capitol Hill to lobby Congress on the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) Enhancement Act (S. 440) and the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

For more information, please visit http://atwork.avma.org/2016/01/19/avma-grd-prepares-for-annual-fly-in/?utm_source=advocate&utm_medium=email&utm_campai

UF College of Veterinary Medicine Celebrates 40 Years

Happy Birthday to the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine! A key SART partner, the college is celebrating 40 years of existence in 2016; and to help celebrate, they're already planning for lots of activities for alumni and friends.

The college's first veterinary medical students entered the hallways in 1976. So far, approximately 2,900 D.V.M. program graduates and nearly 500 alumni from their graduate studies program hold M.S. or Ph.D. degrees in veterinary medical sciences.

The first event was a 40th Anniversary kick-off celebration held on January 7 at the UF Small Animal Hospital. The event was for internal staff and students to come together informally to acknowledge this important milestone in the history of the college.

The next event will be an alumni reception on March 7 at the Western Veterinary Conference in Las Vegas, followed by an open house on April 9.

Meanwhile, the college has posted a milestones page to help supporters walk down memory lane and refresh their historical knowledge with key points in the life of the college.

As the year unfolds, UF CVM will be keeping everyone informed about anniversary-related activities on their events calendar page, so stay tuned for more information as it becomes available.

In the meantime, please read more by visiting http://givingandalumni.vetmed.ufl.edu/events/40th-anniversary-2/

Students celebrate during The University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine's 40th Anniversary kickoff party on January 7.

'60 Minutes' Exposes Italy's Olive Oil Fraud

When it comes to knock-offs of Italian classics—you probably think of fake Guccis or Pradas—not food.

But in December, police in Italy nabbed 7,000 tons of phony olive oil. Much of it was bound for American stores. The oil was from North Africa, deodorized with chemicals and rebranded as more expensive Italian extra virgin. The scam was cooked-up by organized crime.

CBS News' *60 Minutes* investigated the copies of fine olive oil, wine, and cheese, which has fueled an explosion of food crime in Italy. It's estimated to be a $16 billion-a-year enterprise. The Italians call it "Agromafia"...and it's a scandal for a people whose cuisine is considered a national treasure.

Read the story and watch the clip at:
http://www.cbsnews.com/news/60-minutes-agromafia-food-fraud/

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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