



# THE SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA STATE AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE TEAM



Photo: SART Planning Meeting, March 28-30, 2017

## 2017 SART Planning Meeting Marked as a Success

In March, SART sponsored another successful Biennial Planning Meeting at the Plaza Resort and Spa in Daytona Beach, Florida. FDACS employees, SART members, emergency management personnel, and IFAS extension agents came from around the state to share knowledge and enhance agricultural emergency response networks. The meeting took place from March 28-30, with different topics covered each day.

### Tuesday, March 28

The meeting kicked off with presentations including an overview of SART, agriculture-related homeland security intelligence, food safety response, and vector control. The first day concluded with a reception

hosted by the State Animal Response Coalition.

### Wednesday, March 29

Topics covered on Wednesday encompassed emergency animal sheltering, the Zika Virus, large animal rescue, resources available through IFAS extension offices, and available trainings.

### Thursday, March 30

The meeting concluded with presentations on homeland security funding, New World Screwworm response, the reasons for SART county visits, and sheltering in Jacksonville during Hurricane Matthew.

(See 2017 SART Planning Meeting, page 8.)

## Special Features of this Issue:

- *UF VETS Score a Big Win for a Little Dog*
- *FDA Acting Assistant Commissioner for Food Safety Integration Talks About Advancing the Safety of Imported Food*
- *Florida's Integrated Rapid Response Team Announces May Annual Meeting*

***“One way we can help ensure the safety of imported food is by allocating our resources, based on risk, using the full range of tools across the supply chain.”***

— Dr. Donald A. Prater  
Acting Assistant Commissioner  
for Food Safety Integration,  
Office of Foods and Veterinary  
Medicine, FDA  
(Story on page 3)



## UF VETS Score a Big Win for a Little Dog

On April 4, 2017, Gilchrist County received several inches of rain within a brief period of time. A resident contacted the Gilchrist County Sheriff's Office stating her dog had fallen into a large ground collapse on her property.

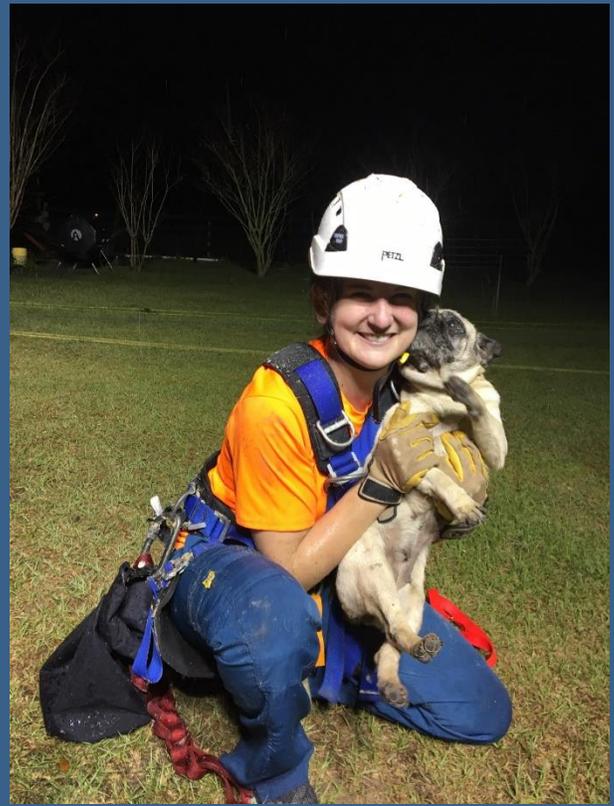
Local Fire Rescue crews responded and saw a hole nearly six feet in diameter at the top, tapering down almost 30ft deep. The animal, a small breed "pug," could be heard at the bottom of the cavern but was not visible. Responders immediately contacted the UF Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (VETS team) for assistance in this rescue. Among many other functions, the UF VETS team has extensive training in the technical rescue of trapped animals both large and small.

UF VETS team leader, John Haven, and his team responded quickly to assess the scene. Gilchrist County Fire Rescue also requested the assistance of Fanning Springs Fire Rescue and the City of Trenton Fire Department to assist with manpower.

The UF VETS team in collaboration with the other responders donned safety harnesses, securing all team members to a hard anchor point, and began to carefully enlarge the cavern in attempts to locate the trapped canine without triggering another collapse.

Once a substantial portion of loose dirt had been removed from the top of the collapsed area, the UF VETS team was able to determine that the walls of the newly formed cavern were comprised of hard limestone. With all responders working together, a team member was lowered into the collapsed area, rescuing the dog uninjured from the incident.

Gilchrist County Fire Chief, James Campbell, said he was "Grateful for the assistance of the UF VETS team, John Haven, Jenny Groover, and Brandi Phillips. This rescue would not have been possible without the knowledge, compassion and years of specialized training of this team."



## FDA Acting Assistant Commissioner for Food Safety Integration Talks About Advancing the Safety of Imported Food

Dr. Donald A. Prater is the Acting Assistant Commissioner for Food Safety Integration in the Office of Foods and Veterinary Medicine (FVM). He is responsible for import-related strategic resource planning activities across FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) and the Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) in coordination with FDA's Office of Global Regulatory Operations and Policy (GO).



In this Q&A interview, Dr. Prater explains that his job is to coordinate foods import activities across the FVM program. **Q. Why is this important?** Because about 15 percent of the U.S. food supply is imported, including nearly 50 percent of fresh fruit and 20 percent of fresh vegetables, and 80 percent of seafood. We import from more than 200 countries and about 125,000 firms. It's FDA's responsibility, along with suppliers and importers, to help ensure imported food is safe. One way FDA can do that is by allocating resources, based on risk, to better protect consumers.

### **Q. Assistant Commissioner for Food Safety Integration. That's a long title. What exactly does that mean?**

My job is to coordinate foods import activities across the FVM Program. The "integration" aspect reflects the fact that our traditional regulatory oversight tools for imports (e.g., inspections, import screening, field exam activities) will be assimilated with the new import provisions of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) to form a multi-faceted toolkit to help ensure the safety of imported food.

The cross-cutting nature of import-specific issues requires a significant amount of communication and coordination across the FVM Program, which includes the Office of Foods and Veterinary Medicine, CFSAN and CVM, as well as the related activities under GO and the Office of Regulatory Affairs.

The need for this kind of integration is greater than ever given the increasing volume of food imports and the fact that we are moving into the operational phase of FSMA.

### **Q. How will this benefit consumers?**

We import a lot of foods into the United States. About 15 percent of the U.S. food supply is imported, including nearly 50 percent of fresh fruit and 20 percent of fresh vegetables, and 80 percent of seafood. We import from more than 200 countries and about 125,000 firms. It's FDA's responsibility, along with suppliers and importers, to help ensure imported food is safe.

One way we can help ensure the safety of imported food is by allocating our resources, based on risk, using the full range of tools across the supply chain. By tailoring our oversight responsibilities, leveraging work done by other responsible parties in the food supply chain, and applying new regulatory tools provided in FSMA along with our existing tools, consumers will be better protected and our resources will be more efficiently allocated to areas that present the greatest risk.

(See *Food Safety Integration*, next page.)

## Food Safety Integration (continued)

### **Q. So does that mean you are applying the same oversight whether a food is produced domestically or imported?**

FDA has a range of tools (e.g., inspections, physical examinations, sampling/testing) to provide oversight of domestic and foreign foods, and the import provisions of FSMA provide new tools, such as the requirement that importers verify that their suppliers produce food consistent with U.S. food safety standards. The deployment of the tools may be different across the food supply chain, but the level of oversight will be comparable.

The fundamental principal is to ensure that foods imported from abroad are as safe as those produced domestically. It's not about having identical systems but having the same level of protection. However, given the range of available tools there may be ways to optimize their use in the domestic and foreign arenas. For example, FDA inspections are a valuable tool, but overseas inspections are very resource intensive because of the need for coordination with national and local authorities, visa requirements, logistical arrangements, language (need for interpreters), and other challenges. For that reason, they may be most appropriate for facilities that pose the highest risk.

### **Q. Aren't you already shifting resources based on the risk a food facility's operation may pose? This seems like common sense.**

For sure, we already apply a risk-based approach to inform what commodities and facilities we inspect, as well as our inspection frequency. Our Predictive Risk-based Evaluation for Dynamic Import Compliance Targeting (PREDICT) system is a well-known analytics tool FDA uses to electronically screen all regulated shipments imported or offered for import into the U.S.

In addition, we are now able to bring powerful information technology and data analytics to bear in order to examine and obtain a deeper understanding of our global inventory of regulated entities. This richer information portrait will allow us to further refine our resource allocation models to more efficiently and effectively deploy FDA's regulatory oversight resources. Thousands of registered firms and thousands of shipments every day result in a dynamic and ever-changing landscape of risk. Increasing the precision and robustness of our information will help us obtain even better public health outcomes.

### **Q. How is FDA changing its approach to import inspection?**

Traditionally, our import safety program has consisted of inspecting foreign facilities that import food into the U.S. and inspecting shipments at the port of entry. A significant increase in the volume of imports and the number of registered firms compared to the relative costs associated with implementing these particular import tools challenges the ability of this traditional model to keep pace with the current trend.

Activities related to imported foods are undergoing big changes, largely due to FSMA, by requiring prevention-based actions to ensure the safety of these foods before they reach U.S. borders. FSMA gives us that opportunity because it provides several new tools to help us to do the job better. For example, we have the Foreign Supplier Verification Program, which requires importers to verify the safety of the food they import, and we will inspect importers to make sure they are doing so. We have a program that will be used for accrediting third-party certification bodies to conduct food safety audits of foreign food entities, including registered foreign food facilities. And we have the Voluntary Qualified Importer Program, which involves expedited review of food from eligible importers that meet rigorous standards.

Read more at: <https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm552507.htm>

## Enrollment Open: Operations Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Course

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition (FL SARC) has upcoming opportunities for participation in their *Operations Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering* course.

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

The Operations Level course will give you many new job options, in addition to leadership skills and team lead opportunities. This course expands upon information covered in FL-003-RESP and ICS-100 courses. These earlier courses are prerequisites for FL-607-RESP.

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>



### May 20-21 Course – Sarasota, FL

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**When:** May 20-21, 2017

**Where:** Cat Depot Education Resource Center, 2542 17th Street, Sarasota, FL 34234

**Details:** If you are interested in signing up for this class, please contact Pam Burns, Volunteer Director, via e-mail at [pamburnssarc@gmail.com](mailto:pamburnssarc@gmail.com). Ms. Burns will be able to tell you if she has already received all required documentation, or if you need to submit anything. If you need to submit additional information, you may e-mail it, or FAX it to [727-474-3644](tel:727-474-3644). Once everything is received, you will get a confirmation for the class.

To be able to deploy to federally declared disasters and/or take this Operations Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering course, you must have proof of the following:

- FL SARC Awareness Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering class completion
- Current Tetanus vaccination
- FEMA IS-100 (online and no charge)



## May 15, 2017

- 1:00 - 1:30**      **Welcome and Introductions**  
Brenda Morris, FDACS  
Dr. Elizabeth Ormond, FDA  
Vakesha Brown, DOH  
Lindsay Porter, DBPR
- 1:30 – 2:30**      **Jeopardy Ice Breaker**  
Clay Kilgore, FDACS
- 2:30 - 3:45**      **2016HurricaneActivations**  
Summer Williams, FDACS  
Cleone Cooper, FDACS
- 3:45 - 4:00**      **Break**
- 4:00 – 5:00**      **FDACS GIS Overview**  
Sara Wander, FDACS

## May 16, 2017

- 8:00 - 8:40**      **DOH Zika Response**  
Dr. Danielle Stanek, DOH
- 8:40 - 9:00**      **DBPR Zika Response**  
Jens Rammelmeier, DBPR
- 9:00 - 9:45**      **Michigan RRT**  
Brad Deacon, MDARD
- 9:45 - 10:00**      **Break**
- 10:00 - 10:45**      **FDACS New World Screwworm Response**  
Dr. Diane Kitchen, FDACS
- 10:45 - 11:30**      **Incident Command System**  
Florida Forest Service Team, FDACS
- 11:30 - 1:00**      **Lunch- on your own**
- 1:00 - 5:00**      **Incident Management Team breakouts**  
Florida Forest Service Team, FDACS

## May 17, 2017

- 8:00 - 9:30**      **Recall Audit Check Module**  
Dr. Elizabeth Ormond, FDA  
Rich Stephens, FDACS
- 9:30 - 9:45**      **Break**
- 9:45 - 10:15**      **Mississippi RRT**  
Ben Barham, MS-DOH
- 10:15 - 11:30**      **Georgia RRT**  
Venessa Sims and Brandon Saucedo,  
GDACS
- 11:30 - 12:00**      **Wrap-Up**

## Florida's Integrated Rapid Response Team Announces May Annual Meeting

Florida's Integrated Rapid Response Team (FLIRRT) will be hosting their Annual Meeting from May 15-17, 2017, in Lake Mary, Florida.

The purpose of this year's meeting is to gather our food safety and food defense partners in person, so when the time comes for a rapid response, we will have the knowledge and tools necessary to accomplish our mission.



Each person involved will have a better understanding of what would be expected from them and their agency in the event of a multi-agency response to an adverse incident.

**Hotel/Meeting Location:** Orlando Marriott Lake Mary; 1507 International Parkway, Lake Mary, Florida.

\*All hotel reservations will be made through the FLIRRT coordinator. Please do not call the hotel and book on your own.

If you have any questions, contact Summer Williams at [Summer.Williams@FreshFromFlorida.com](mailto:Summer.Williams@FreshFromFlorida.com) or [850-245-5535](tel:850-245-5535).

## Florida Fire Service Reminds You of Essential Information



As the State continues to battle wildfires, The Florida Forest Service (FFS) consists of more than 1,250 dedicated employees with the mission to protect and [manage the forest resources](#) of Florida, ensuring that they are available for future generations.

[Wildfire prevention and suppression](#) are key components in the FFS efforts to protect homeowners from the threat of damage in a natural, fire-dependent environment. FFS is dedicated to [training](#) individuals to meet these goals.

### Hot Links

- For wildfire emergencies, call 911 immediately or contact a local forestry [field unit](#) office.
- [Wildfire Information](#): Find current conditions by county, burn bans, and helpful tips regarding wildfires in Florida.
- [With More Than 240 Arson Wildfires in 2017, Commissioner Adam Putnam Asks Floridians to Help Combat Arson](#)
- NEW — Download Free [FLBurnTools Mobile App](#)
- [Fire Safety Tools](#) for First Responders
- [Hurricane Recovery](#): Storm damage and tree removal
- [Growth and Yield Model for Planted Southern Pines](#) under various management scenarios

## FDACS Hosts Regional Zika Workshops Through the State

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services hosted a series of Zika workshops for mosquito control programs throughout Florida, which concluded late in April. The department hosted regional workshops in the following counties to discuss mosquito surveillance and control measures: Alachua, Brevard, Broward, Hillsborough, Lee, Leon and Okaloosa.

“As we enter into the warmer months, it's especially important that Florida communities are equipped with the knowledge and resources they need for their Zika-related response efforts,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam.

The department continues to support local programs by providing mosquito testing at the Bronson Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory. To date, nearly 90,000 individual mosquitoes, represented by more than 6,500 pools of mosquitoes, have been tested for the presence of the Zika virus. Of those collected in 2017, none has yielded positive results.

While the Florida Department of Health is the lead agency in this public health crisis, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is



supporting efforts by:

- Providing technical assistance to mosquito control programs and the Department of Health;
- Monitoring mosquito control activities across the state and notifying local mosquito control programs of arbovirus activity or events;
- Identifying resources to conduct incident-related mosquito control efforts.

For more information regarding Zika, visit the [Florida Department of Health's website](#).

## 2017 SART Planning Meeting (continued)



The presentations provided a plethora of knowledge for attendees to take back to their local communities. The knowledge of available resources gained by planning meeting attendees allows for more coordinated and efficient response during an emergency. SART would like to thank all of those who attended the meeting and especially those who presented. The meeting could not have been a success without you!

*Submitted by Sara Thomas, Apalachee Regional Planning Council*

Please log in and update  
your membership  
information online at:  
[www.FLSART.org](http://www.FLSART.org)

## About the SART Sentinel

The *SART Sentinel* is an email newsletter prepared monthly by the members of the **Florida State Agricultural Response Team**. Past issues of the *Sentinel* are archived on the Florida SART website at [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.

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