THE SENTINEL
NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA STATE AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE TEAM

The Florida Integrated Rapid Response Team plays an integral role in Florida's Food and Feed Defense

Special Features of this Issue:

- *ESF-17 and SART Respond to Multiple Incidents Throughout October*
- *Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Putnam Writes in Letter "We Will Rebuild"*
- *SART Offers K9 Handler/First Responder Advanced Scope 2-day Training Class*

Florida SART Works Together to Protect, Defend, and Respond to Food Threats

The Sunshine State is no stranger to natural disasters — hurricanes, floods, droughts and wildfires have done their share of damage in Florida. With 14 seaports and over 800 airports and airfields, the state is also at risk for man-made disasters.

75 million tourists and billions of tons of freight enter Florida each year, making it vulnerable to threats like disease introduction and agro-terrorism.

According to the Food Protection and Defense Institute (FPDI), a Homeland Security Center of Excellence, "A great place to start assessing risk is to look at the components of food defense threat – what components have to be in place for intentional food adulteration to occur."

Further, the FPDI states that "A Food Defense threat is comprised of motivation, capability, and vulnerability."

Florida's State Agricultural Response Team (SART) works closely with Florida's Integrated Rapid Response Team (FLIRRT) to coordinate feed and food emergency response under the Rapid Response Team Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Cooperative Grant Program.

See page 6 of this edition for *The FLIRRT Report*. And for more information about food defense threat, review FPDI's message at:

http://mailchi.mp/umn/4kokd2lv3x?e=ce80d9882a

"If you were to go into an orange grove in Florida right now, you could stand there and hear fruit hitting the ground."

— Adam Putnam
Commissioner, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
See page 10 for the story.

ESF-17 & SART Respond to Multiple Incidents Throughout October

The State of Florida must be prepared to respond quickly and effectively on a 24-hour basis to developing events. When an event or potential event is first detected, the State Emergency Operations Center is activated to a level appropriate to the magnitude of the threat. The State's response effort is then initiated through the State Emergency Response Team (SERT), which is comprised of Governor-appointed Emergency Coordination Officers (ECO) from State Agencies and volunteer organizations. These ECOs are authorized to use the resources of their respective agency or organization to carry out response and recovery missions that are assigned by functions.

All state agencies and volunteer organizations, that comprise the SERT, are grouped into 18 Emergency Support Functions (ESF) to carry out coordination and completion of assigned missions. These functions represent specific response activities that are common to all disasters. Each ESF is comprised of one or more Primary agency (ies) serving as the lead and several other agencies and organizations providing support.

ESF-17 "Animal and Agricultural Issues" is led by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). And no doubt, with an active few months, the team has been busy. Below are some of the highlights:

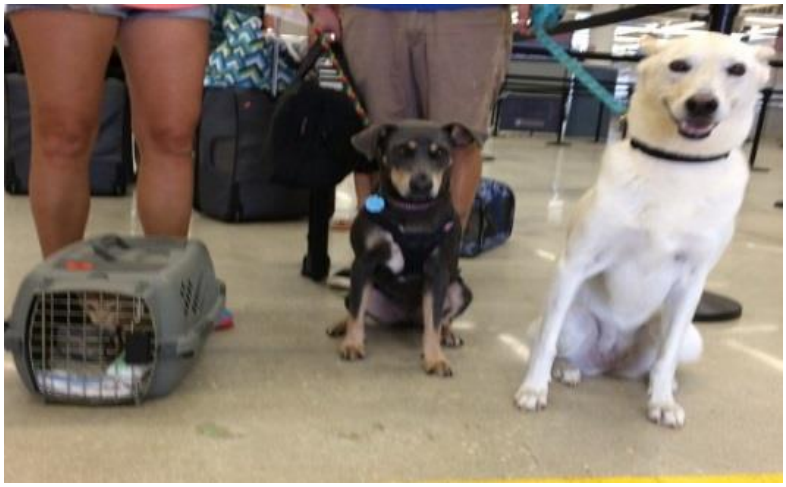
Actions to Assist Puerto Rico

On October 3, Florida Governor Rick Scott announced the opening of two Disaster Relief Centers (DRC) to assist Puerto Rican families displaced by Hurricane Maria at the Orlando International Airport and Miami International Airport. The DRCs ensure that any families displaced by Maria that come to Florida are welcomed and offered available resources from the state. Meanwhile, in an effort to support Puerto Ricans evacuating the island with their pets, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture, Adam Putnam, suspended import rules for proof of import health certificate (Official Certificate of Veterinarian Inspection) and/or proof of rabies vaccination for domestic dogs, cats, fowl and other small mammals that arrive with evacuees.

See ESF-17 Response, page 3.

ESF-17 and SART Respond (continued)

FDACS staff is also present at each DRC, providing daily support and information to evacuees arriving with pets. The Florida Veterinary Medical Association (FVMA), a SART partner, has also set up a "Find a Vet" option on their website to assist evacuees with finding a local veterinarian for any medical questions regarding their pet. This information is provided to evacuees with pets upon arrival at the DRC, and can be found on the FVMA website at https://fvma.org.



In other news, FDACS assisted with animal inspection for a cruise ship that arrived from Puerto Rico carrying evacuees and their pets. The cruise ship was carrying 102 dogs, 15 cats, 3 birds, 1 hamster.

Hurricane Nate Response

On October 5, the SEOC activated to a Level 1 to prepare for Hurricane Nate category 1; ESF-17 staffed the SEOC, while monitoring the opening of four pet friendly shelters in Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Lee Counties. Fortunately, no significant impacts to Florida from Hurricane Nate.

Vector Control – Mosquito Control Incident Response Team

Following Hurricane Irma, local-level surveillance and requests for vector control support began nearly immediately. Once notified, the state activated a Memorandum of Understanding between the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Meanwhile, FDACS remained in contact with local mosquito control officials to provide data and technical assistance, all while coordinating with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for spraying that occurred on state lands.

Because of this work, the state yielded the following outcomes:

- 31 counties requested assistance
- Mosquito control treatments occurred in 25 counties
- 49 FDACS Agricultural Environmental Services Division personnel participated
- $6,005,980 was expended
- 15,655 gallons of Dibrom was applied for aerial spray missions
- In total, 3,036,092 acres were treated to abate mosquitos

SART Advisory Board Gathered for October Meeting

The SART Advisory Board held a meeting on October 6 in Gainesville at the Florida Farm Bureau building. This year's board meeting was marked a success as SART partners shared presentations of their recent efforts and successes during Hurricane Irma response.

Presenters included: University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine, and IFAS Extension; Humane Society of the United States; Florida Cattlemen's Association; Florida Farm Bureau; Florida Department of Health; Florida Animal Control Association, and others.

The SART Advisory Board is currently completing an After Action Review (AAR) for SART Hurricane Irma response to help the team identify its successes and document lessons to learn for future emergency response.

Presentations from this year's SART Advisory Board meeting are available to view on the SART website at http://flsart.org/jsp/conference.

Enrollment Open: Livestock Education and Certification for Agriculture Law Enforcement (LECALE)

The objective of the ***Livestock Education and Certification for Agriculture Law Enforcement (LECALE)*** program is to provide law enforcement and state attorney personnel rigorous and relevant training curriculum regarding generally accepted livestock production practices, skills to discern acceptable animal well-being, and ability to apply acquired knowledge and skills in the field and during litigation proceedings.

Specific learning objectives include: Basic Animal Husbandry, Identification, Behavior and Handling, Nutrition, Pastures, Disease and Biosecurity, Euthanasia, Body Condition Scoring, and Live Animal Evaluations. Attendees will receive both classroom and hands-on education opportunities.

For more information, or to register, visit: http://animal.ifas.ufl.edu/LECALE/lecale.shtml

December 11th - 15th Course – Gainesville, FL

When: Monday, December 11 - Friday December 15, 2017, from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Where: Department of Animal Sciences, 2250 Shealy Drive, Gainesville, FL 32611

Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Putnam Writes in Letter "We Will Rebuild"

In response to the impact from Hurricane Irma, Commissioner Adam Putnam penned the following letter on October 13, 2017.

Friend,

This week, I joined Governor Rick Scott and Florida's Congressional Delegation in Washington D.C. to discuss the recent agricultural damage caused by Hurricane Irma and to request federal disaster assistance.

In short, Hurricane Irma's path could not have been more lethal to Florida agriculture, and the damage is still unfolding.

Right now, you can walk through any citrus grove in Florida and smell the rot of fruit that was just weeks away from being harvested. Citrus was not the only commodity impacted. Our preliminary estimates show Hurricane Irma caused more than $2.5 billion in agricultural damage, across all commodities and sectors.

One thing is clear, Florida's farmer and ranchers need support and they need it fast. I will continue to work with leaders in Washington and Tallahassee to get Florida agriculture the support and relief it needs to rebuild as quickly as possible.

There is no group of people more stubborn or more resilient than Florida's farmers, ranchers and growers, and we will get through this together.

Sincerely,
Adam

UF IFAS Provides Biosecurity and Biological Risk Management for Livestock Enterprises Resource

UF IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

The purpose of biosecurity is to establish a prevention barrier to disease-causing agents and other threats by minimizing the movement of biological organisms and external threats onto and within livestock operations. The University of Florida IFAS Extension service has published a resource entitled *Biosecurity and Biological Risk Management for Livestock Enterprises*.

The report may be accessed at:
http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/AN/AN19400.pdf

In the News

Short stories and updates from around the state…

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE): On October 10, an unvaccinated, 11-month-old horse tested positive for EEE. No travel history was reported. EEE viruses are mosquito transmitted diseases that can cause severe inflammation of the brain (encephalitis) in horses and humans. As the names suggest, EEE most commonly occurs in the Eastern United States and Canada. This is the first EEE case for Clay County and the sixth case in Florida this year.

Strangles: On October 12, FDACS' issued a Strangles (*S. equi*) quarantine at a Palm Beach County barn after two horses displayed clinical signs and one horse tested positive via PCR testing. Strangles is a contagious, infectious, upper respiratory disease of horses. This is the fourth case of Strangles in Palm Beach County and the 30th case in Florida this year.

Import Rules Suspended: Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam, in an effort to support Puerto Ricans who are evacuating the island with their pets, suspended import rules to include dogs, cats, birds and other small mammals that arrive with evacuees. These pets are exempt from the import health certificate (Official Certificate of Veterinarian Inspection) and/or proof of rabies vaccination. These exemptions include those listed in Florida Administrative Code 5C-3.002,5C-3.009 and 5C-3.012(1). (See additional information on page 2 of the *Sentinel*.)

USDA Disaster Relief Programs: For more information on the Farm Service Agency (FSA) disaster programs, visit your local FSA county office or service center, or visit online at: http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov. To find your local FSA county office, visit: http://offices.usda.gov.

FDACS Hurricane Irma Resource Center: The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services continues to support recovery efforts throughout the state following the catastrophic impact of Hurricane Irma. For more information, please visit: http://FreshFromFlorida.com/AnimalEmergency.

Enrollment Open: Multiple Levels for Small Animal Emergency Sheltering

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition has upcoming opportunities for their Awareness Levels 1 and 2 Small Animal Emergency Sheltering courses.

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

The Awareness Level 1 course 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 course is certified by the Florida Department of Emergency Management and is required to respond in Florida to help companion animals and their owners during a disaster.

The Awareness Level 2 course gives 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 Setup, 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 4 Course – Fellsmere, FL (Awareness Level 1)

When: Saturday, November 4, 2017 from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Where: Fellsmere City Hall Office Complex (City Council Chamber), 21 S Cypress Street, Fellsmere, Fl 32948
Register: http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07eeo8cw4la983b10f&llr=cmn8hziab

November 11-12 Course – Jacksonville, FL (Awareness Level 2)

When: Saturday, November 11 – Sunday, November 12, 2017
For more information, or to register: Contact Bud Most, Volunteer Director, via email at volunteer@flsarc.org

The FLIRRT Report

A special section dedicated to feed and food emergency planning and response.

Florida's Integrated Rapid Response Team (FLIRRT) is a multi-agency coordination group responding to feed and food emergency under the Rapid Response Team Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Cooperative Grant Program.

Florida is one of 21 states participating in this program, beginning in 2008. Partner agencies include the FDA, the Florida Department of Health, and Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation.

FLIRRT consists of technical experts in food manufacturing, food inspection, environmental health, and epidemiology. FLIRRT is an active partner in Emergency Support Function 11 (Food and Water) at Florida's State Emergency Operations Center.

For more information, please visit: http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Food-Safety/Food-Emergencies-and-Disaster-Preparation

FLIRRT Winds Down Following Hurricane Irma Response

While the response continues, FLIRRT officially demobilized on October 6, 2017. Below are the statistics from the full response:

- FDACS: 5,562 assessments via phone and visits. 116 FDACS personnel deployed.
- Florida Department of Health: 1,911 assessments (visits) with 20 staff in St. Johns, Monroe, Collier, Okeechobee, and Highlands counties deployed.
- Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation: 14,965 assessments (visits).
- United States Department of Agriculture: 567 assessments: 494 phone assessments and 76 on-site visits conducted by 17 investigators.
- Food and Drug Administration: 2,185 phone assessments. 85 personnel activated.

In total, FLIRRT reported assessments totaling 25,190.

The image to the right is a snapshot of the open/closed retail food establishment map used in the emergency management tracking system. Green flags represent businesses that are open for business, while red flags indicate operations that are still closed.

Visit FLIRRT's Website at:
http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Food-Safety/Food-Emergencies-and-Disaster-Preparation

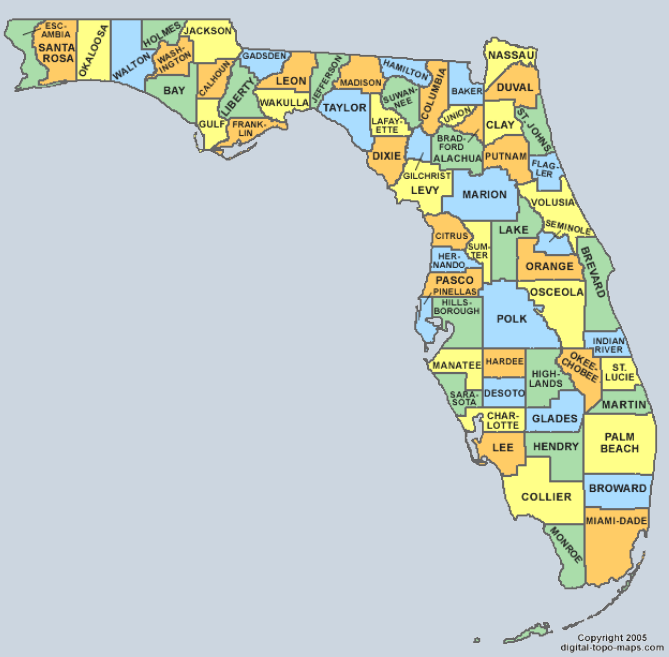
Even as the Atlantic Hurricane Season Winds Down, SART Asks Counties to Update Emergency Contact Information

Counties, please update your Emergency Contact Information. As hurricane season continues through November 30th, it is imperative that we assure all contact information is accurate and up-to-date before an activation.

County contact information such as your County Emergency Operation Center, Emergency Support Function 17 Coordinator, and County Extension Office is a resourceful and highly-utilized feature on the SART website, especially during an activation or exercise.

In the event of a disaster, proper preparation will pay off. Please review your county emergency contact information at http://flsart.org/SART/choosecountyforview.

If you need to make changes to your county contact information, please send a request to LeiAnna Tucker at LeiAnna.Tucker@FreshFromFlorida.com.



SART Offers K9 Handler/First Responder Advanced Scope 2-day Training Class

Florida's State Agricultural Response Team (SART) is happy to announce that it will host a 2-day "K9 Handler/First Responder Advanced Scope" training class for canine handlers and their working canines. This training is paid for by SART (all instructor costs and student tuition). Students will be responsible for their travel, lodging and per diem expenses.

SART has partnered with expert educators from the K9 MEDIC™ training program and SynDaver Labs, the world's leading manufacturer of synthetic humans and canines, to provide canine handlers a unique, advanced scope training format within a scenario-based and comprehensive hands-on training environment.

The "K9 Handler/First Responder Advanced Scope" training class is geared for those handlers and first responders who will face environments which require additional medical support for their canines. Students will have the tremendous opportunity to practice pre-veterinary emergency medical skills on SynDaver's synthetic surgical canines, basic and advanced veterinary manikins, and live canines (for noninvasive demos). This training will teach canine handlers the advance skills needed to prevent and treat injuries and illnesses in working dogs, and train canine handlers to become field-ready.

Students attending this course receive a K9 MEDIC™ Certificate of Completion and Continuing Education Credit for Law Enforcement and EMS providers.

For more information, or to register, visit: http://flsart.org/jsp/registration

Hurricane Irma's Damage to Florida Agriculture

According to Sunshine State News, the citrus industry alone in the State of Florida experienced losses totaling $761 million following Hurricane Irma. "If you were to go into an orange grove in Florida right now, you could stand there and hear fruit hitting the ground," said Commissioner Putnam. He and Governor Rick Scott recently paid a visit to Washington, DC with a visit to Florida's congressional delegation seeking federal assistance.

According to Southeast AgNet, Commissioner Putnam said, "I thank U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue for taking action to support Florida's farmers and ranchers still picking up the pieces from Hurricane Irma. Our preliminary estimates peg the total damage at more than $2.5 billion, but it's important to recognize that the damage is still unfolding. Today's disaster declaration provides much-needed support, and I will continue working with Governor Scott and our leaders in Washington to get Florida agriculture the relief it needs to rebuild."

Meanwhile, Governor Scott activated a $25 million Florida Citrus Emergency Loan Program to support citrus growers impacted by Hurricane Irma. The bridge loan program, managed by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), will provide interest-free loans to citrus growers that experienced physical or economic damage during the storm. The application period will be open through November 30, 2017.

In total, crop losses in the state are estimated at $2,014,481,961; while total losses to production agriculture are estimated at $2,558,598,303.

Please log in and update your membership information online at:

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.

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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EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam, in an effort to support Puerto Ricans who are evacuating the island with their pets, suspended import rules to include dogs, cats, birds and other small mammals that arrive with evacuees.

These pets are exempt from the import health certificate (Official Certificate of Veterinarian Inspection) and/or proof of rabies vaccination. These exemptions include those listed in Florida Administrative Code 5C-3.002, 5C-3.009 and 5C-3.012(1).

For medical questions regarding your pet, please see a local veterinarian. You may find one at **https://fvma.org**.

For further information and resources, please visit **FreshFromFlorida.com/AnimalEmergency** or contact **1-800-HELP-FLA (1-800-435-7352)**.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

EFECTIVO INMEDIATAMENTE

El Comisionado de Agricultura de la Florida Adam H. Putnam, en un esfuerzo por apoyar a los puertorriqueños que están evacuando la isla con sus mascotas, suspendió las reglas de importación para incluir perros, gatos, aves y otros pequeños mamíferos que llegan con los evacuados.

Estas mascotas están exentas del certificado sanitario de importación (Certificado Oficial de Inspección Veterinaria) y / o prueba de vacunación antirrábica. Estas exenciones incluyen las enumeradas en el Código Administrativo de la Florida 5C-3.002, 5C-3.009 y 5C-3.012 (1).

Para preguntas médicas relacionadas con su mascota, por favor consulte a un veterinario local. Puede encontrar uno en **https://fvma.org**.

Para obtener más información y recursos, visite **FreshFromFlorida.com/AnimalEmergency** o llame al **1-800-HELP-FLA (1-800-435-7352)**.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services