THE SENTINEL
NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA STATE AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE TEAM

"Though there is general acknowledgment that a biological agroterror attack could harm the nation's economy and food supply, as well as possibly cause human illness, the likelihood of an attack is not clear." - Madeline Bodin

Is the U.S. Prepared for Agricultural Disease Outbreaks?

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.

A recent report in GovTech.com's *Emergency Management* magazine focuses on the risks and consequences that a major agricultural disease outbreak would cause. Further, the story questions the effects that agricultural terrorism would have on the macro system.

"The consequences of an agroterror attack would be grave," said William Karesh, executive vice president for health and policy for the nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance and adviser to the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense. "It could be devastating to the economy, because agriculture makes up 5.5 percent of the country's gross domestic product and employs 11 percent of Americans. It could cause food shortages and even starvation."

To read the full story, visit:

http://www.govtech.com/em/disaster/US-Remains-Unprepared-for-Agricultural-Disease-Outbreaks.html

Special Features of this Issue:

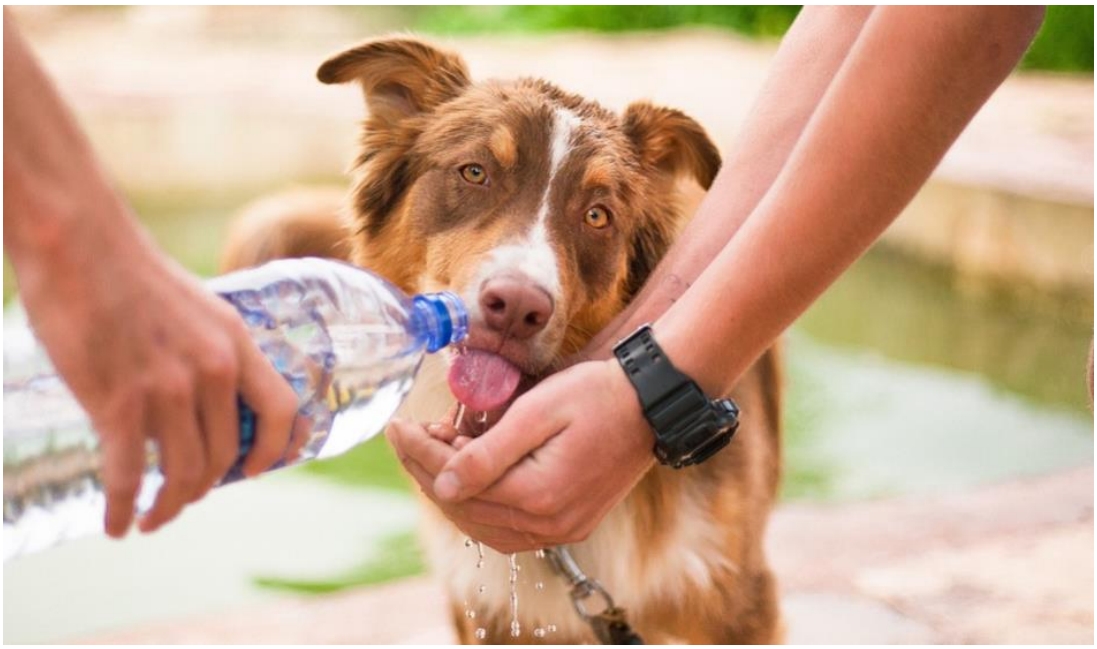
- *ESF-17 and SART Continue to Assist Puerto Rico*
- *Enrollment Open: Livestock Education and Certification for Agriculture Law Enforcement (LECALE)*
- *Destructive 2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season Comes to an End!*

"I want to extend my appreciation and gratitude to our State Agricultural Response Team, industry partners, organizations, associations, and clients for working together to assist in recovery efforts."

— Dr. Michael Short
State Veterinarian
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
See page 3 for the story.

ESF-17 and SART Continue to Assist Puerto Rico

Since October 3, 2017, more than 199,000 individuals have arrived in Florida from Puerto Rico through Miami International Airport, Orlando International Airport and Port Everglades. At the direction of Governor Scott, two Multi-Agency Resource Centers (MARC) have opened at Orlando International Airport and Miami International Airport for Puerto Rican families displaced by Hurricane Maria. The MARCs have served more than 30,000 individuals, and ensure that any families displaced by Maria that come to Florida are welcomed and offered available resources from the state. 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.



FDACS staff continues to provide daily support and information to evacuees arriving with pets at the MARCs. 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 MARC, and can be found on the FVMA website at https://fvma.org. For more information on state response action for Hurricane Maria, visit www.floridadisaster.org/info/maria.

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

Message from the State Veterinarian/Director

This year, Florida has had a very active hurricane season and has suffered more than $2.5 billion in agricultural damages because of Hurricane Irma.

I want to extend my appreciation and gratitude to our State Agricultural Response Team, industry partners, organizations, associations, and clients for working together to assist in recovery efforts. Please visit http://FreshFromFlorida.com/AnimalEmergency for preparedness and recovery resources and thank you again for supporting Florida's animal industries.

- Dr. Michael Short, State Veterinarian

Editor's Note: Dr. Short is responsible for the department's animal disease control and prevention efforts, which include investigating outbreaks, providing laboratory diagnostics and containing the spread of animal diseases.

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.

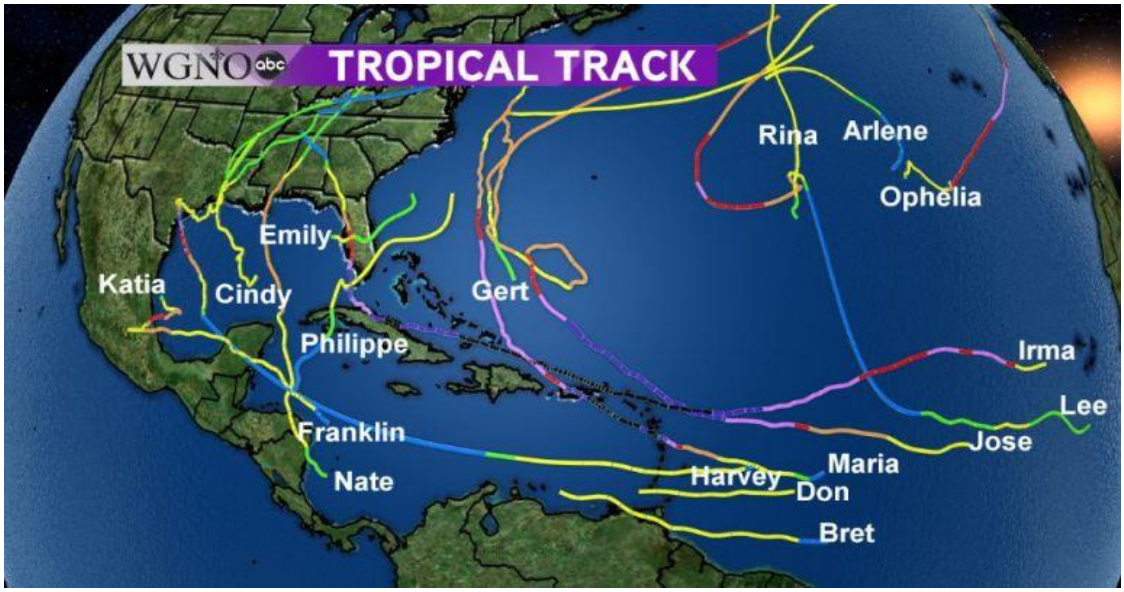
Specific learning objectives include: Basic Animal Husbandry, Identification, Behavior and Handling, Nutrition, Pastures, Disease and Biosecurity, Euthanasia, Body Condition Scoring, and Live Animal Evaluations. Attendees will receive both classroom and hands-on education opportunities.

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

Destructive 2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season Comes to an End!



Source: WGNO

As we wrap up the month of November, we also wrap up the Atlantic Hurricane Season and it has been quite the active season! 2017 will go down as being tied for the fifth most active hurricane season in the Atlantic since records began being kept in 1851 and the most active season since 2012.

This year, not only did we have 10 hurricanes, but they occurred sequentially, tying the record for greatest number of hurricanes in a row. Hurricanes occurred from Franklin to Ophelia. Overall, we had 17 named storms, 6 tropical storms and 11 hurricanes, six of which were major hurricanes: Harvey, Irma, Jose, Lee, Maria, Ophelia.

For our viewing area, four named storms affected Florida: Emily, Irma, Nate, and Phillipe. Irma was the first storm since Charley in 2004 to hit Florida with Category 4 intensity. This year was also the first time on record two Category 4 storms (Harvey and Irma) made landfall along the continental U.S. in the same year.

Read more at: http://wgno.com/2017/11/30/destructive-2017-atlantic-hurricane-season-comes-to-an-end/

USDA

USDA Disaster Relief Programs and Resources

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.

In the News

Short stories and updates from around the state…

Red Tide Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Workshop: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) Division of Aquaculture participated in the Southwest Shellfish Growers Association, Florida Sea Grant Red Tide Workshop. Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Regulatory presentations were provided by the FDA, National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP), Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), and the FDACS' Division of Aquaculture. Southwest Florida is a hot spot for Red Tide, with outbreaks occurring routinely from October through December on an almost annual basis. All shellfish harvesting is prohibited during Red Tide blooms causing significant economic hardships to shellfish leaseholders. Consuming shellfish contaminated with the Red Tide associated brevotoxin can cause Neurotoxic Shellfish Poisoning (NSP). NSP symptoms can include vomiting and nausea and a variety of neurological symptoms such as slurred speech.

FDACS Division of Agricultural Environmental Services (AES) investigates Monensin contamination of equine feed: A routine surveillance sample of horse feed detected the presence of Monensin in feed manufactured by Mid-South Feed, Alma, Georgia. Monensin is a cattle antibiotic and in small amounts can be harmful to horses. The initial investigation revealed that the feed was distributed to several stores in North Florida. Subsequently, AES inspected the locations where the feed was distributed to place any existing product on Stop Sale and to collect additional samples. Two additional samples from the suspect lot have been analyzed and results indicate the presence of Monensin. AES is working with the Georgia Department of Agriculture and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to determine the source of the contamination.

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).

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

- Two sets of deli salad samples collected from a central Florida retailer have tested positive for Listeria monocytogenes (L. mono) by the FDACS Food Lab. In response, a team of bureau inspectors consisting of Rita Johnson, Matthew Johansson, Rich Brasher and Lenita Silvera visited the firm two weeks ago and collected 40 environmental samples to determine the source of the contamination. These samples tested positive for L. mono. as well. Rita and Rich visited the firm and issued a STOP USE order on the firm's food preparation area. The firm is currently remodeling the deli with help from an independent consultant. FDACS Division of Food Safety is remaining in contact with the firm, and will witness their environmental sampling after remodeling and cleaning is complete.

- The National Rapid Response Team Face to Face Meeting will be taking place during the first week of December in Denver, CO. In addition to Florida, twenty other states will be in attendance. FLIRRT will be conducting a presentation on the activation during Hurricane Irma, participating on a panel discussion on cyclospora, and participating in a "speed dating" session on a Recall Audit Check Module.

Hurricane Irma Fact Check

Hurricane Irma Facts (Florida)	
Residents Ordered to Evacuate	6.3 million residents (one third of the population)
First Florida Landfall	Cudjoe Key; September 10, 2017 (Category 4)
Second Florida Landfall	Marco Island; September 10, 2017 (Category 3)
Highest Storm Surge Recorded	10 feet; Cudjoe Key
Fastest Wind Gust Recorded	109 mph; Pembroke Pines
Boil Water Notices Issued	472
Power Outages Statewide	Over 6.7 million customers statewide
Deaths Associated	82; majority due to drowning, trauma and carbon monoxide poisoning
Post-Irma Food Assistance	$1.2 billion distributed statewide*

The above table depicts detailed information about Hurricane Irma.
*As of 10/31/2017

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

Irma's Toll: Unprecedented Losses for Florida Agriculture

Following an unprecedented year of hurricanes in the state, G.B. Crawford, Director of Public Relations for the Florida Farm Bureau, recently wrote in FloridAgriculture magazine, "Citrus growers in the south-central and southwest counties took the hardest financial hit, but winds of at least 74 mph whipped through properties as far north as Marion County."

Citing figures from the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, he said total farm destruction amounted to $2.5 billion. As a further implication, state and local governments are expecting to lose $493 million in tax revenues.

This article is brought to you by our SART partner, Florida Farm Bureau. Read the full story at: http://www.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?m=1377&l=1#{"issue_id":453487,"page":18}

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

Moment in Nature

As we wrap up a busy 2017, our friends and SART Partners at the Florida Cattlemen's Foundation remind us to take a moment to celebrate the marvelous natural beauty throughout Florida.

After surviving a tough year of hurricanes, this moment in nature video clip, "Expedition Florida - Horsecreek Ranch," takes viewers into some of the most scenic parts of the state.

On behalf of all SART partners, we hope you, too, can find some peace at this time of year. And wish you a wonderful and safe holiday season!

Video: Expedition Florida – Horse Creek Ranch

For more information, visit www.floridacattlemen.org

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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