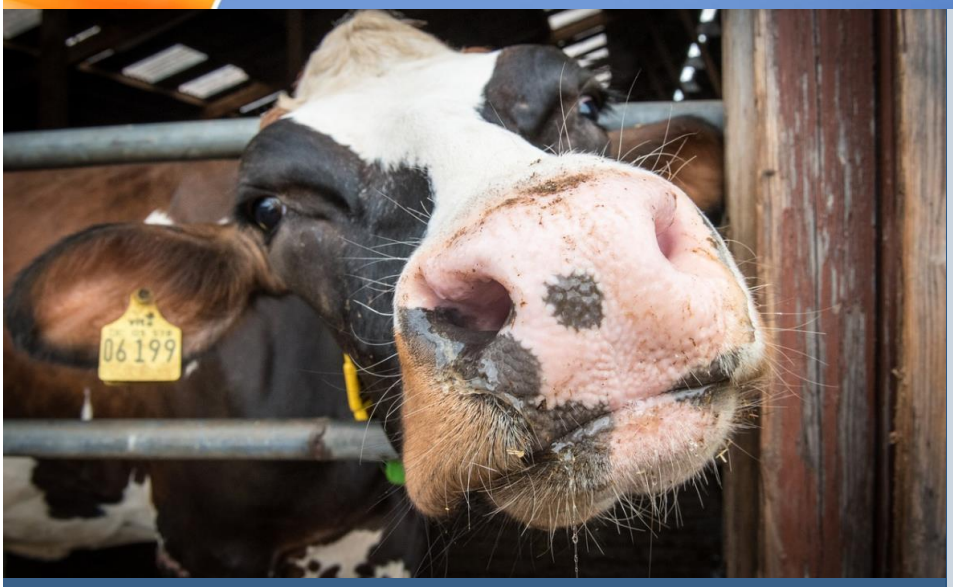
The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team



Florida SART is working with partners like the Western Institute for Food Safety & Security to deliver agroterrorism awareness instruction.

Special Features of this Issue:

- *SART Partners Attended All Hazards Planning for Animal, Agricultural, & Food Related Disasters Course*
- *FDACS and ESF 17 Begin Scheduling Annual County Meetings*
- *US Congress Passes Spending Bill that Included More than $2.3 Billion for Agricultural Assistance*

Ever-Present: Threats to Florida's Food and Agriculture Systems

The increasing rate of emerging and reemerging zoonotic disease, along with threats and attempts by those with nefarious intent to attack food and agriculture, point to the need to exert more effort to eliminate vulnerabilities and reduce consequences associated with America's agricultural sector. This, as written in the Defense of Animal Agriculture Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense in October 2017.

According to the Western Institute for Food Safety & Security (WIFSS) at the University of California Davis, "a good example of our nation's vulnerability was the highly pathogenic strain of avian influenza that entered the United States via migrating wild birds in 2014 and resulted in the biggest animal health disaster ever experienced in the country. State and federal governments spent $879 million on outbreak response." This outbreak affected 21 states and led to the depopulation of more than 50 million birds on 232 farms.

WIFSS has multiple projects and resources to train members of the agriculture community about the dangers of agroterrorism and natural disasters; and has been working with SART and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to offer and host courses on agroterrorism and food system disaster courses.

For more information about WIFSS, please visit: https://www.wifss.ucdavis.edu/

There are currently 41 active wildfires in Florida burning 34,539 acres.

— Adam Putnam, Commissioner
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
See page 4 for the story.

UF Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (VETS) Update

The UF VETS Team, including instructors Josh Fleming, Karl Froling, and Brandi Phillips, spent four days in Melbourne early in March with members from the Melbourne Fire Department's S.M.A.R.T. Team, Brevard County Animal Control, and University of Florida IFAS Extension Agents from around Central Florida. These individuals completed both the operations and technician level courses to ensure the highest level of training and response capabilities for animal technical rescue scenarios. Participants performed exercises related to trailer accidents, use of a portable high point, application of the Anderson sling for extended lifts, pick offs, and sloping highlines.

Dane Anderson and Brandi Phillips of the UF VETS Team also provided a workshop for employees at the Florida Horse Park in Ocala this month. During this event, participants learned to assist downed horses, methods for gaining control of loose animals, and assist techniques useful in low angle rescue scenarios.

The UF VETS Team offers an online awareness level class that costs $100/participant (https://xms.dce.ufl.edu/reg/groups/all/course.aspx?c=9760&ug=9) for those interested, and an open enrollment, hands-on operations level class will be hosted by the Florida State Fire College for $600 for participants June 8th-10th. Contact Brandi Phillips at brandikphillips@ufl.edu for more details and to register.

SART Partners Attended All Hazards Planning for Animal, Agricultural, & Food Related Disasters Course

The Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART) and Florida's Integrated Rapid Response Team (FLIRRT) hosted All Hazards Planning for Animal, Agricultural, & Food Related Disasters training course on February 28, 2018. This management level course provided background information needed to lead a multi-agency team of emergency planners in the development of an Emergency Support Function (ESF) annex for animal, agriculture, and food-related (AAF) disasters. This Department of Homeland Security certified training can then be used to supplement a community's existing Emergency Operation Plans.

Participants included FDACS' Division of Animal Industry, Division of Food Safety, Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement, and Office of Agricultural Water Policy; SART partners included FLIRRT, Florida Veterinary Medical Association, University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine, and USDA. The training provided background information, resources, and case studies for constructing AAF disaster response plans for application in the event of an AAF emergency.

The course was instructed by the University of California-Davis' Western Institute for Food Safety and Security.

Looking for Animal-Related Sheltering Information?

The FDACS Emergency Response Web site has a host of information on sheltering for horses, livestock and pets.

For all the details, just please visit: https://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Animal-Industry/Consumer-Resources/Animal-Related-Emergency-Response

Commissioner Putnam Provides Update on Florida Wildfire Activity

The Commissioner of Agriculture announced that there are currently 41 active wildfires in Florida burning 34,539 acres. (As of April 2) Significant wildfires in Florida include:

- Greenway, Collier County: 17,957 and 90 percent contained.
- Firebreak, Gulf County: 8,080 acres and 80 percent contained.
- Airport/Context, Miami-Dade County: 1,037 acres and 90 percent contained.
- Old Blade Line, Polk County: 450 acres and 60 percent contained.

The Florida Forest Service is urging residents to be cautious with fire and heat sources and to remember the following:

- Develop and implement a family wildfire action plan;
- Call 911 or a local Florida Forest Service field unit office immediately in the event of a wildfire;
- Obey Florida's outdoor burning laws;
- Never burn on windy days;
- Always keep a water source and suppression tools on hand when burning yard debris;
- Never leave an outdoor fire or hot grill unattended; and
- Avoid parking vehicles on dry grass.

The Florida Forest Service, a division of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, manages more than 1 million acres of state forests and provides forest management assistance on more than 17 million acres of private and community forests. The Florida Forest Service is also responsible for protecting homes, forestland and natural resources from the devastating effects of wildfire on more than 26 million acres. Learn more at FloridaForestService.com.

Training Opportunity: Emergency Pet Friendly Sheltering and PETS Act Reimbursement for Counties

A new course, "Emergency Pet Friendly Sheltering and PETS Act Reimbursement for Counties," will be offered at this year's 2018 Governor's Hurricane Conference (FLGHC) in West Palm Beach. This 1.5 hour course will be offered two times during the conference. The course will be taught by SART's LeiAnna Tucker and SARC's Consie von Gontard.

Course Description: Disasters can have a devastating effect on human and animal life, including family pets. This course will explain the difference between emergency sheltering, co-located sheltering and Pet Friendly sheltering, along with the pros and cons of each type of shelter. Through best management practices, pet evacuation and sheltering operations can provide proper care for these animals and keep families together. The PETS Act and Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act mandates state and local jurisdictions seeking FEMA Public Assistance to incorporate provisions in their emergency plans for evacuating and sheltering people with household pets and service animals facing disasters. This course will focus primarily on responsibilities with the setup, maintenance, animal care, and teardown of emergency Pet Friendly shelters. This training will also discuss how the Pet Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act (PETS Act) provides counties reimbursement for eligible expenses associated with setting up pet-friendly shelters and transporting those pets, if needed.

For more information, visit: http://flghc.org

FDACS and ESF 17 Begin Scheduling Annual County Meetings

As the State prepares for the kick-off to the 2018 Hurricane Season, FDACS staff and ESF-17 District Specialists have begun scheduling their own annual county meetings. Conversations will occur with all 67 Florida counties on the topics of:

- ESF 17 Response Capabilities: Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART); Pet Sheltering; PETS Act Reimbursement for Counties
- ESF 11 Food, Water and Ice responsibilities
- Food Safety: Florida's Integrated Rapid Response Team (FLIRRT)
- ESF 17 Emergency Mosquito Control

UF VETS Make News for Successful 2,000 Pound Horse Rescue

A few short weeks after training with the UF VETS Team, Brevard County Animal Control Officers had an opportunity to put their new skills to use. A Percheron named Dan trapped in mud on March 22nd was retrieved safely using techniques they learned during the class.

For the full story, visit: http://www.wesh.com/article/crews-working-to-rescue-horse-trapped-in-mud-on-merritt-island/19562017

UF Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service
College of Veterinary Medicine
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

In the News

Short stories and updates from around the state…

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) (Marion, Levy, Polk, Flagler, and Columbia Counties)
From March 7-15, five horses were confirmed positive for EEE. EEE is an infectious viral disease that is maintained in bird reservoirs, transmitted by mosquitoes, and oftentimes causes fatal neurological diseases in mammals, such as horses, deer, pigs, and, rarely, humans. Two horses had no or unknown vaccination history and three had a vaccine history outside of the six-month recommended booster period. These cases mark the 4th-8th cases of EEE in Florida in 2018.

Strangles (Clay, Palm Beach, and Volusia Counties)
Strangles is a contagious, infectious, upper respiratory disease of horses. From March 8-15, several Strangles cases were identified. Two separate premises in Clay County have been placed under quarantine for clinical signs and positive PCR test results. Both premises received horses from Bastrop, Louisiana several weeks prior. One premises in Volusia County was placed under quarantine for clinical signs and positive PCR results after receiving a horse from Bastrop several weeks prior. One premises in Palm Beach County was placed under quarantine for clinical signs and positive PCR test results. These cases mark the 11th-14th cases of Strangles in Florida in 2018.

SART Partners Conference Call Scheduled for 2018 Statewide Hurricane Exercise
The 2018 Statewide Hurricane Exercise is scheduled April 30 – May 3 at the State Emergency Operations Center located in Tallahassee. SART partners will hold a conference call on May 1, 2018, 10am-11am, during the exercise to discuss the exercise scenario and how our SART partners would coordinate resources and response for the ESF 17 Incident Management Team during a hurricane event. The conference call invitation with call-in number and password was emailed to SART partners on February 27.

Mid-Year SART Advisory Board Meeting Scheduled
June 28, 2018, 10am-12:30pm, Florida Farm Bureau building in Gainesville.

Next Steering Committee Meeting
The SART Steering Committee will not meet in April nor May.

Enrollment Open: Multiple Courses for Small Animal Emergency Sheltering

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition has upcoming opportunities for their Operations Level 2 Small Animal Emergency Sheltering and Awareness Level 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 Operations 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

April 7 Course – Jacksonville, FL (Awareness Level 1)

When: Saturday, April 7, 2018
Where: First Coast No More Homeless Pets, 6817 Norwood Avenue, Jacksonville, FL 32208
Register: http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07ef72znph5326d6f8&llr=cmn8hziab

April 14 Course – Tampa, FL (Awareness Level 1)

When: Saturday, April 14, 2018
Where: Public Safety Operations Complex (PSOC) in the EOC, 9450 East Columbus Drive, Tampa, FL 33619
Register: http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07ef72jevy243cd9d0&llr=cmn8hziab

May 12 Course – Orlando, FL (Awareness Level 1)

When: Saturday, May 12, 2018
Where: Ventura Community Country Club, 3333 Woodgate Boulevard, Orlando, FL 32822
Register: http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07ef79vr7gadef8243&llr=cmn8hziab

June 2-3 Course – Orlando, FL (Operations Level 2)

When: Saturday, June 2 – Sunday, June 3, 2018
Where: Details to be announced soon!
Register: http://flsarc.org/Training.html

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

- During the week of March 5, the US Food and Drug Administration Office of Regulatory Affairs conducted an audit of the Division of Food Safety, Bureau of Food Inspection's Manufactured Food Team to evaluate conformance with the current Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards. Standard 5 (Food-related illness and Outbreak Response) directly correlates to Florida's Integrated Rapid Response Team. The tremendous efforts of the thirteen-member Manufactured Food Team resulted in the successful implementation and compliance with all ten program standards. Florida is one of the first states in the country to be in full compliance with the Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards!

- FDACS Division of Food Safety is currently working with Florida State University's Center for Information Management & Educational Services on the development of an online training module for food product sampling. The training will include videos involving step-by-step processes such as donning sterile gloves, collecting food product samples, and packing the samples for shipment to the laboratories. FDACS Division of Marketing assisted with filming the videos and a finished product is expected for release in July.

US Congress Passes Spending Bill that Included More than $2.3 Billion for Agricultural Assistance

In the wake of Hurricane Irma, Commissioner Putnam announced that Florida citrus sustained more than $760 million in damages. In the weeks following Hurricane Irma, Commissioner Putnam joined Governor Rick Scott in Washington, D.C, to discuss the agricultural damage and to request federal assistance with Florida's Congressional Delegation. In February, the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives passed a spending bill that included more than $2.3 billion for agricultural assistance.

To read more, visit:
http://citrusindustry.net/2018/03/08/commissioner-putnam-citrus-forecast/

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.

Editor: Michael T. Turner, The Turner Network, LLC (www.TurnerNetwork.com) under contract with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry.
E-mail: flsart@turnernetwork.com

Associate Editor: LeiAnna Tucker, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry.
E-mail: LeiAnna.Tucker@FreshFromFlorida.com