The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team

The Hill writes, "Agroterrorists have access to animal-based bio-agents, which are easy to transport and simple to conceal."

Special Features of this Issue:

- *UF Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (VETS) Update*
- *FDACS e-ISuite Training and IMT Workshop a Success*
- *FDACS and ESF 17 Continue to Plan for Annual County Meetings*

'The Hill' Editorial: "Agroterrorism a Real Threat to America's Food Supply"

According to an editorial late last year by *The Hill,* individuals or groups looking to perpetuate on attack can do so quite simply via our food system. "Just as ramming a speeding truck into a crowd is low-tech, an attack via the food chain has a low barrier to entry and little skill needed to execute."

This says Kyle Landry, a lecturer in the Department of Health Sciences at Boston University, and LCDR Greg Keeley USN (ret.), a former senior congressional aide and combat veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan.

While most pathogens are not transmitted from animals to humans, the risks of E. coli, Listeria monocytogenes, and Salmonella could significantly affect human health if undetected.

"The neurotoxin produced from Clostridium botulinum is the deadliest, naturally occurring acute toxin on the planet and results in visual and respiratory impairment and the loss of muscle control. Death by asphyxiation usually results three to six days after symptoms begin. There is an antiserum for the botulism neurotoxin, however the mortality rate with treatment is still between 5-15 percent."

To read the complete story, please visit: http://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/365491-agroterrorism-a-real-threat-to-americas-food-supply

"Students dressed in personal protective equipment were sprayed down with Glo Germ prior to performing exams on equine actors; and all passed the blacklight test with flying colors."

— Brandi K. Phillips
UF VETS Team
See page 2 for the story.

UF Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (VETS) Update

UF VETS will be hosting our first open enrollment operations level Animal Technical Rescue training at the Florida State Fire College June 8th-10th. This 3-day, hands-on course will prepare participants to respond safely to technical rescue emergencies for animals including trailer accidents, animals entrapped in mud, and other common scenarios. Registration is $600 per participant. Contact Brandi Phillips (brandikphillips@ufl.edu) to register.

UF VETS teamed up with Dr. Greg Christy and LeiAnna Tucker to provide our DVM students with a mock infectious disease inspection scenario. Students dressed in personal protective equipment were sprayed down with Glo Germ prior to performing exams on equine actors; and all passed the blacklight test with flying colors.

Our Animal Technical Rescue instructor team provided our operations level course at home to current DVM students. These students will be prepared to serve their communities after they graduate by working in conjunction with local law enforcement and fire rescue agencies to safely perform animal technical rescues.

UF VETS Team Leader John Haven assisted Marion County Fire's Technical Rescue Team in a successful pool rescue of a mare last month. Dr. Luis Cadena of Peterson and Smith was the on-scene veterinarian who provided sedation and an exam following the rescue. The horse is reported to be in good health following the event and we are proud of the efforts of all involved.

FDACS e-ISuite Training and IMT Workshop a Success!

This month, the Department's Division of Animal Industry and Florida Forest Service (FFS) held the FDACS e-ISuite Training and Incident Management Team (IMT) Workshop in Tallahassee, Florida. Both events were conducted as part of a two-part workshop. This was the first time FDACS divisions participated in a Department-initiated, functional workshop together. The objectives for the workshop were to:

1. Train FDACS Incident Management Teams to use the ICS Planning P process to effectively work through an Operational Cycle.
2. Assess the awareness of, and provide basic training on, the e-ISuite incident management team tool.
3. Assess the advantages and disadvantages of multiple FDACS divisions and offices responding together in one IMT during an incident.
4. Assess the ability of FDACS Incident Management Teams to work together and the need to pursue future joint training and exercises.

On April 3 through 5, four instructors from FFS trained Department personnel on the use of the e-ISuite IMT management tool. FFS uses the e-ISuite tool to track and plan resources for its IMTs. Participants included staff from multiple FDACS Divisions who serve in the Planning and Finance Sections of their Division's IMT. Over 20 staff attended the e-ISuite training.

On April 18 and 19, the Department's Division of Animal Industry and FFS held the FDACS IMT Workshop. Participants were presented with an agroterrorism emergency scenario that required multiple FDACS divisions to commit resources to the response and use the e-ISuite tool to track and plan their resources. The workshop was led by eight FFS command and general staff. On Day 1 of the workshop, participants were presented with the scenario and, then, grouped into their respective Incident Command System sections while shadowing FFS instructors. On Day 2, participants were assigned to one of four IMTs and held a specific ICS position on their IMT. FFS mentored each IMT throughout the day as the IMTs worked through the Planning P of an operational cycle.

Pictures from the FDACS e-ISuite Training and Incident Management Team (IMT) Workshop are available for viewing on the SART website Photo Gallery at: https://flsart.org/photogallerylist

Looking for Pet-Friendly Sheltering Resources?

The FDACS Emergency Response Web site has a new Web page filled with valuable resources for pet-friendly sheltering.

For all the details, just please visit: https://flsart.org/jsp/petfriendly

Monroe County Impacted by Wildfire Activity

Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam commented late last month that wildfires continue to be a problem for the state; particularly in Monroe County.

As of April 22, the "Littons Fire" was the greatest concern, covering 30 acres on Big Pine Key. Two homes had been destroyed, and a helicopter was dropping water to help extinguish the flames. The Florida Forest Service has been assisted by Monroe County, Miami-Dade County, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and Big Cypress Preserve.

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

Cornell University: Water Troughs Can Spread E. Coli

Researchers at Cornell recently published findings that troughs used on farms can lead to the spread of toxic E. coli in cattle. This can later be transmitted to people through bacteria in feces. The results were printed in the journal PLOS ONE.

It was noted that, "People commonly acquire infections from shiga toxin-producing E. coli through cow feces-contaminated beef and salad greens. The main shiga toxin-producing strain, E. coli 0157:H7, causes more than 63,000 illnesses per year and about 20 deaths, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Though cows carry and spread E. coli 0157:H7 when they defecate, the bacteria do not make them sick."

Read more at: http://news.cornell.edu/stories/2018/02/water-troughs-are-key-toxic-e-coli-spread-cattle

FDACS' Summer Williams and Brenda Morris Published in Food Safety Magazine

Assistant Director Brenda Morris, and Emergency Response Coordinator Summer Williams, both with the Division of Food Safety at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, were published by *Food Safety Magazine* last month.

Their story, *Responding to Harvey and Irma: Rapid Response Teams Take Action*, focuses on the effects that rapid response teams are having with regard to multi-agency responses that incorporate federal, state, and local officials.

The article was co-authored by food safety industry leaders Joseph Corby, Executive Director of the Association of Food & Drug Officials (AFDO); Steven Mandernach of the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals; and Tishara Coleman, Specialist with the TRRT project in Texas.

Read the full article at:
https://www.foodsafetymagazine.com/magazine-archive1/aprilmay-2018/responding-to-harvey-and-irma-rapid-response-teams-take-action

In the News

Short stories and updates from around the state…

The 89th Florida Veterinary Medical Association (FVMA) Annual Conference
The theme of this year's conference was "Building the Dynamic Veterinary Team." Included in the conference were hands-on wet labs, workshops, and lectures. Speakers from all over the United States presented topics on a variety of veterinary issues. Dr. Mike Short, FDACS State Veterinarian and member of FVMA Board of Directors, attended the conference. https://eventscribe.com/2018/FVMA-Annual

Strangles Update
From March 15 to April 5th, Strangles cases were identified across Sarasota, St. Johns, Osceola, Palm Beach, Marion, Seminole, and Okeechobee Counties, and seven premises were placed under quarantine. Each premises has at least one horse who has clinical signs of Strangles as well as a positive PCR test result. Strangles is a contagious, infectious, upper respiratory disease of horses.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE)
On April 5, one horse in Baker County tested positive for EEE. The three-year-old Paint filly became clinical on March 11 and was humanely euthanized on March 12 due to a poor prognosis. 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.

Gov. Scott Letter to USDA: Let's Meet the Unique Needs of Citrus Growers
The Florida Governor sent a letter to Secretary Perdue requesting "customize[d] federal aid for Florida citrus growers." This as a means of recovering from last year's hurricanes and citrus greening.
https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/SGS-BIZHUB18041018500.pdf

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 ESF17 IMT during a hurricane event. The conference call invitation with call-in number and password was emailed to SART partners on February 27.

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

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: EOC, Osceola County Emergency Management, 2586 Partin Settlement Rd., Kissimmee, FL 34744
Register: http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07efc903k226db7e2b&llr=cmn8hziab

June 9-10 Course – Gainesville, FL (Operations Level 2)

When: Saturday, June 9 – Sunday, June 10, 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

- The first of multiple meetings with county emergency operations center management began during the week of April 16th. The meeting goal is to showcase the various functions provided by FDACS emergency management response groups. FLIRRT staff presented along with other ESF-17/State Agricultural Response Team staff. Food Nutrition and Wellness staff also presented representing ESF-11. Additional county meetings are scheduled each week through the month of June.
- The Food Safety and Food Defense Advisory Council met on April 2. Discussions included specific program related updates, a presentation of Whole Genome Sequencing from the FDACS Food Laboratory, and the upcoming hurricane season.
- The Division of Food Safety announced the merge of the Bureau of Food Laboratories and the Bureau of Chemical Residue. They will now be one Bureau, the Bureau of Laboratories and will be led by Diane Pickett, Food Safety's newest Bureau Chief. The main purpose of the merge is to enhance coordination, planning, and communication in the Food Safety lab services.
- Richard Stephens was selected to participate in the International Food Protection Training Institute Cohort VII Fellowship in Food Protection. This one-year program includes a multi-faceted approach incorporating work sessions, webinars and a mentor-guided research project.
- Matthew Standland conducted a presentation entitled "Monitoring Prohibited Antibiotic Residues in Food by LC-MS" at the FDACS Ag Science Café on April 24. The AgScience Café is a monthly series open to all FDACS staff to share scientific information.
- The 2018 FLIRRT Annual Meeting was March 20-22 in Tallahassee, Florida. Topics included a Hurricane Irma panel discussion, FDA's San Juan Hurricane Maria response, various emergency support functions at the State EOC, Texas RRT Hurricane Harvey response, a SART update, Georgia RRT updates, a foodborne illness traceback exercise, GIS and other technology pieces during an emergency, and more. Overall, there were 80 participants including FLIRRT partners from FDACS, FDA, DOH, DBPR, and AHCA.

FDACS and ESF-17 Continue to Plan for 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. Nearly 60 meetings have already been scheduled through May. 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

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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