The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team

Attendees pose for a photo at the Pinellas County MHFA

Special Features of this Issue:

- *SART Holds its Underlying Contradictions Workshop*
- *FDACS' Summer Williams Attends IFPTI Fellowship Program*
- *Sarasota County Ag Community Prepares for Storm Issues*
- *Save the Date: SART Workshops*

UF IFAS and SART Partner to Bring Metal Health First Aid Training for Disaster Responders

Throughout 2019, the University of Florida (UF) Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) and the Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART) have teamed up to address a different aspect of disaster response, mental health.

Thus far, seven Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) trainings have occurred throughout the state, including:

- Broward County, February 26-27
- Suwannee County, March 4-5
- Marion County, April 23-24
- Osceola County, April 30-May 1
- Pinellas County, June 4-5
- Charlotte County, June 19-20
- Bay County, September 24-25

One of the goals of this training was to create awareness, recognize the signs of a person experiencing mental health issues, and to give a person positive coping strategies and professional resources for getting help. As mental health illnesses are very common, it's important to be aware of what populations are at need and how we can help these populations early on, especially those affected by disasters.

These 1.5 day-long courses have been instructed by personnel from the UF IFAS Department of Family, Youth and Community Services. Topics included information on the prevalence of mental health disorders, a history of mental health first aid, depression, anxiety disorders,

Continued. See *Mental Health First Aid Training*, page 2.

"Mental Health First Aid was not a part of a lot of peoples' job, but during a disaster, it ended up being a part of their job."

Below: Attendees look on at the Mental Health First Aid seminar in Marion County on April 23, 2019.

Mental Health First Aid Training (continued)

panic attacks, disaster stress, and how to support individuals and families within their communities.

Attendees were provided with additional resources and best management practices, as well as certification for their attendance in the delivery. WCJB News ran a story this past April highlighting the Marion County course.

Source: https://www.wcjb.com/content/news/UF-IFAS-holds-mental-health-training-to-prepare-for-disaster-recovery-509021141.html

Course attendees responded favorably to the training writing, "I am currently working in disaster relief but can apply these practices in any professional or personal situation. Best training!" Another, when asked about what was the most enjoyable part of the training wrote, "How to use the info you have given us to help myself and others when deploying for animal disasters. It's extremely stressful and I found many ideas to be helpful!"

Photo, left: Attendees at the Bay County MHFA training.

Where to Get Immediate Help

Disaster Distress Hotline
1-800-985-5990

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-8255
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Your Mental Health Line
1-888-568-1112

Child-Help USA
1-800-422-4453

SAMHSA Disaster Distress
www.disasterdistress.samhsa.gov

UF VETS Hosted 3-Day Operations Training

In September, the UF Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (VETS) provided a 3-day Operations Level training in Pinellas County to members of the technical rescue teams of Pinellas Park Fire & Rescue, St. Petersburg Fire & Rescue, Clearwater Fire & Rescue, and Largo Fire & Rescue. Several participants that were in attendance are also members of Task Force 3 and a few have responded to animal technical rescues in the past, including while deployed to Hurricane Harvey. We were grateful for the opportunity to help them develop their knowledge and skills and look forward to seeing their future successes!

Additionally, our team had the opportunity last month to participate in the Northwest Florida Volunteer Firefighter Week in Niceville. Members of volunteer fire departments in the panhandle and from as far as Jackson, Mississippi attended the UF VETS Awareness Level training at this event. We are proud to partner with the Florida State Fire College to provide these opportunities for volunteer firefighters!

For more information, please contact Brandi Phillips at brandikphillips@ufl.edu.

Enrollment Open: Animal Emergency Sheltering

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition (SARC) has upcoming opportunities for their Awareness Level 1 and Operations Level 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 (FL-003-RESP) gives students the knowledge necessary to work in a small animal emergency shelter. This class provides expertise and practical experience required to become a disaster animal responder. The Operations Level 2 (FL-607) course gives many new job options, in addition to leadership skills and team-led opportunities. This course expands upon information covered in Awareness Level 1 and ICS-100 courses. Both courses are certified by the Florida Division of Emergency Management and are geared for Florida responders who want to help rescued animals, companion animals and their owners during a disaster.

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

Awareness Level 1 Courses

When: Saturday, October 5, 2019
Where: Lakeland, FL - Hosted by Florida SPCA
Registration: http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=cmn8hziab&oeidk=a07egfqgzns64eb9a96

When: Saturday, November 16, 2019
Where: Marietta, GA - Hosted by Good Mews Animal Foundation
Registration: http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=cmn8hziab&oeidk=a07egekoh9j82260716

Operations Level 2 Courses

When: Saturday and Sunday, November 23 and 24, 2019
Where: Lakeland, FL - Hosted by Florida SPCA
Registration: http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=cmn8hziab&oeidk=a07egfrtum29713135a

In the News

Short stories and updates from around the state and nation…

China's Hog Herd May Drop by 55% Due to African Swine Fever
China's hog herd fell by half in the first eight months of 2019 due to a devastating outbreak of African swine fever and will likely shrink by 55% by the end of the year, analysts at Rabobank said on Wednesday. The pace of herd losses will likely slow in the coming months due to reduced farm numbers and Chinese government measures to control the pig disease in the world's largest pork consumer. (CNBC) Read More

FDA Partners with the University of Arizona and Other Stakeholders to Enhance Food Safety
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has launched a new initiative with support from the Arizona Department of Agriculture, and in conjunction with the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, the Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation and Drainage District (WMIDD), and members of the Yuma area leafy greens industry to better understand the ecology of human pathogens in the environment in the Yuma agricultural region. This initiative will be a multi-year study that will focus on how these pathogens survive, move and possibly contaminate produce prior to harvest. Read More

New Report Details a 2017 E. coli Outbreak Linked to Soy Nut Butter
A new report published in Pediatrics describes a 2017 outbreak investigation of E. coli O157:H7 infections that sickened 32 people, primarily young children, in 12 states. Investigators identified soy nut butter as the source of the outbreak, which led to a recall of more than 1.2 million pounds of products. Read More

Disaster Preparedness for Animals Information Available

FDACS is proud to announce "Disaster Preparedness for Animals" for horses, livestock and pets. Information is now available on their website. Please visit: https://www.freshfromflorida.com/Consumer-Resources/Animals/Animal-Related-Emergency-Response

SART Holds its Underlying Contradictions Workshop

On September 12th, SART held an "Underlying Contradictions Workshop." This workshop was the third installment in a series of strategic planning workshops designed to help update the SART Organizational Declaration, Steering Committee, and Advisory Board. The purpose of the workshop was to identify negative patterns and issues that prevent successful strategic initiatives from being implemented, and to determine what is in the way of achieving our practical vision for the future of SART.

Through exercises and discussion, the group was able to identify issues that impede our vision. At our next strategic planning workshop entitled "Strategic Directions Workshop," we will use the issues identified in the "Underlying Contradiction Workshop" to answer the question: *What innovative, substantial actions will deal with the underlying contradictions and move us toward our vision?*

The Strategic Directions Workshop will take place on October 10th in Gainesville.

Counties, Is Your Contact Information Up-to-Date on the SART Website?

Please review your county emergency contact information at https://flsart.org/resource/countyinformation.jsp. If you need to make changes to your county contact information, please send a request to LeiAnna Tucker at LeiAnna.Tucker@FDACS.gov. During an emergency, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services provides necessary food and water to affected areas and helps protect animals and pets.

The Department's Florida Forest Service is responsible for incident management and assists emergency responders in clearing debris and distributing supplies. Additionally, the Department's Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement provides law enforcement services to police departments and county sheriff's offices as necessary.

For more information and tips on hurricane preparedness, visit www.floridadisaster.org.

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Pet-Friendly Sheltering
Online Training Course Information

The Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART) will soon offer an online, state-certified training on pet-friendly sheltering. The online training will provide participants with guidance on how to plan for and operate a pet-friendly shelter to ensure that individuals evacuating from a disaster with household pets are accommodated.

Lesson 1: Course Structure

Lesson 2: Opening the Doors to Pet-Friendly Sheltering
Lesson 2 is a course background lesson. The question of "Why Pet-Friendly Sheltering?" is introduced and participants will receive numbers and statistics on pet-friendly sheltering from previous disasters.

Lesson 3: Who is in Charge? Using ICS.
Lesson 3 provides a brief overview of using ICS in pet-friendly shelters. An important aspect of this lesson is how to properly use ESFs during all phases of pet-friendly sheltering. Participants will learn about the coordination between ESF 6 and ESF 17 and the importance of that relationship's successful operations.

Lesson 4: Planning for a Pet-Friendly Shelter
Lesson 4 will focus on planning a pet-friendly shelter. It will make recommendations for staff training, suggestions for where to set up pet-friendly shelters, and will go through the important elements of a pet-friendly shelter plan.

Lesson 5: Preparedness is a Partnership
Lesson 5 is about establishing partnerships. It will cover MOUs and MAAs, recommended trainings for pet-friendly shelter staff, and will help participants to identify agencies in their communities for partnership.

Lesson 6: Social Media and Beyond
Lesson 6 will focus on using social media for disseminating a unified message and providing the public with pet-friendly sheltering information. Accurate information is crucial for evacuations and this lesson will share some best practices.

Lesson 7: How to Set-up and Take Down a Pet-Friendly Shelter
Lesson 7 will focus on best practices for setting-up and taking down pet-friendly shelters. Participants will be introduced to potential issues and will be provided several different checklists so they can be best prepared. This lesson will cover supplies, choices for enclosures/caging, setup and design, design considerations, species separation, indoor "pet walk," quarantine, storing cages and kennels, sanitizing animal items, and more.

RELEASE DATE
Summer 2019

COURSE DURATION
4 hours

COURSE FEE
Free

COURSE MODE
100% online

TARGET AUDIENCE
Emergency Managers
County Employees
Shelter Volunteers

PROVIDED BY
Florida State Agricultural Response Team, in partnership with the Florida State Animal Response Coalition

POINT OF CONTACT
LeiAnna Tucker
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
(850) 410-0920
LeiAnna.Tucker@freshfromflorida.com

FDACS' Summer Williams Attends IFPTI Fellowship Program

Pictured above: IFPTI Cohort VIII with their mentors

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' (FDACS) Summer Williams (Emergency Response Coordinator, Division of Food Safety) last month attended week 1 (of 3) of the International Food Protection and Training Institute (IFPTI) Fellowship Program in Kalamazoo, Michigan. This fellowship program concentrates on the dedication to improving food safety nationwide with a pinpoint on leadership skills. In conjunction with face-to-face sessions, Summer will be conducting a research project during this year long program.

Summer's project will focus on resources used during food safety response to natural disasters nationwide. She will complete the program in June 2020 and will present her final research project at the AFDO Educational Conference in Phoenix, Arizona.

UF IFAS Launches Prevent & Protect Against Mosquitoes Website

The UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (PIE Center), as part of a Florida Department of Health grant, created the initial Prevent & Protect web page and related materials to help local officials communicate to residents of Florida's cities and counties about the importance of mosquito control efforts and how residents can help reduce mosquito populations.

On this website, you will learn how to use two toolkits designed to educate local communities about mosquito control. Each toolkit has pre-made social media posts and graphics that are easy to use to inform the public about the importance of mosquito control. The Mosquito Control Toolkit educates the public on mosquito control and the negative impact mosquitoes can have in local communities.

For more information, visit:
https://preventmosquitoes.org

Food Safety and Food Defense Report

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

FDACS' Division of Food Safety is responsible for assuring the public of a safe, wholesome, and properly represented food supply through permitting and inspection of food establishments, inspection of food products, and performance of specialized laboratory analysis on a variety of food products sold or produced in the state. The Division of Food Safety monitors food from the farm gate, through processing and distribution, to the retail point of purchase.

Pictured above: A collaboration between regulatory agencies checking the movement of trucks along Interstate 95. FDACS Food Safety staff are shown wearing orange vests (Clint Fox in the lobster photo and in the temperature photo).

The Food Safety Inspectors Clint Fox and Michael Byrd participated in the FDACS Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement increased activity day at the I-95 inspection station on September 24, 2019. This increased activity day included FDACS regulatory divisions (Animal Industry and Plant Industry) along with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

All trucks passing through the I-95 agricultural inspection station (southbound only) were opened and inspected during the hours of 6am-noon. There was a total of 212 visual inspections, 44 written warnings, one citation, and five violations (four plant and one livestock).

Sarasota County Ag Community Prepares for Storm Issues

Sarah Bostick
Sustainable Agriculture Agent
UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County

Pictured above: Members of the Sarasota Agriculture Response Group meet to discuss actions.

Preparing for hurricanes and other natural disasters is a very big job in our state, and one not limited to our urban areas. It is such a big job that the state of Florida mandated the formation of a multi-agency coordination group to plan for and manage agricultural and animal disaster response.

This group, called the State Agricultural Response Team (SART), consists of 23 partners representing the government, non-profit and private sector. The wide range of partners (see a full list) covers all aspects of agriculture in Florida and includes members from:

- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- University of Florida
- Florida Nursery Growers and Landscape Association
- Florida Cattlemen's Association, and many more.

SART encourages county-level collaboration to coordinate rural recovery. In the spring of 2019, members from Sarasota County Cattlemen's Association, Sarasota County Emergency Management, Sarasota County Farm Bureau, Sarasota Soil and Water Conservation District, UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County, and volunteers from the local network of ham radio operators came together to solidify a plan that has been steadily developing for a number of years. The group called themselves the Sarasota Agriculture Recovery Group (SARG) and hit the ground running ahead of the hurricane season.

SARG members worked together to compile an extensive list of resources that might be needed after a storm, such as large animal veterinarians from outside of the county, locations and contact information for feed and supply stores in other parts of the state, and heavy machinery in the county that can be used to demolish damaged barns and greenhouses.

The key to any effective storm response is communication. As recent hurricanes have taught us, normal communication methods can be down for days after hurricane-force winds end. SARG's solution: ham radios.

There is an active group of ham radio operators, many of whom are ranchers, in Sarasota County and they are willing and ready to put their radio skills to work as the backbone of an extensive communication network during and after a storm. Members of SARG not already licensed as ham radio operators are studying for their licensing exam.

Continued. See *Sarasota Agriculture Recovery Group*, page 12.

Sarasota Agriculture Recovery Group (continued)

SARG members are ready to coordinate a huge spectrum of volunteer recovery efforts on the ground such as assisting sheriffs to capture and safely house horses and other livestock running loose on public roads, locating fuel for a generator that powers the irrigation system for a plant nursery, removing drowned wildlife from a creek that is part of our drinking water supply, and so much more.

As part of my role with SARG and Extension, I am assigned to the Agriculture and Large Animal Recovery desk in Sarasota County's Emergency Operation Center (EOC). As SARG members travel the county post-storm, they will radio damage reports and resource requests to the EOC.

This information will be used to secure federal disaster relief funding for the state and county, as well as ensure that necessary resources are sent as quickly as possible to areas most in need. By working as a team, the process of collecting damage reports and resource requests can be achieved in a matter of hours rather than days or weeks. And that is something to be proud of.

SARG members know that by working together, our capacity to respond quickly and effectively to natural disasters is greatly increased.

Read more at: http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/sarasotaco/2019/09/20/sarasota-county-prepares-for-agricultural-storm-issues

Hurricane Dorian Recovery for Pets Evacuating the Bahamas

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is providing the following guidance to all individuals who are evacuating pets from areas impacted by Hurricane Dorian and wish to enter the continental United States or territories. This guidance is for the Hurricane Dorian-affected areas of Abaco and Grand Bahama only, all other animal imports must conform to current federal, state, and local regulations.

Visit: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel/evacuation-guidance

Save the Date: SART Workshops

SART partners are invited to come and collaborate in our future workshops for updating the Organizational Declaration and building the priorities of SART. The process for updating SART priorities going forward includes a series of workshops to build commitment, roles and responsibilities, and clear objectives. Each workshop will build on the next. It is ideal that you attend each workshop, but we understand if you can't and will provide a way to hear your ideas. Mark your calendar!

October 10, 2019 - Strategic Directions Workshop – Fifield Hall, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL
What Innovative, substantial actions will deal with the underlying contradictions and move us toward our vision?

November 14, 2019 – Focused Implementation Workshop 1 – TBD
What will our specific, measurable accomplishments be for the first year?

December 12, 2019 – Focused Implementation Workshop 2 – TBD
What will our specific, measurable accomplishments be for the first year?

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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