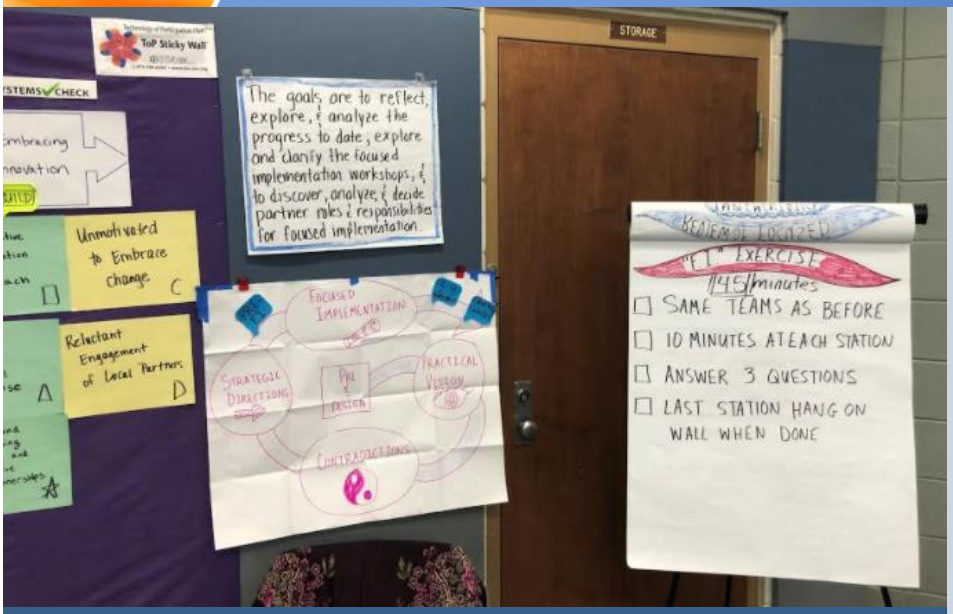
The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team



Notes from the November 19th Pre-Focused Implementation Workshop.

Special Features of this Issue:

- *SART 2019 Year-in-Review*
- *ASPCA's Dr. Dick Green to Retire*
- *Strategic Planning for Mother-Nature: Considerations in Planning and Training*
- *YETies Learn to be Volunteers for Pet-Friendly Sheltering*

SART Holds its Pre-Focused Implementation Workshop

On November 19th, SART held a "Pre-Focused Implementation Workshop." This workshop was the fifth installment in a series of strategic planning workshops designed to help update the SART Organizational Declaration, Steering Committee, and Advisory Board.

The goal of the "Pre-Focused Implementation Workshop" was to reflect, explore and analyze the progress we've made to date during this planning process and to clarify the components of future "Focused Implementation Workshops."

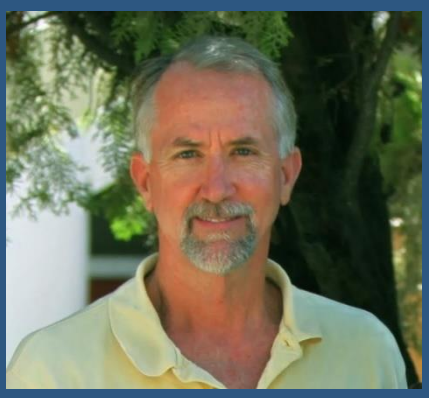
The "Pre-Focused Implementation Workshop" helped attendees from various agencies identify individuals in their organizations that will be instrumental in helping to implement initiatives that will successfully guide SART into the future.

Our next strategic planning workshop entitled "Focused Implementation Workshop" will take place in Gainesville on December 17th. Attendees will work to answer the question: What will our specific, measurable accomplishments be for the first year?

Over the course of 20 years, Dick responded to well over 125 international and national disasters including several hurricanes in Florida.

ASPCA's Dr. Dick Green plans to retire at the end of 2019.

Read the story on page 8.



SART 2019 Year-in-Review

Thanks to our many SART Partners, 2019 was a marked success in terms of training, equipping, and coordination. Below are some of the highlights we've reported on this past year.

Q1: January – March

FDACS Winning Fight Against Destructive, Disease-Carrying Snail
Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam announced that more than 168,000 Giant African Land Snails (GALS) have been eliminated in Florida since the invasive snail was discovered in Miami-Dade County in 2011. In addition, due to the success of the program, the Department has decommissioned two additional core areas, two of the largest is the state, where snails were found. (January 2019)

A Welcome Message from the New Commissioner of Agriculture
Commissioner Nicole "Nikki" Fried was sworn into office on January 8, 2019. She provided this message: "*I'm so honored to serve as your 12th Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services! It's been an exciting first two weeks as we start working to implement our bold agenda and fresh vision for Florida's farmers, consumers, and families. – The responsibilities of this office are vast and the opportunities are great – and I can't wait to take them on together, with you. Check out some highlights from our first two weeks in office, and please don't hesitate to reach out if we can be of service to you.* (February 2019)

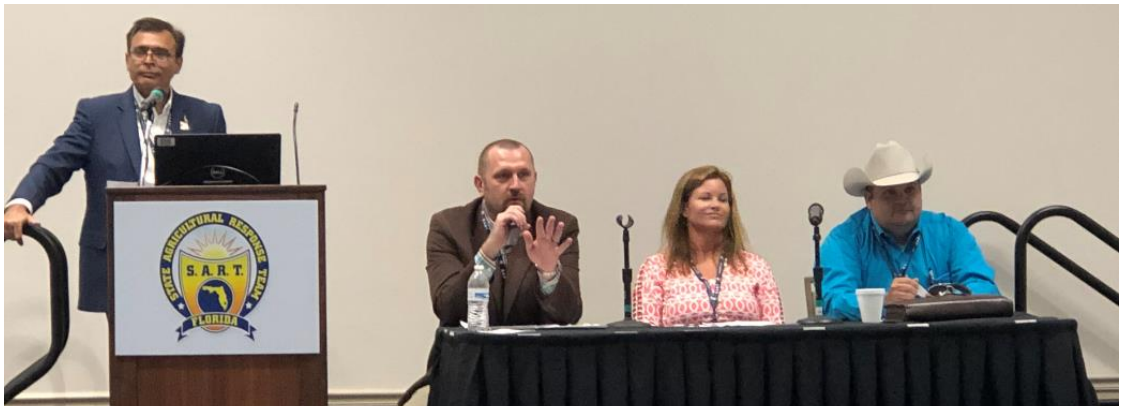
SART Year-in-Review (continued)

New Year, New Look. Florida SART Launches Updated Website
On February 26th, Florida SART launched the latest version of their FLSART.org Website. Having last gone through a major redevelopment eight years ago, the new and improved site brings additional functionality and a more streamlined designed to members and the general public. (March 2019)

Q2: April - June

UF VETS in Action…
The University of Florida (UF) Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (VETS) Animal Technical Rescue Team provided response for a cow trapped in a dry septic tank on April 17th in Putnam County, Florida. Also involved in rescue efforts were Putnam County Sheriff's Department, Putnam County Animal Control, Putnam County Volunteer Fire Service, and Alachua County Sheriff's Department. The cow was able to be safely retrieved from the tank without further injury and reunited with her calf. (May 2019)

2019 SART Planning Conference Hosts 160 Attendees
The 2019 SART Planning Conference ended on May 31, 2019. Sponsored by the Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART), this biennial event serves Florida's county emergency management professionals and SART partner agencies. The conference served as an opportunity for SART leaders and experts in the fields of animal care and agriculture to share best practices and resources for integrating animal care and agriculture into disaster planning. (June 2019)



SART Year-in-Review (continued)

Q3: July – September

OALE Conducts Blitz at I-95 Inspection Station

On June 18, FDACS Environmental Specialists Terry Taynton and Clint Fox worked with the Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement (OALE) during the monthly "blitz" at the Agricultural Inspection Station on I-95. The OALE enforces laws governing businesses regulated by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Their mission is to protect consumers from unfair and deceptive trade practices, protect Florida's agriculture industry from theft and other crimes, and safeguard the wholesomeness of food and other consumer products. There are 23 agricultural inspection stations on 19 highways going into and out of Florida. Officers conduct vehicle inspections 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to ensure the safety of Florida's food supply. Officers are on the lookout for unsafe or unwholesome food that could make people sick, in addition to plant and animal pests and diseases that could harm the state's $100 billion agriculture industry. Each month OALE brings in several regulatory partners and performs inspections of every trailer coming into a specific station. (July 2019)

SART Holds its First Historical Scan Workshop

On July 11th, SART held a "Historical Scan Workshop" to kick off our strategic planning process for updating the SART Organizational Declaration, Steering Committee, and Advisory Board. The Historical Scan Workshop was a visual timelining exercise to help members identify key events – past and present – of Florida SART, SART partners, state, and nation. The historical scan highlighted what we have done together, educated new members on SART's history, and helped with organizational learning. The information and events revealed in the Historical Scan Workshop will be used in additional planning workshops in the coming months. (August 2019)

SART Year-in-Review (continued)

SARC's Consie von Gontard Helps the Dogs of Chernobyl
The Chernobyl disaster of 1986 left many abandoned and distressed animals in its wake, including pet dogs and cats, as families evacuated with nothing but what they could carry in their hands. The *Dogs of Chernobyl* program has recently stepped in to spay, neuter, and vaccinate stray dogs that now call the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone home. Consie von Gontard, our SART partner with the Florida State Animal Response Coalition, recently had the opportunity to travel for three weeks with Clean Future Fund, working with a team of radiation specialists and scientists to collect bloodwork, parasites, tissue, and a plethora of other samples in an effort to link scientific research alongside humane care for the animals. (September 2019)

Q4: October – December

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 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. (October 2019)

UF VETS Hosted 3-Day Operations Training
The UF VETS Animal Technical Rescue Team 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. (October 2019)

Commissioner Fried Celebrates Grand Opening of New $11 Million State Laboratory
Agriculture Commissioner Nicole "Nikki" Fried and former Agriculture Commissione Charles H. Bronson participated in the ribbon-cutting and grand opening of the Bronsor Animal Disease Diagnostics Laboratory (BADDL). A state-of-the-art $11 million state facility the Bronson Lab is Florida's only animal disease diagnostic laboratory fully accredited by the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians. The new 22,000 sq. ft facility houses a full-service veterinary laboratory with the latest technology, dedicated to keeping Florida's animals and citizens healthy. The lab will be managed by Dr. Reddy Bommineni of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division o Animal Industry, Bureau of Diagnostic Laboratory. (November 2019)

LECALE Enrollment Open for December 9-13, 2019

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.

DATES AND TIMES
December 9-13, 2019

LOCATION
Department of Animal Sciences
2250 Shealy Drive, Room 102, Building 459
Gainesville, Florida 32611

For more information and to register, visit:
https://animal.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/courses/lecale/

Save-the-Date: SART Brunch & Workshop

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!

December 17, 2019 – SART Brunch! And Focused Implementation Workshop
10:00am-2:00pm
Florida Farm Bureau
Gainesville, FL

In the News

Short stories and updates from around the state and nation…

Scientists Say Quarter of All Pigs Could Die of Swine Fever
Around a quarter of the world's pigs are expected to die from African swine fever as authorities grapple with a complex disease spreading rapidly in the globalization era, the World Organization for Animal Health's president said last month. A sharp reduction in the world's pig population would lead to possible food shortages and high pork prices, and it might also cause shortfalls in the many products made from pigs, such as the blood-thinner heparin that's used in people, said Dr. Mark Schipp, the organization's president. "I don't think the species will be lost, but it's the biggest threat to the commercial raising of pigs we've ever seen," he said. "And it's the biggest threat to any commercial livestock of our generation" (Associated Press). Read More

Swine Fever Raises Fears of Bird Flu Pandemic
In recent times two strains of bird flu — H5N1 and H7N9 — have struck humans with deadly results. Scientists fear that such viruses can mutate into strains capable of human-to-human transmission. The influenza virus is unstable and prone to mutations or the exchange of internal genes, making it difficult to determine how exactly a potential pandemic would play out. (SciDev.net) Read More

Investigation of E. coli O157:H7 Outbreak Linked to Romaine from Salinas, California
FDA, CDC, and state health authorities are investigating an outbreak of illnesses caused by *E. coli* O157:H7 in the United States. Epidemiologic, laboratory, and traceback evidence indicates that romaine lettuce from the Salinas, California growing region is a likely source of this outbreak. The CDC is reporting an increase in the case count to 67 and that the most recent illness onset date is November 14, 2019. Consumers should not eat romaine lettuce harvested from Salinas, California. Additionally, consumers should not eat products identified in the recall announced by the USDA on November 21, 2019. Read More

Taste of Florida Agriculture Reception, December 10th

Florida Farm Bureau will host **Florida Farm Bureau Day** and the **Taste of Agriculture Reception** at the Capitol on December 10th. https://www.floridafarmbureau.org/events/florida-farm-bureau-legislative-days-2/

ASPCA's Dr. Dick Green to Retire

The ASPCA, a partner of SART, announced that Dr. Dick Green is retiring from the ASPCA effective December 31, 2019. Dick has been the Senior Director of Disaster Response for the ASPCA since October 2011. Prior to coming to the ASPCA, Dick spent 6 years with the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and 6 years with American Humane leading their disaster response efforts. Over the course of 20 years, Dick responded to well over 125 international and national disasters including several hurricanes in Florida. Tim Perciful (Tim.Perciful@aspca.org) will be stepping in as the Interim Director starting January 1, 2020.

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.

Pet-Friendly Sheltering
Online Training Announcement

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.

This training will include useful information on how to:

- Use the Incident Command System in pet-friendly shelter planning and operations;
- Plan for a pet-friendly shelter;
- Understand the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act (PETS Act);
- Establish partnerships for resource coordination;
- Deliver a unified message to the public before, during and after an emergency, and;
- Set up, operate and demobilize a pet-friendly shelter.

Upon successful completion of the course, participants will receive a downloadable **Tool Kit** that offers functional guidance and plan templates. Students will also receive a **certificate** of completion approved by the Florida Division of Emergency Management and Florida

RELEASE DATE
Winter 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@FDACS.gov

Strategic Planning for Mother-Nature: Considerations in Planning and Training

By: Eric Thompson- ASAR Training and Response Specialist/Instructor; Director of Disaster Response – Code 3 Associates

Whether you are a force-of-one in your community or you are part of a larger organization providing animal services; we all have an investment in the benefits of strategic planning for catastrophic disasters. Many communities planned under the premise "it will never happen here" and Mother-Nature says, "hold my beer…watch this." Over the past three years we have seen weather patterns churn up storm fronts and hurricanes that are dumping records amounts of rain in areas that usually never saw long-term flooding issues. We now see that planning for **100 animals needing evacuation and sheltering in the first 24-hours** is just a preface for the possible hundreds of animals of different species that will continue to need assistance for weeks after the initial event. This article summarizes some of the things we know Florida agencies are great at; and also brings light to more advanced rescue training to meet **new Animal Search and Rescue (ASAR) FEMA resource typing.**

First and foremost, we can't do this alone! If your organization is the sole provider of disaster response and animal services for your jurisdiction, and you think "we got this," I'm here to tell you in catastrophic planning none of us have "got this" alone. One of the most common mistakes we see in planning at all levels across the Country is the failure to "lean forward" in disaster planning and response for animals. Granted human life and safety issues are always a priority; however only the insightful planner understands that **animals of all shapes and sizes are part of human life** and will be an issue during all phases of the disaster event. Local resources are assumed to be overwhelmed given the potential split in resources to fill requests for service; and an agreement for outside partner help should be explored during your catastrophic planning process.

For example, your jurisdiction receives a storm that dumps 30+ inches of rain over a 36-hour period causing widespread long-term flooding. Your agency now receives requests to: aid with mass care evacuations as **people are bringing their animals**, send someone to the mass care shelter for set-up/care/tracking/logistics, your **stray animal shelter has lines of people** outside that just grabbed an animal to save it and need to turn it in (they won't have an address or owner info), frantic calls are coming in to **save animals left behind in the flood** but you don't have a boat or the credentials/PPE to work in raging flood waters, the Emergency Operations Center is asking for a representative to sit and handle phone calls, Facebook and social media are blowing up because your agency isn't reacting fast enough, ….and folks I'm just getting started. This is just the first 24-36 hours. This event will last for weeks and transition through response to recovery, which will last for months if not longer.

Continued. See *Strategic Planning for Mother-Nature*, page 9.

Strategic Planning for Mother-Nature (continued)

Now do all of that with no power, no water, limited logistic support, and you don't know if your house, animals, and family are safe. This was just the tip of the iceberg for agencies in parts of Florida as over the years storms have either made landfall or threatened the coastline.

Fortunately, many agencies in Florida have the foresight to seek a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with other partner agencies to provide mass care sheltering, **animal evacuation and transport**, and **technical rescue teams** that are trained and equipped to work in swiftwater and floodwater environments prior to the hurricane. The MOU states what services can be provided; and includes a list of information items response partners would need to know so we can plan on what to bring with us. Basic questions prior to response include: Under who's authority are we being activated? What is the immediate need and projected needs? Where do we stage and how do we get there if roads are closed? What specialty credentials are needed or what type of response team is needed? (I'm not sending a large animal rescue ground team into a swiftwater disaster), and how long do you expect to need us? There are many more questions that need to be addressed as the response unfolds; but these will get everyone out the door and on the way.

To be part of a recognized and credentialed **animal disaster team**, we always push potential responders to meet training guidelines acknowledged by their Agency Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). If you are looking to help at a local level, check with your local Emergency Management office and see what animal resources are in place. If you are looking to participate at a State team level, contact that team and understand what training is required to participate and what training is recommended to help. No matter at what level you want to respond, seek out the proper training to give you the credentials that are widely recognized and accepted.

Recently **ASAR Training and Response** conducted an ASAR Swiftwater/Floodwater training near Tampa with RVR Horse Rescue and Hillsborough County FD teaming up to host the 4-day training. This training was geared towards responders that already had some of their basic field operations and ICS training completed; and focused more on response from a technician level skillset. In addition, this training promoted the local intra-state networking between government, educational, and NGO agencies to help enhance animal rescue response at all levels. Just as ASAR Training and Response provides technician/specialist level training nationwide, also check out **Code 3 Associates** if you are just getting started in disaster response training. Code 3 offers awareness and operations level training for individuals that are looking for a well-rounded base of response topics. For more information on ASAR Training and Response check out our new website launching December 6th, 2019 at www.asartraining.com or on social media via Facebook and Youtube: ASAR Training and Response; and on Instagram and Twitter @asartraining. For Code 3 information check out www.code3associates.org or on Facebook at Code 3 Associates.

YETies Learn to be Volunteers for Pet-Friendly Sheltering

Nassau County Emergency Management and the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences (UF/IFAS) 4-H have teamed up to expand beyond the traditional Teen Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program to create the successful Nassau County Youth Emergency Team (YET) program. This program is open to youth ages 10 to 17 rather than being teen exclusive.

On October 24th, 20 YETies learned about the considerations and techniques of animals in emergencies including sheltering design and implementation, animal behavior and restraint, and basic animal first aid.

Four return graduates helped professionals from local animal control teach members how to handle questions and clientele situations during shelter check-ins, fixing issues in a mock shelter set-up to minimize disease spread and injury, and how to establish pet sheltering rules. Two dogs volunteered as live models for low-stress restraint practice and training of checking vital signs. Youth even practiced using slip leads for catching and muzzling of dogs and learned how to properly catch/wrap cats using the Sophia Yin "Low- Stress Handling" towel method.

The YET program is always filled with laughter and insightful questions from active participants dedicating their time to better prepare and serve their community of both animal and human variety.

To see more of what our YET-ies will be up to, follow our Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/NassauYET

UF VETS Animal Technical Rescue Ops Training

Please log in and update your membership information online at:

www.FLSART.org

Did You Know?

Pregnant women are 10 times more likely than others to get listeriosis, a rare but deadly foodborne infection caused by the bacteria *Listeria*. This according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Learn how to protect yourself from this harmful germ. Visit: https://www.cdc.gov/listeria/risk.html

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@FDACS.gov