



The Sentinel

Newsletter of
the Florida State
Agricultural
Response Team



Photo credit: USDA APHIS

What's the Buzz with New World Screwworm?

Some of you may recall back in 2016 there was a brief New World Screwworm (NWS) infestation in the Florida Keys. Unfortunately, that infestation had a significant negative impact on the Keys' wildlife. Fortunately for Florida and the United States, the infestation occurred in an area that was ideal for eradication efforts.

Securing islands are much easier to do and allow for more methodical techniques and tactics to be employed against the threat. Because of this ideal setup, the Keys were determined NWS free within a year. Fast-forward to 2025, the NWS threat has reared its head again. This time, as many are probably aware, the threat is coming from Mexico and Central America.

It should be stated that a threat of an NWS infestation has always been present to a degree.

Traditionally it has originated from Central America and even some Caribbean countries. However, an infestation originating from our southern borders would present unique challenges that our nation has not seen since the 1950s and 1960s. But these challenges are not insurmountable, as we have overcome them before. To be clear, there are no reports of NWS infestations in the United States currently.

As with hurricane preparedness, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) is currently increasing their preparedness by procuring necessary NWS specific response equipment. FDACS is also working with other states to create a unified response plan, should the need arise.

Continued, next page.

Special Features of this Issue:

- *Florida DEM Opens New State-of-the-Art Emergency Management Warehouse in Auburndale*
- *Images of Recovery: Utilizing Photographs to Understand, Connect, & Restore Following Recent Hurricanes*
- *Commissioner Wilton Simpson Encourages Floridians to Choose Pasteurized Milk Products from Florida Dairy Farmers*

"Florida's pasteurized milk supply is safe, nutritious, and closely controlled from the farm to your local grocery store"

— Wilton Simpson
Florida Commissioner of Agriculture



What's the Buzz with New World Screwworm? (continued)



Photo credit: USDA APHIS

For more information on NWS, please reference the resources below. There you can find a robust amount of information about the NWS fly, historical information about infestations, eradication techniques, and even updates on current locations. You can also find several informational flyers available for download that can help educate and promote awareness.

New World Screwworm Resources

- [Commissioner Simpson, FDACS Urge Vigilance as New World Screwworm Threat Increases](#) (FDACS)
- [New World Screwworm](#) (FDACS)



New World Screwworm

Story provided by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

New World screwworms are fly larvae (maggots) that can infest livestock and other warm-blooded animals, including people. They most often enter an animal through an open wound. They feed on the animal's living flesh and, if not treated, infestations can be fatal. While New World screwworm (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*) has not been widely present in the United States since the 1960s, it is still found in most of South America and in five Caribbean countries. Cases began spreading in 2023, heading north from Panama, and have reached southern Mexico, increasing the risk of reintroduction into the United States.

The New World Screwworm (NWS) has been spreading in Central America. While not currently detected in the U.S., NWS is a devastating pest and is being monitored.

What to know:

- **NWS DOES NOT** impact food safety.
- If **UNTREATED**, the NWS can impact livestock, pets, wildlife, and in rare cases, people.
- Be **PROACTIVE** to protect yourself and your animals.

How to keep you and your animals safe:

- NWS attacks open wounds.
- Be alert and **TREAT** wounds immediately.
- **MONITOR** wounds for infection.
- **CONTACT** your doctor or veterinarian if you suspect an infestation.



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If you want to learn more about
the New World Screwworm, visit
FDACS.gov/NWS

Signs

Screwworms are typically found on warm-blooded animals that have a draining or enlarging wound.

Screwworm eggs are creamy and white and deposited in a shingle-like manner on or near the edges of superficial wounds. The larvae are cylindrical with one pointed end and one blunt end and have rings of dark brown spines around the body. Female screwworm flies are larger than a housefly with a dark blue to blue-green body and reddish-orange head.

Almost any type of wound can become infested with screwworm larvae, including those caused by feeding ticks, castration, dehorning, branding, shearing, barbed wire fences, and even shedding of antler velvet in deer. The navels of newborn mammals can also become infested.

Guidance for Animal Health

Carefully inspect animal wounds and hides for signs of screwworm. Owners should immediately consult their veterinarian if a case of screwworm is suspected.

Continued, next page.

New World Screwworm (continued)

Story provided by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Treatment

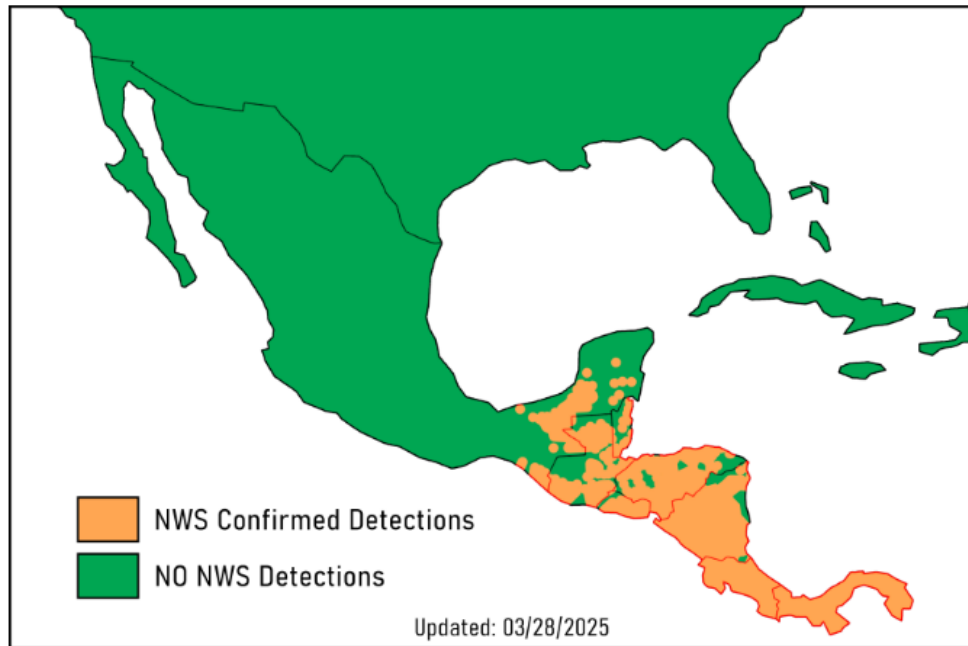
Screwworm infestation is treated by cleaning the site and topical application of a pesticide or other medication effective at killing the screwworm larvae. Treated wounds should be inspected daily until completely healed. The examining veterinarian will remove larvae from the wound with tweezers, place them in alcohol, and report to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Division of Animal Industry (State Veterinarian's Office).

Report Suspected Cases

- **By phone during office hours:** (850) 410-0900
- **By phone after hours:** 1-800-342-5869
- **Via email:** RAD@FDACS.gov
- **Report online at:** www.FDACS.gov/RAD

Wildlife Reports

To report sick or injured wildlife, including a suspected screwworm infestation, call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) at 1-888-404-FWCC (3922) or email the Wildlife Health Team at WildlifeHealthTeam@MyFWC.com.



Resources

- [Information on the Screwworm Eradication Program](#) (USDA APHIS)

Screwworm Information Sheets (Provided by USDA APHIS)

- [Screwworm Brochure \(English Version\)](#)
- [Screwworm Brochure \(Spanish Version\)](#)
- [Screwworm Poster](#)
- [Screwworm Factsheet](#)
- [Screwworm Pest Alert \(English Version\)](#)
- [Screwworm Pest Alert \(Spanish Version\)](#)

For the latest information, visit:

<https://www.fdacs.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Pests-and-Diseases/Animal-Pests-and-Diseases/New-World-Screwworm>

Florida Division of Emergency Management Opens New State-of-the-Art Emergency Management Warehouse in Auburndale



Photo by Jesse Romimora

the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) celebrated the grand opening of Florida's Central Operations and Coordination Office, a critical investment in the state's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. Located in the heart of Central Florida, the 421,600-square-foot facility is already 91% utilized. It will serve as a major hub for disaster logistics and coordination. Stocked with equipment, including utility vehicles, forklifts, and skid steers, the warehouse will ensure lifesaving supplies such as food, water, flood prevention resources, and generators can be staged and deployed quickly after a disaster to communities in need.

"This new facility is more than just a warehouse—it's a promise to the people of Florida," **said Executive Director Kevin Guthrie**. "By expanding our capacity, improving our logistics, and adding state-of-the-art features, we're ensuring that when disaster strikes, help gets to our communities faster than ever before. This is how we strengthen resilience and lead the way in emergency management."

The new warehouse offers several improvements from the current State Logistics Response Center (SLRC), including:

- **400 trailer spaces** (up from 130 at SLRC)
- **Over 100 sleeping quarters** (up from 16)
- **Three hazardous material closets** with air quality monitoring and leak detection
- A **drive-in loading design** allowing trailers to be loaded and deployed entirely indoors, saving time and deploying resources faster
- A **helipad capable of landing Florida National Guard aircraft**

Supported by billions of dollars dedicated to enhancing response and recovery capabilities at both the state and local levels, these efforts ensure Florida is prepared not only to respond but also to build long-term resilience. The newest warehouse—strategically co-located with major distribution centers and interstate infrastructure—will house more than 300 personnel, enabling faster, more efficient deployment of resources and improved coordination during emergencies. With expanded space, advanced features, and enhanced logistics capabilities, this facility represents a major step forward in protecting Floridians and ensuring rapid action when every second counts.

As the peak of the Atlantic Hurricane Season approaches, Florida residents and visitors are encouraged to remain vigilant by visiting [FloridaDisaster.org](https://www.floridadisaster.org) and following FDEM on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [X](#) for weather updates and preparedness tips.

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR UF/IFAS **RESEARCH STUDY**

The Images of Recovery Project seeks photographers of all skill levels to contribute up to three photos depicting the recovery process in agricultural communities affected by recent hurricanes, aiming to identify needs and barriers and facilitate long-term recovery through Extension resources, with submitted photos showcased post-project via QR codes.



Ready Business Hurricane Toolkit

Why Should Organizations Care About Hurricane Risk?

Significant portions of the United States are at risk for the effects of tropical storms and hurricanes. It is important that organizations throughout the country, including associations, businesses, and community groups, understand the risks and potential impacts and prepare accordingly.



The [Ready Business Program](#) for Hurricane and the Preparedness and Mitigation Project Plan allow users to take action to protect employees, protect customers, and help ensure business continuity.

Organizations can achieve six levels for recognition through the Ready Business Program. The levels include **STAFF, SURROUNDINGS, SPACE, SYSTEMS, STRUCTURE, and SERVICE**. The first five levels can be achieved either independently or as a group. The **SERVICE** level is achieved by completing requirements for **STAFF, SURROUNDINGS, SPACE, SYSTEMS, and STRUCTURE** levels in addition to the **SERVICE** requirements.

Benefits

Peace of mind that your organization is prepared not only for hurricanes, but for other business interruptions and natural disasters.

Ready Business **window cling** to announce to your customers or clients and employees that you have taken steps to prepare your STAFF, SURROUNDINGS, SPACE, SYSTEMS, STRUCTURE, and are prepared to be of SERVICE after an event.

Ready Business **recognition certificate**.

Ready Business **web badge** to display on your organization's website.

Organization listing on Ready Business website.

Sample **news release** to recognize and acknowledge your organization's participation in the *Ready Business Program*.

Gain tips for **media placement**.

Inspire others to take steps to improve community resiliency.

For more information, please visit:

https://ccmedia.fdacs.gov/content/download/79714/file/Hurricane_Ready_Business_Toolkit_Interactive_Final_508.pdf

Florida State Animal Response Coalition

www.fl sarc.org

352-658-1224

Pet Evacuation Documents Bag

Pet's Name:

Bring these items when you evacuate. Prepare one bag per pet.

- ☐ Medication (make sure it's current)
- ☐ Medical Records
- ☐ Vaccination Records
- ☐ Special Medical/Behavioral Instructions
- ☐ Picture of your Pet and Picture of You With Your Pet
- ☐ All Identification Numbers (Microchip, Tattoo, Rabies Tag)
- ☐ List of Distinguishing Features/Marks
- ☐ Emergency Contact Information for You
- ☐ Emergency Contact Information for Your Pet (Vet, babysitter, caregiver, etc.)

In addition to these items, you should also bring the following:

Food/Water for 7 days
Food and water bowls
Poop bags
Toys and treats

2 extra collars and leashes
Bedding
Trash bag

Pet first aid kit
Pet carrier
Litter box/litter

Florida EDEN: Mental Health Matters

Disasters shake more than just the physical foundations of our lives—they can take a significant emotional toll as well, *according to the Florida Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN)*. While the loss of property and disruption to daily life are often visible, the invisible impacts on mental health can be just as devastating. For Extension professionals, the responsibility of supporting communities through these events can bring added emotional strain, especially when navigating personal losses at the same time.

The educational materials below aim to equip you with practical strategies to strengthen personal resilience and better support those around you. Together we can foster healthier communities that are more prepared emotionally and physically before, during, and after disaster strikes.

Personal resilience plays a critical role in disaster response, especially for Extension professionals who serve on the front lines during crises like hurricanes. Resilience is the ability to reduce stress and adapt in challenging situations—anchored by three key attitudes: *challenge, commitment, and control*.

Research from UF/IFAS following Hurricane Irma showed that while many agents demonstrated strengths in learning and connecting with others, they also faced mental fatigue, stress, and unclear expectations—factors that impacted their ability to meet job demands. This educational resource outlines practical strategies for building resilience, including:

- Clarifying disaster response roles
- Offering targeted training
- Promoting support services and peer connection

By strengthening these skills and attitudes, Extension professionals can better balance personal and professional responsibilities and serve their communities more effectively in times of need.

Follow Florida EDEN on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) to stay updated! Visit our [webpage](#) to learn more and access disaster preparedness resources.

Mental Health Awareness

Learn more about staying healthy following a disaster.

RECOVER, REBUILD, RESILIENT: UNDERSTANDING THE EMOTIONAL JOURNEY AFTER DISASTER

Impact & Immediate
Response

Honeymoon
Phase

Rebuilding &
Reconstruction



Heroic
Phase

Disillusionment
Phase

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EDUCATION NETWORK

Retrieved from www.fema.gov/pdf/areyouready/recovering_from_disaster.pdf

Your Resilience Toolkit for Disaster Response



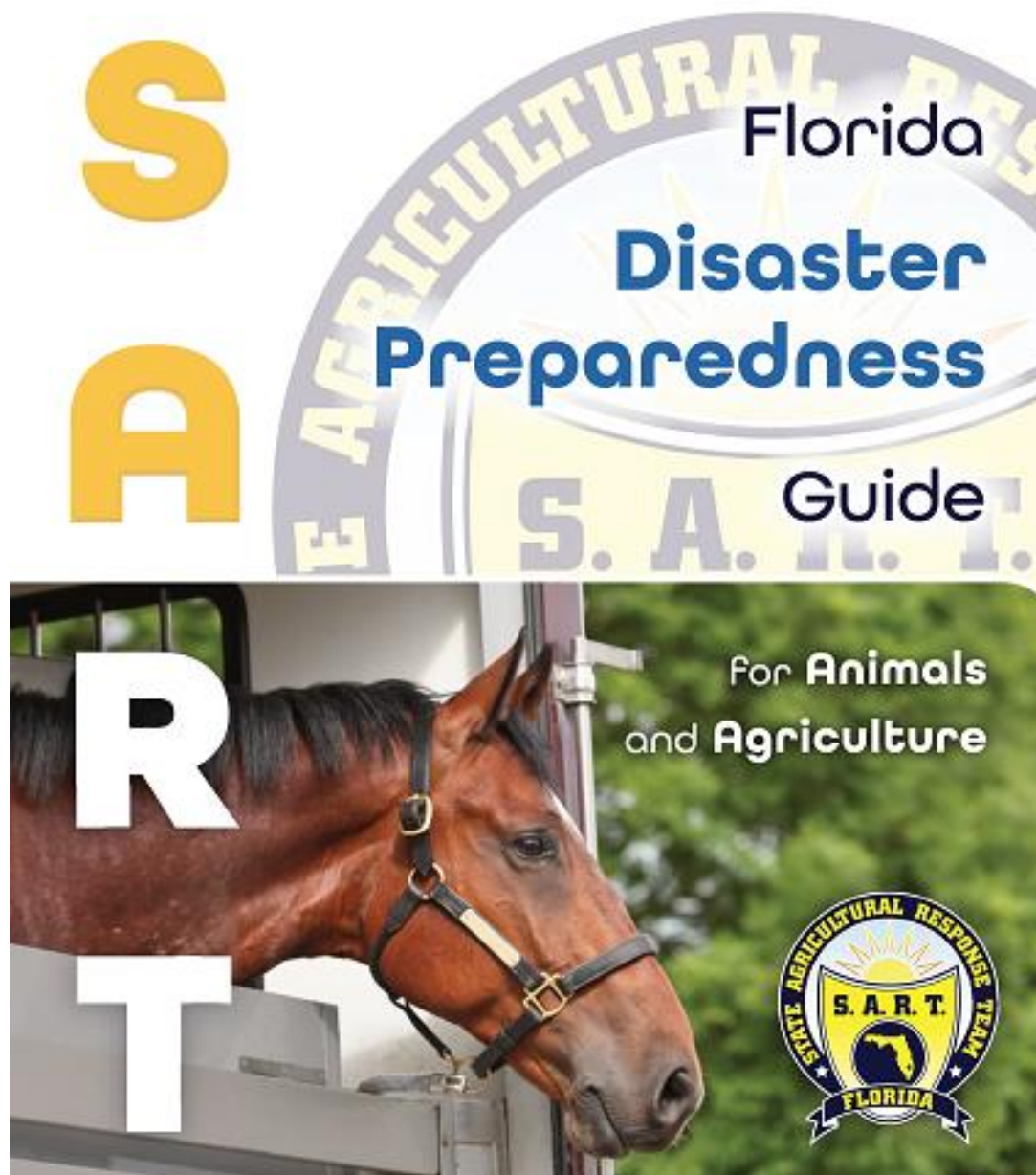
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EDUCATION NETWORK

The Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture

The [Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture](https://flsart.org/resource/DisasterPreparednessGuides/DisasterPreparednessGuides.jsp) was developed by FDACS and Florida SART. This guide explores the various animal and agricultural sectors in the state of Florida that are at risk from natural and man-made disasters, and what you can do to help prepare and protect animals and agriculture before a disaster strikes. The recommendations and resources in this guide are applicable to preparing for all hazards such as hurricanes, floods, wildfires, disease introduction, hazardous material spills, and more.

This publication is available only to SART members. To access the Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture, visit the SART website at flsart.org, and navigate to the "Resources" tab. It may also be accessed directly at:

<https://flsart.org/resource/DisasterPreparednessGuides/DisasterPreparednessGuides.jsp>



Become a Volunteer of the Florida Veterinary Corps Today!



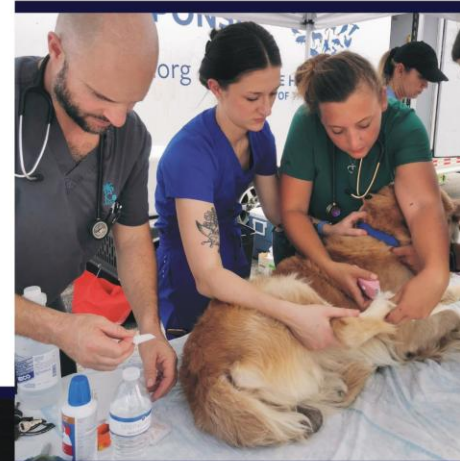
Florida veterinarians and veterinary technicians have volunteered to assist local and state emergency management officials in responding to animal emergencies. The Florida Veterinary Corps is recruiting more volunteers to help protect our state.

Become A Volunteer

To apply to the Florida Veterinary Corps, visit www.FLSART.org



Safeguarding Animal and Public Health in Florida



A cooperative effort of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team and its Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Veterinary Medical Association, and University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine.

Florida Veterinary Corps



What is the Florida Veterinary Corps?

- The Florida Veterinary Corps (The Corps) is a component of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART), established within the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and a cooperative effort with the Florida Veterinary Medical Association and the University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine.
- The Corps has been established to enlist veterinarians and veterinary technicians who are willing to volunteer their services in responding to animal emergencies in the state of Florida.
- During activation, Corps volunteers will work within an Incident Command System structure under state Emergency Support Function 17 as part of the State Emergency Response Team.
- Corps volunteers will be kept informed as to the status of emergencies and the need for volunteers depending upon the specific emergency.
- Volunteers may serve in veterinary infrastructure assessment teams, triage or emergency animal treatment teams, and animal disease surveillance or control teams under an Incident Command System structure.

Obligation of Corps Volunteers

- Corps volunteers will serve only when activated within an Incident Command System structure under state Emergency Support Function 17 as part of the State Emergency Response Team and adhere to all state regulations and rules.
- Complete the following four Incident Command System trainings to apply for The Corps. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides the independent study courses online, free of charge. The training is required for credentialing of emergency responders by the Department of Homeland Security. The courses are critical to train a professional volunteer Corps capable of responding as part of the state Emergency Support Function 17 and State Emergency Response Team.
 - IS-100.C: Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS)
 - IS-200.C: Basic ICS for Initial Response
 - IS-700.B: An Introduction to the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
 - IS-800.D: National Response Framework, An Introduction
- Corps volunteers will only be activated in response to specific emergency situations and may decline service at any time.

Rationale

- Protecting animal agriculture and household pets in Florida begins locally and requires cooperation, participation, and partnership.
- Federal or other outside assistance to deal with an animal disease emergency may not be available for hours or days.
- Animal agriculture in Florida is highly vulnerable to severe disruption and financial loss through natural disasters and exotic or zoonotic diseases.
- Counties and state agencies must be prepared to respond to animal disasters through planning and identification of human and material resources.
- Natural disasters are unpredictable and cannot be prevented.
- Florida has a high risk for introduction of a foreign animal disease.

Become a Volunteer

To apply to the Florida Veterinary Corps, visit www.FLSART.org

Be Sure to Check Out the FDACS and UF IFAS Partnership Video

Florida SART, FDACS, and University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) teamed up to create a training video on their disaster response partnership.



Florida Department of
Agriculture and
Consumer Services

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Published in December 2022 on [YouTube](#), the video features interviews with LeiAnna Moorhead (FDACS Emergency Programs Manager), Dr. Saqib Mukhtar (UF/IFAS Associate Dean for Extension, Agriculture, and Natural Resources), and Dr. Angie Lindsey [Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN)].

EDEN is funded by the USDA and is a collaborative multi-state effort by cooperative extension services across the country to improve the delivery of services to citizens affected by disasters.



Dr. Lindsey highlighted the important connection that agricultural extension agents have throughout the State of Florida. "We learn so much from our Extension agents and the work that they're already doing throughout the state and the work that they do within their own communities for disaster preparedness, recovery, and response," said Dr. Lindsey.

To view the video for yourself, and to like or comment, please visit:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sl1Xsjd-FCw>

EDIBLES TO PLANT IN *September*



	North	Central	South
 EASY TO TRANSPLANT	Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Strawberry, Swiss Chard	Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive, Kale, Lettuce, Peppers, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes, Tropical Spinaches	Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive, Kale, Lettuce, Peppers, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tomatillo, Tomatoes, Tropical Spinaches
 TRANSPLANT CAREFULLY	Celery, Mustard, Spinach	Celery, Mustard, Pineapple, Spinach	Amaranth, Calabaza, Long Squash, Luffa, Mustard, Papaya, Pineapple, Seminole Pumpkin, Sweet Potatoes
 USE SEEDS	Arugula, Beans (bush, pole), Carrots, Onions (bulbing, bunching), Radish, Squashes, Turnips	Arugula, Beans (bush, lima, pole), Carrots, Cucumbers, Onions (bunching), Radish, Squashes, Turnips	Beans (bush, lima, pole), Carrots, Cucumbers, Okra, Onions (bunching), Peas (southern), Squashes, Turnips









For more information, please visit
GardeningSolutions.ifas.ufl.edu

UF/IFAS Florida Gardening Calendars

The [Gardening Calendar publications](#) on the UF/IFAS Solutions for Your Life website gives Florida gardeners a monthly guide for what to plant and do in their gardens and includes links to useful gardening websites, all based on University of Florida research and expertise. Three different editions of the calendar provide specific tips for each of Florida's climate zones—[North](#), [Central](#), and [South](#).

[What to Plant in September - University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences \(ufl.edu\)](#)

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 Moorhead at LeiAnna.Moorhead@FDACS.gov. During an emergency, ESF 17 and SART provides necessary food and water to affected areas to help protect animals, agriculture, and pets.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Training

Florida State Animal Response Coalition (FLSARC) provides Small Animal Emergency Sheltering training for Florida communities. These courses teach the unique procedures, skills, and knowledge necessary to build and operate a temporary emergency animal shelter in response to natural disasters and animal cruelty cases. These courses were created and designed by experts from many organizations including Florida SART, University of Florida Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (VETS) Team, and leadership of FLSARC. This training is state-certified by the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

Awareness Level 1	Operations Level 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">August 9 – SarasotaAugust 23 – GladesSeptember 20 – Broward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">TBD

To register, visit: <https://flsarc.org/training-classes-events>

SART-Sponsored Animal Technical Rescue Training

Florida SART sponsors a limited number of trainings annually at no cost to participants. Registrants must be Florida residents serving communities in Florida to be eligible for participation. These trainings will take place at the Florida State Fire College (11655 NW Gainesville Rd, Ocala, FL 34482). Participants are responsible for their own travel costs and meals, but registration fees are covered by Florida SART for these classes. We encourage all participants to bring their own Class C helmet with chinstrap and gloves for handling rope to training. Limited quantities of PPE may be provided by the UF VETS team.

AWR – 8 Hours	OPS – 24 Hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">October 20, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">October 21-23, 2025

To register, visit: <https://bit.ly/SART2025ATR>

SART Partners Meeting

The following meeting is by invitation only to primary representatives of SART partner agencies and are not open to the public:

- Monthly Virtual Meeting – September 24, at 10:00 a.m. via Microsoft Teams

In the News...

- [Commissioner Simpson Announces State Protection of Agricultural Land](#) (FDACS)
- [Paws, Pump, Repeat: Keeping Hearts Beating](#) (UF Veterinary Medicine)
- [Hurricane Preparedness for Forage Crops in the Southeast United States](#) (UF IFAS)



Sponsored by Florida SART

ANIMAL TECHNICAL RESCUE TRAINING

Target Audience:

Livestock Owners, Fire/
Search and Rescue, Law
Enforcement, Animal Control,
Veterinary Professionals,
Extension Agents

Location:

Florida State Fire College
11655 NW Gainesville Rd
Ocala, FL 34482

Course Fee:

Free - Participants
responsible for travel costs

Training Date

AWR-8 hours

Oct. 20, 2025

OPS-24 hours

Oct. 21-23, 2025

All trainings 8:30 AM
to 5:30 PM

CEs provided by
Florida State Fire College

Point of Contact:

Brandi Phillips
brandikphillips@ufl.edu

Register for free at
bit.ly/SART2025ATR

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





This program is funded through USDA APHIS NADPRP

For questions, contact Dr. Jimmy Tickel and Sarah Carrell at:
jimmy.tickel@ag.tamu.edu | sarah.manning@ag.tamu.edu

100% Online
& Self-Paced



**REGISTER
NOW!**



SUMMER 2025

PRODUCER DECON

CERTIFICATE TRAINING PROGRAM

Educating producers on how to utilize decontamination best practices to prepare their farms and staff for implementing prevention and response activities during a foreign animal disease outbreak.

This Program Provides Producers with Knowledge to:



**Understand
Disease Threats &
Government
Collaboration**



**Perform a
Premises
Assessment & Site
Decon Plan**



**Protect their
Livelihood &
Implement Routine
Biosecurity Practices**

Those eligible to enroll in the program include but are not limited to:

U.S. small and large-scale livestock and poultry producers, food animal and agriculture affiliates, industry site managers, extension agents and ag educators, animal feed industry personnel, and other professionals in food animal and livestock production fields.



Did You Know? SART Offers Pet-Friendly Sheltering Online Training

The Pet-Friendly Sheltering Online Training is the first of its kind to be offered in Florida. The Training gives guidance to private, local, and state entities on how to plan for and operate a pet-friendly shelter to ensure that individuals evacuating from a disaster with their household pets are accommodated.



This training includes 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 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.

Colleen Yarbrough

Florida State Animal Response Coalition

"This training will give someone with minimal experience in animal sheltering a very good starting point. My entire team will be mandated to take this course."

The four-hour course is designed for emergency managers, county employees, veterinary and animal services, and shelter volunteers. There is no charge for this 100% online course. For more information, please visit www.FLSART.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.

Ag Commissioner Encourages Floridians to Choose Pasteurized Milk Products from Florida Dairy Farmers



Following a [recent update](#) from the Florida Department of Health on reported illnesses linked to the consumption of raw milk from a Florida dairy, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Wilton Simpson and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) are encouraging Floridians to protect their health by only consuming pasteurized milk products.

"Florida's pasteurized milk supply is safe, nutritious, and closely controlled from the farm to your local grocery store," **said Commissioner of Agriculture Wilton Simpson.** "There have been no reported illnesses from pasteurized milk products in Florida, so Floridians should continue to buy and enjoy nutritious and wholesome dairy products from Florida farmers."

Milk and milk products have a wide array of nutritional benefits, but raw, unpasteurized milk can contain dangerous germs and pathogens that pose serious health risks to humans. Pasteurized dairy products are subject to rigorous safety standards that are strictly enforced by state and federal regulatory agencies. Products that undergo pasteurization are regularly inspected, tested, and held to enforceable public health regulations to ensure consumer safety.

"Pasteurization is a process that has been utilized to kill harmful pathogens in food for nearly 150 years and is the most common method utilized today to eliminate potentially harmful pathogens in milk products," **said Dr. Matt Curran, Director of FDACS' Division of Food Safety.** "Raw milk can contain dangerous pathogens like *E. coli*, *Listeria*, *Salmonella*, and others that can cause serious illness, especially in young children, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems."

Pasteurization is a widely used process where milk is heated to a specific temperature for a set time to kill harmful germs and pathogens. Raw milk and raw milk products are not pasteurized and, therefore, are at high risk for contamination. Raw milk and raw milk products are not approved for human consumption in Florida and can only be sold with a label clearly stating that the raw milk is not for human consumption. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) also recommend that consumers avoid raw milk and dairy products made from raw milk.

For more information about [Commissioner Simpson](#) and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, visit [FDACS.gov](https://fdacs.gov).

SART Resources and Links



Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza – USDA APHIS Flock Defender

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program/outbreak-illness/outbreak-illness>

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Dairy Cattle

<https://ccmedia.fdacs.gov/content/download/115892/file/2024-HPAI-Dairy-Cattle-Announcement.pdf>

Large Animal Incident Response Plan Template

<https://flsart.org/resource/TLAER>

Pet Sheltering Resources

<https://flsart.org/resource/petshelter>

Ask IFAS: Disaster Preparedness and Recovery

https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/entity/topic/disaster_preparedness_and_recovery

FDEM Vector Control Quick Guide

[https://flsart.org/pdf/Vector Control Quick Guide.pdf](https://flsart.org/pdf/Vector%20Control%20Quick%20Guide.pdf)

SART Response Equipment List and Request Information

<https://flsart.org/resource/equipmentrequest.jsp>

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** 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.

Editing Services: The Turner Network, LLC under contract with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry.

E-mail: flsart@turnernetwork.com

Associate Editor: LeiAnna Moorhead, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry.

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