



# The Sentinel

Newsletter of  
the Florida State  
Agricultural  
Response Team

August 2026



Image: New World Screwworm infection (USDA/APHIS)

## Florida Remains Vigilant as New World Screwworm Cases Rise in Texas

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) emergency restrictions on animal imports remain in place as newly identified cases of New World Screwworm (NWS) continue to rise in Texas. To date, the [number of cases has grown to 42](#). No instances of NWS have been identified in Florida at this time.

### Designated Infested Zones Expand

Florida has [designated 59 total counties in Infested Zones](#) following the detection of NWS in a domestic dog in Sutton County, Texas. Sutton, along with the buffer counties of Schleicher, Menard, Kimble, Edwards, Val Verde, and Crockett Counties were added to the infested zone list on July 20, 2026. The number of designated New Mexico counties remains unchanged at four.

### Florida Leaning Forward

FDACS is leading the effort to prevent NWS from entering Florida. On June 11, 2026, Governor DeSantis issued Executive Order 26-117 adding New World Screwworm to the State of Emergency declared in Executive Order 26-33 on February 9th of this year. The Governor stated in the June order that "immediate action is necessary to limit the impact resulting from New World Screwworm."

Subsequent to the Governor's Executive Order, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Wilton Simpson issued Emergency Rule 5CER26-7 on July 1, 2026, establishing heightened protocols for animal imports from designated high-risk areas and USDA-infested zones. Department staff are providing education and expertise to animal health professionals and shelter personnel to monitor for signs of screwworm in animals. Suspected infestations should be reported to the FDACS Division of Animal Industry (State Veterinarian's Office).

*Continued, next page.*

## Special Features of this

### Issue:

- *Hurricane Season Food Safety Tips*
- *USDA Calls on Farmers and Ranchers to Take Action as 2026 Hurricane Season Underway*
- *SART Welcomes Wendy Reynolds*

***"Helping animals affected by disaster also helps people affected by disaster."***

— Wendy Reynolds  
ESF 17/SART Lead Coordinator  
Division of Animal Industry  
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

*Read more on Page 6.*





# NEW WORLD SCREWORM(NWS) ENHANCED PROTOCOLS

June 2026

## ANIMAL MOVEMENT WITHIN FLORIDA

No enhanced NWS protocols, visit [FDACS.gov/AnimalMovement](https://fdacs.gov/AnimalMovement) for existing animal movement requirements.



## ANIMAL IMPORTS FROM NON HIGH-RISK NWS AREAS

No enhanced NWS protocols, visit [FDACS.gov/AnimalMovement](https://fdacs.gov/AnimalMovement) for existing animal movement requirements.



## ANIMAL IMPORTS FROM HIGH-RISK NWS AREAS

- Official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (OCVI), valid for 5 days from date of inspection, documenting that all animals have been inspected and found free of disease and pests, including NWS.
- Without a valid OCVI, imports will be quarantined and fines will be levied.



## ANIMAL IMPORTS FROM NWS INFESTED ZONES

- No imports of warm-blooded animals until June 12, 2026.
- After June 12, all warm-blooded animals must receive a Florida Certificate of Animal Movement and prior permission number, applied for 2 days in advance of arrival.
- Certificate will require an Official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (OCVI), valid for 5 days from date of inspection, documentation of inspection, documentation of effective treatment for NWS.
- Without a Florida Certificate of Animal Movement and required documentation, imports will be turned away at the border, beginning June 12, 2026.

For the latest information on the New World Screwworm, zone designations, and animal movement protocols, visit [FDACS.gov/NWS](https://fdacs.gov/NWS) or scan the QR code above.



## 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.



Image source: NewsWest9

### 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.

### 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).

*Continued, next page.*



## New World Screwworm (continued)

### Separating Fact from Fiction

Understanding the facts about New World Screwworm is critical to containing the spread of NWS and addressing public concern. The USDA's NWS Myth Busters fact sheet identifies and dispels common misconceptions related to Screwworm. For example, presence of fly larvae is not necessarily indicative of a Screwworm infestation. Botfly and blowfly infestations present similarly to NWS and may coexist with NWS in some instances. Examination of a specimen by an entomologist is necessary to positively identify the fly larvae species. Additionally, the publication explains that NWS is not contagious, is not a food safety concern, and that culling an entire herd due to the presence of NWS is not necessary.

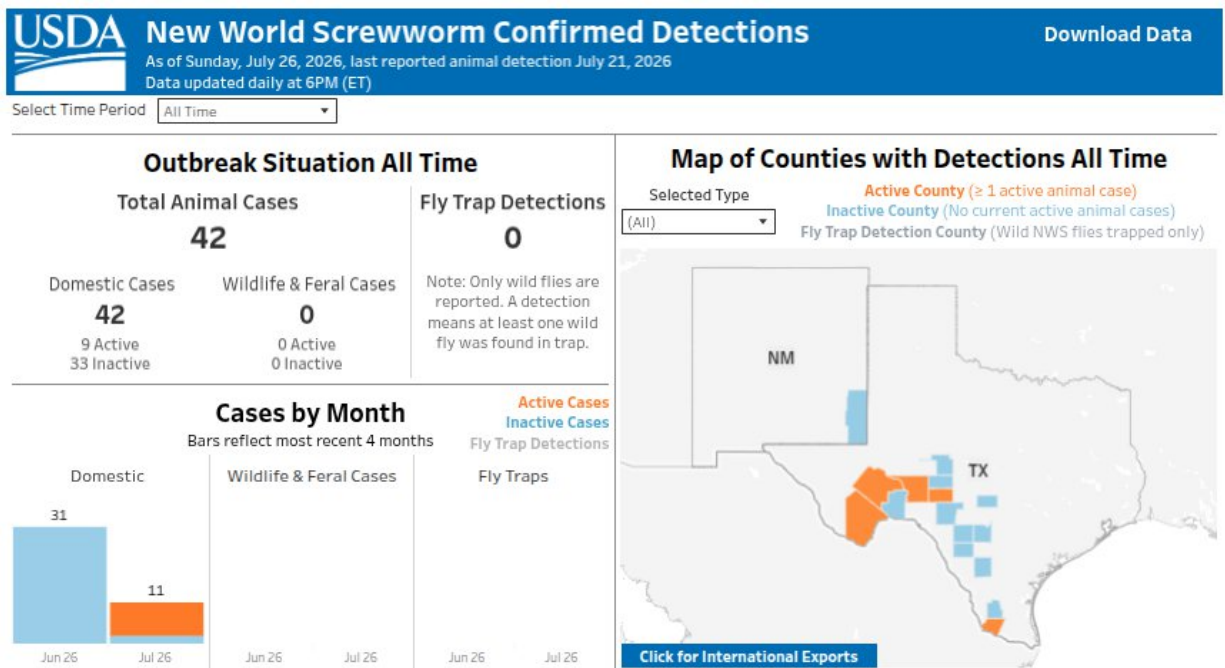
More details may be found at: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/nws-myth-busters.pdf>

### Report Suspected Cases

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

### Wildlife Reports

To report sick or injured wildlife, including a suspected New World 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](mailto:WildlifeHealthTeam@MyFWC.com).



Source: USDA/APHIS, July 27, 2026.

### New World Screwworm Resources

- [Commissioner Wilton Simpson Issues Emergency Rule to Further Protect Florida from Threat of New World Screwworm](#)
- [USDA APHIS – Information on the Screwworm Eradication Program](#)
- [FDACS – New World Screwworm Information Page](#)
- [FDA – New World Screwworm Information for Veterinarians](#)

## USDA Calls on Farmers and Ranchers to Take Action as 2026 Hurricane Season Underway

With the 2026 Atlantic hurricane season underway, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has issued preparedness guidance for farmers and ranchers in potentially affected regions. In a May 11 blog post, USDA emphasized that while federal disaster assistance programs exist for recovery, advance preparation should be producers' primary focus. The department outlined key steps to minimize damage and protect operations.

### Core Preparedness Steps

USDA recommended developing detailed emergency plans with employees and household members, including meeting points, emergency contacts, and alternate evacuation routes if infrastructure fails during storms.

For property protection, producers should secure or remove loose equipment and supplies that could become airborne in high winds. Clearing culverts, ditches, and drainage systems before peak season reduces floodwater accumulation and structural damage risks.



<https://youtu.be/tUerzFFQtZY>

### Documentation Critical for Recovery

Maintaining updated inventories of buildings, vehicles, equipment, and livestock is essential for insurance claims and federal assistance applications. Producers should photograph existing conditions and document all damage and cleanup efforts afterward.

The department also advised regularly reviewing insurance policies to confirm adequate coverage for facilities, crops, and livestock—including flood insurance. Officials noted coverage generally won't apply if policies weren't secured before disasters occur.

### Emergency Supplies and Information

USDA recommended keeping emergency supplies on hand: drinking water, non-perishable food, generators, batteries, flashlights, and fuel. Cash should be available as electronic payment systems may fail during widespread outages.

### More Information

More information, including a full list of programs, can be found on the Farmers.gov [Hurricane webpage](#).

Our [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [Disaster Assistance at a Glance](#) fact sheet, and [Farm Loan Assistance Tool](#) can help you determine program or loan options. Additionally, the [FarmRaise](#) educational hub can also help with disaster recovery program decisions.

To report losses or ask questions about available programs, contact your [local USDA Service Center](#).



## SART Welcomes Wendy Reynolds!

Please welcome Wendy Reynolds as the new SART Lead Coordinator in the Emergency Programs Section of the Division of Animal Industry. Wendy possesses a Bachelor of Science in Emergency Management and nine years of professional emergency management experience. While employed with the Florida Division of Emergency Management, she responded to multiple disasters as part of the State Emergency Response Team (SERT).

Wendy has served in a variety of roles, most recently as a SERT Liaison during Hurricanes Idalia, Debby, and Helene. Her knowledge of state-level emergency operations, understanding of the local perspective, and deep passion for serving the people of the State of Florida will be a valuable asset to ESF 17 and Florida SART.



## Florida Wildfire Update: Mid-Year 2026 Statistics

The State of Florida has recorded significant wildfire activity through mid-2026. From January 1 to July 26, the state logged 2,907 wildfires burning 246,316 acres—186,716 acres on state lands and 59,600 on federal properties.

State-managed incidents made up the majority, with 2,739 fires compared to 168 on federal lands. These figures reflect ongoing fire season challenges amid dry conditions and dense vegetation.

### Key Risk Factors & Resources

Escaped debris burning remains one of Florida's leading wildfire causes. The Florida Forest Service urges residents to comply with local burn ban regulations, which many counties have enacted given current conditions.

Residents can monitor fire risk through:

- [Fire Danger Index \(FDI\)](#) and [Keetch-Byram Drought Index \(KBDI\)](#)
- [Interactive maps showing active wildfire locations and county-enacted burn bans](#)
- [Official FDACS Forest-Wildfire portal for mitigation resources](#)

For suspected arson, report information to 1-800-342-5869 or the Florida Forestry Arson Alert Association, which offers rewards for tips leading to arrests.

As fire season continues, officials encourage Floridians to stay informed, follow burn restrictions, and exercise caution with outdoor burning activities.

For more information, visit: <https://www.fdacs.gov/Forest-Wildfire/Wildland-Fire/Current-Wildfire-Information>

# 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"><li>• August 29, Citrus County</li><li>• September 12-13, Online Virtual</li><li>• October 3, Taylor County</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• August 8-9, Palm Beach County</li></ul> |

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

## PIE Center and Florida EDEN to Host Hurricane Readiness Webinar

Angela "Angie" Enyedi, Warning Coordination Meteorologist with the National Weather Service Jacksonville, will address seasonal hurricane forecasts, current tropical weather conditions and address lessons learned from past tropical events. Forecast products from the National Weather Service and National Hurricane Center will be showcased and participants will learn where to access these online resources and how to properly interpret them to guide educated personal safety decisions.

**Date:** August 5, 2026

**Time:** 12:00 PM EDT

**Speaker:** Angela "Angie" Enyedi, National Weather Service Jacksonville

**Hosted by:** FL EDEN and the UF/IFAS PIE Center

To receive a Zoom link, visit the [registration page](#).



## In the News...

- [Commissioner Wilton Simpson Announces Arrest of Individual Accused of Illegally Importing Livestock From High-Risk New World Screwworm Area \(FDACS\)](#)
- [Invasive Insect Spreads Across Florida Raising Concerns for Cattle Farmers \(Bay News 9\)](#)
- [Film Screening and Panel Discussion to Explore Hurricane Recovery and Community Resilience in Cedar Key \(UF/IFAS\)](#)
- [Healthy Infant Microbiomes Appear to Protect Against Malaria \(UF/Veterinary Medicine\)](#)



## SART Offers Pet-Friendly Sheltering Online Training – Register Now!

The Pet-Friendly Sheltering Online Training is the first of its kind to be offered in Florida. The training provides 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.

### Paula Carroll

Jefferson County, Florida

"I feel that with this training we will succeed... I am much more equipped."

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](http://www.FLSART.org).



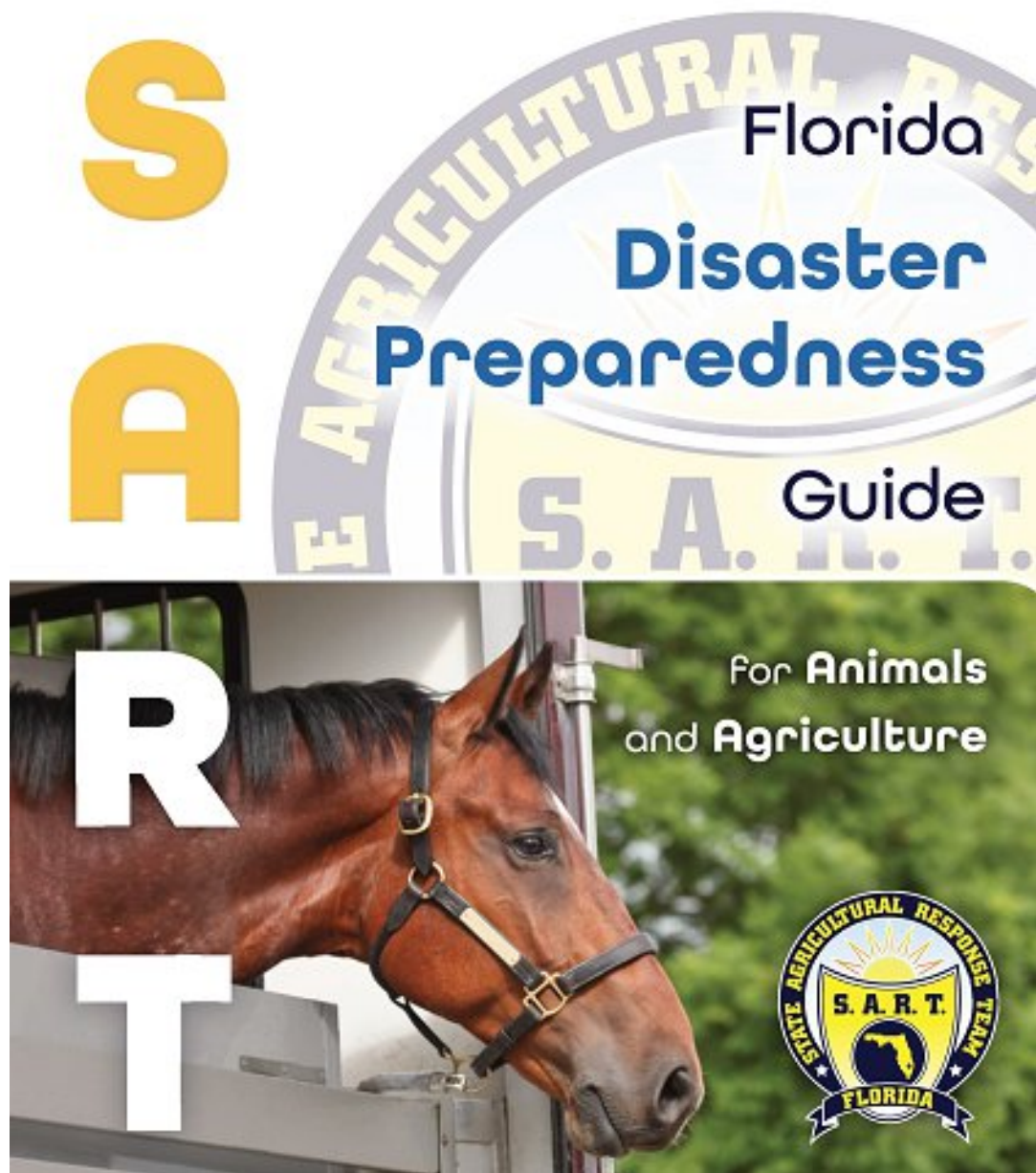


# The Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture

The [Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture](#) 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](https://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.

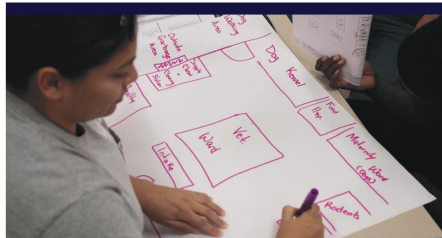
## Become A Volunteer

To apply to the Florida Veterinary Corps, visit [www.FLSART.org](http://www.FLSART.org)



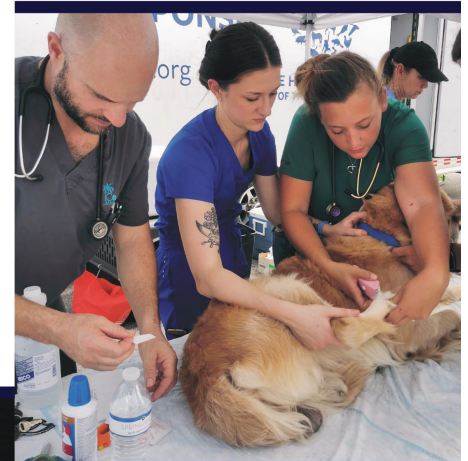
Florida VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

**UF** College of  
Veterinary Medicine  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



**Florida  
Veterinary  
Corps**

*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](http://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

**UF | IFAS**  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

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.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sl1Xsjd-FCw>

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 *August*

| North                                                                                                                                                                                       | Central                                                                               | South                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <br><b>EASY TO TRANSPLANT</b><br>Eggplant, Kale, Peppers, Endive, Tomatillo, Tomatoes, Tropical Spinaches  | Eggplant, Endive, Peppers, Sugarcane, Tomatoes, Tropical Spinaches                    | Eggplant, Peppers, Sugarcane, Tomatillo, Tomatoes, Tropical Spinaches   |
| <br><b>TRANSPLANT CAREFULLY</b><br>Mustard                                                                 | Pineapple                                                                             | Amaranth, Calabaza, Papaya, Pineapple, Seminole Pumpkin, Sweet Potatoes |
| <br><b>USE SEEDS</b><br>Beans (bush, lima, pole), Carrots, Cucumbers, Onions (bunching), Squashes, Turnips | Beans (bush, lima, pole), Carrots, Okra, Onions (bunching), Peas (southern), Squashes | Okra, Pumpkin                                                           |



UF IFAS Extension  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



Gardening  
SOLUTIONS

For more information, please visit  
[GardeningSolutions.ifas.ufl.edu](http://GardeningSolutions.ifas.ufl.edu)

## UF/IFAS Florida Gardening Calendars

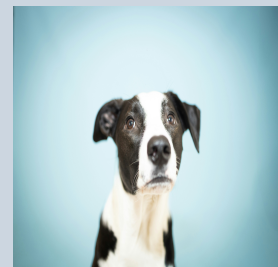
The [Gardening Calendar publications](#) on the UF/IFAS Solutions for Your Life website gives Florida gardeners a monthly guide for what to plant and do in their gardens and includes links to useful gardening websites, all based on University of Florida research and expertise. Three different editions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

[What to Plant in August - 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](mailto: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.



## 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.

### Hurricane Season Food Safety Tips



Follow these tips to protect yourself, your family and your pets from foodborne illness in the event of a storm.

- [Hurricane Preparedness Checklist](#)
- [Take our Quick Hurricane Preparedness Checklist survey](#)
- [Water Needs for Power Outages Flyer](#)
- [Take our quick Water Needs for Power Outages Flyer survey](#)



<https://youtu.be/FhhTVYrpsZs>



## SART Resources and Links



Image source: USDA

### 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](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/entity/topic/disaster_preparedness_and_recovery)

### SART Response Equipment List and Request Information

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

### FDEM Vector Control Quick Guide

<https://flsart.org/pdf/Vector%20Control%20Quick%20Guide.pdf>

Please log in and update your membership information online at:

[www.FLSART.org](http://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](http://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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