



*Diversity in research programs to meet the needs of the diverse agriculture in North Florida*

**UF | IFAS**  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

North Florida Research and Education Center  
Quincy, Marianna and Live Oak

**99<sup>th</sup>** UF/IFAS  
NORTH FLORIDA  
RESEARCH &  
EDUCATION  
CENTER  
**Anniversary**  
1921-2020



*The Systems Research Center*

<https://nfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/>



*From the Director's Desk*

Here we are in August and still feeling the effects of the COVID 19 Pandemic. North Florida REC is in Stage 3 of the pandemic, which means our research activities in the field are moving forward without being hindered by new safety and social distancing protocols. We were hoping to start having extension events at the Center if we could provide social distancing and have all participants wear face coverings; however, the rise in COVID cases has forced us to pause these plans and continue to organize and coordinate virtual events. We are allowing laboratory activities, but they have been curtailed to allow a safe working zone for individuals of 150 ft<sup>2</sup> in laboratories and offices. To maintain a safer work environment, many of our employees are still working remotely. Nonetheless, through these challenges during this new reality, our work is effectively getting done.

One major announcement to make is that UF/IFAS is now under new leadership. Dr. Jack Payne retired on July 12th after serving ten years as UF/IFAS Senior Vice President. Dr. Payne led UF/IFAS through a period of substantial growth of the Institute and expansion of our mission across Florida and beyond our borders. He is replaced by Dr. Scott Angle who has over 35 years of service in agricultural science. Prior to becoming our new Vice President, Dr. Angle was Administrator of the USDA's National Institute for Food and Agriculture, which followed his being Dean for the College of Agriculture and Environment at the University of Georgia for ten years. We were fortunate to have the leadership of Dr. Payne and we can expect great things to come under the leadership of Dr. Angle.

1

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## *Updates for some of our individual research and extension programs*

### WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND ECOLOGY

Dr. Holly Ober, our Wildlife Ecologist and Conservationist at NFREC-Quincy, recently became the Extension Program Leader for Natural Resources. No problem: she will remain at NFREC-Quincy and you can expect her research and extension programs to remain active.

### PLANT PATHOLOGY

The NFREC Plant Diagnostic Clinic is now open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. The NFREC front gate is open during this time, but the May Building where the clinic is located remains closed to visitors. A cooler is placed next to the front gate.

Please call (875-850-7140) or e-mail ([fbiriarte@ufl.edu](mailto:fbiriarte@ufl.edu)) before submitting the sample. We prefer you send the sample by mail (FedEx overnight or UPS ideally as it will be delivered daily at NFREC; while USPS mail will be only picked up once in 2 days from the post office).

#### Important Additional Notes:

- Do not drop samples outside of hours of operation as your sample will deteriorate or get lost.
- Turnaround time might be longer than usual in some cases but no longer than 6-8 days. We appreciate your patience and understanding.
- Diagnostic results that require sequencing will not be available at this time.



*For additional information, contact Dr. Mathews Paret, Associate Professor of Plant Pathology at [paret@ufl.edu](mailto:paret@ufl.edu) or Dr. Fanny Iriarte, Plant Disease Diagnostician at [fbiriarte@ufl.edu](mailto:fbiriarte@ufl.edu).*

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**Tung Trees-**

Tung oil production is making a comeback in our area as a fast-growing potential alternative crop. We are conducting research to determine efficient fertilization regimes and our Extension program is addressing other cultivation and marketing needs. We are planning a small “Tung Tree BMP Workshop and Tour” for December 4, 2020, following all CDC and UF precautions. Please see the NFREC website for details. <https://nfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/>



Left: Seven-year old flowering tung trees in production at the Leon Co. fertilization research study. Right: Eight-foot-tall tung trees in July of the second growing season at the fertilization study in Jackson Co.

**Pine Straw-**

Pine straw harvesting is an important annual income for owners of slash and longleaf pine plantations, but nutrient removals are a concern. Drs. Osiecka and Minogue have been working for more than a decade to develop nutrient management guidelines that ensure soil and water protection and the sustainability of this practice. Please see our recent peer reviewed EDIS publication “Guide to Fertilization for Pine Straw Production on Coastal Plain Sites”.

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr395>

**Forestry Site Prep-**

This summer has been very busy as many are preparing land for the December – February pine planting season and most of the work is on land impacted by Hurricane Michael. We are not able to get to all properties with travel restrictions, but we can work though or avoid problems together.

Call me at my cell 850.443.0027, Dr. Pat Minogue.

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### *Awards and Honors*

- **Drs. Ann Blount (NFREC-Quincy) and Ron Barnett (Emeritus Faculty at NFREC-Quincy)** were recognized by UF/IFAS for receiving a United States Variety Protection Certificate for Triticale '1143'.

### *Announcements and Updates*

- ✓ The 2020 Bull Test received 103 bulls on the July 21st delivery date. The test will be initiated on August 11th and 12th in the Beef Efficiency Barn and will be terminated following the pasture phase of the test on Dec. 1st and 2nd. Sale of the consigned bulls will be on January 16th at the NFREC-Marianna Pavilion.
- ✓ We are excited to announce that the new meeting pavilion at NFREC-Suwanee Valley will be breaking ground in a few weeks.
- ✓ Our new sample processing room in the new equipment shed at NFREC-Suwanee Valley is in the process of being finished and will soon be operational. This will greatly enhance our research capabilities at the Unit.
- ✓ Construction of a new greenhouse at NFREC-Quincy will begin in a few months. The 3-bay greenhouse will replace the aged greenhouses that were destroyed by Hurricane Michael.

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## *Events*

*Scheduling of in-person events at the Center have diminished because of COVID-19, but we do have virtual events to announce.*

- Gadsden County Extension will be conducting online pesticide applicators license exams at 8:30 am on Aug. 6th, Sept. 3rd, Oct. 1st, Nov. 5th, Dec. 3rd, Jan. 7th and Feb. 4th.
- We will co-host a virtual meeting of the Cold Hardy Citrus Association on Sept 23rd. Information will be forthcoming on time and registration for the meeting.

I look forward to delivering future e-newsletters.

*Glen Aiken*  
*Center Director*

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