



*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

**98<sup>th</sup>** UF/IFAS  
**NORTH FLORIDA**  
**RESEARCH &**  
**EDUCATION**  
**CENTER**  
**Anniversary**  
1921-2019

*The Systems Research Center*



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



*From the Director's Desk*

Welcome to this inaugural issue of the NFREC e-newsletter!

For this first newsletter, I will reflect on events and activities during 2019, but my goal in the future is to update on a quarterly basis. Distribution of the e-newsletter will be across UF/IFAS and our many valued stakeholders. We will provide announcements of future events, updates on our research and extension programs, as well as any newsworthy items.

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# HURRICANE MICHAEL



I spent much of 2019 praising the efforts of the farm and maintenance crews at NFREC – Marianna and Quincy in expediting our recovery from Hurricane Michael. We are about 95% recovered from the storm and we owe our recovery to the rapid response of UF/IFAS Administrators, and to the crews from Gainesville, Live Oak, Citra and Ona who volunteered instantly after the hurricane to assist us in meeting our immediate needs. Without this help, it would have taken a long time before we saw “some light at the end of the tunnel.” Special thanks go to Facilities Director, Kevin Heinicka, and his Program Manager for NW Florida, Shawn Cody, for placing us as a high priority.



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## We had additions and retirement of faculty at the Center.

UF/IFAS NFREC was fortunate to hire Dr. Angela Gonella-Diaza as our new cattle reproductive physiologist in Marianna.

Ms. Rhonda (De) Broughton also was hired as our row crop RSA in Live Oak after serving as the Ag Agent for Suwannee County.

Both these faculty have made considerable progress in launching productive programs.



Dr. Angela Gonella-Diaza  
Assistant Professor  
Beef Cattle Reproduction

Ms. De Broughton  
RSA Row Crops

Dr. Pete Anderson (Quincy), our tree nut and fruit horticulturalist, retired in June and we are in the process of replacing him in this important position.

One of our entomologists, Dr. Joe Funderburk (Quincy) is scheduled to retire this summer.



Dr. Peter C. Andersen  
Horticulture

Dr. Joseph E. Funderburk  
Entomology

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Dr. Holly Ober  
Wildlife Ecology and  
Conservation

Dr. Holly Ober (Quincy) accepted to serve as the Interim UF/IFAS Program Leader for Natural Resources. She will maintain her wildlife management and conservation program, so she will be very busy.

Despite Hurricane Michael, it has been a productive year at NFREC. A major emphasis for our research and extension programs will be in evaluating alternative crops. Drs. Wright and Small (Quincy) and their research teams have made considerable progress in their multi-state evaluation of carinata, an alternative biofuel crop. Dr. Nicholas DiLorenzo (Marianna) is conducting valuable research to evaluate carinata meal as a co-product for feeding livestock. Dr. Josh Freeman (Quincy) concluded his first year of research with hemp. He also is involved in in-service training of ag agents that are learning cultural practices for this alternative crop. Dr. Pat Minogue (Quincy) initiated a project to evaluate the feasibility of increasing production of tung oil in North Florida.

We are expanding our extension effort into cover crops and sod-based crop rotation systems. The developer of the sod-based rotation system, Dr. David Wright (Quincy), is working with Drs. Jose Dubuex (Marianna), Cheryl Mackowiak (Quincy) and others in evaluating the addition of bahiagrass and cattle grazing in the rotation with cotton and peanuts. So far, they have found positive benefits on soil health and crop yields when adding cattle grazing as part of the rotation. This is a message that definitely needs to be heard by our row crop producers. Dr. Charles Barrett and Mr. Joel Love initiated a 15-yr research/demonstration project on the sod-based rotation system at NFREC-Live Oak.

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Dr. Ann Blount  
Agronomy

Dr. Ann Blount (Quincy) released five new forage and grain cultivars in 2019 by the NFREC and Agronomy Department. These include two new cereal ryes (FL 2X 405 and FL 2X 406), a new triticale (FL 08128) and two new oat cultivars (FLLA0915-U1 and FL0717-R2) for use for grazing, for wildlife, as a silage or cover crop.



We continue to address problems and concerns of Florida farmers and ranchers. The threat of Rose Rosette Virus on the rose industry in Florida and its mitigation became a major focus of Dr. Mathews Paret (Quincy) and his team. The monitoring of Asian Citrus Psyllid in North Florida was increased during the summer by Dr. Xavier Martini's (Quincy) team. Drs. Ann Blount (Quincy), Sunny Liao (Quincy) and Cheryl Mackowiak (Quincy) continue to study the potential threat of mycotoxins in forages grazed by Florida cattle. Their team is collaborating with a number of Florida ranches in conducting this research.

A new equipment barn with an enclosed sample processing building are almost completed at NFREC-Live Oak, which will provide needed equipment storage and the capability to process samples collected by campus and NFREC programs. Planning and design have been completed for constructing a meeting pavilion at NFREC-Live Oak. Special thanks go to Bob Hochmuth, Assistant Director, for raising donations from numerous individuals and group for this project.

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# past events

- NFREC-Quincy held their annual Art, Garden and Farm Fall Festival in October with a record number of over 1800 attendees. This event continues to grow each year.
- Dr. Wright and his team held their Carinata Summit at Quincy in June with approximately 80 people in attendance.
- Dr Barry Tillman also had approximately 80 growers and industry leaders at his annual Peanut Field Day at NFREC – Marianna.
- A few weeks later, De Broughton held a Peanut Field Day at NFREC – Live Oak with an attendance of 150 people.
- Kevin Athearn and De Broughton held their first workshop in May on alternative crops for North Florida workshop in Live Oak in May. The workshop attracted 85 growers.
- NFREC-Marianna held their annual bull sale following the bull test on January 19th, with 90 bulls being consigned.

This is a very short list of the numerous events held at our three campuses.

I look forward to delivering future quarterly e-newsletters.

**Glen Aiken**  
**Center Director**

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## *Awards and Honors in 2019*

- Dr. Ann Blount (Quincy) was awarded **Florida Woman of the Year** by FDACS for her work in advancing agriculture in the State. She received this honor from the Commissioner Nikki Fried at a special luncheon during the Florida State Fair.
- Dr. David Wright (Quincy) received an **Honorary Doctorate** from Poznan University of Life Sciences in Poland. This followed many years of his training their faculty and teaching their students on no-till and sod based crop rotation systems.
- Dr. Jose Dubuex (Marianna) was named **Researcher of the Year** by the Florida Cattlemen Association at their annual convention.
- Dr. Mathews Paret (Quincy) received the **Global Fellows Award** from the University of Florida.
- De Broughton (leader), Charles Barrett, Kevin Athearn, Dr. Bob Hochmuth and Dan Fenneman received the **Agriculture Awareness and Appreciation Team Award** (“Promoting Agriculture in the Suwannee Valley”) from the Florida and National Associations of County Ag Agents.
- De Broughton was on a team that was a finalist for the **Search for Excellence Team Award** (“Tobacco Production Education in North Florida”) from the Florida and National Associations of County Ag Agents.
- Dr. Bob Hochmuth and Kevin Athearn were on a team that was awarded the **Communications Award** for the website category (UF/IFAS Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Website) from the Florida and National Associations of County Ag Agents.

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## *NFREC Employee Awards for 2019*

**NFREC Hall of Farm Award:** Harvey and John Suber of Gadsden County

*The award recognizes those stakeholders that have provided support and dedication to the Center that is evident by friendship, mentorship and financial support of our programs.*

**Innovation Award:** Melanie Kalischuk (Quincy)

**Safety Award:** Susannah Da Silva (Quincy)

**Teamwork Award:** NFREC-Marianna Hurricane Michael Recovery Team

**Distinguished Service Award-Marianna:** Alan Toole

**Distinguished Service Award-Live Oak:** Shirley Bradley

**Distinguished Service Award-Quincy:** Perry Hostetter

**Employee of the Year:** Russell Hunter (Quincy)

## **UPCOMING** *Events*

### *January, February and March 2020*

#### Quincy

- January 21 Agronomic In-Service Training - Drs. Cheryl Mackowiak and David Wright  
March 12 Citrus Health Forum – Dr. Xavier Martini

#### Marianna

- January 10 Florida Heifer Development Field Day - Kalyn Waters and Dr. Angela Gonella-Diaza  
January 18 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Bull Sale – Dr. Nicolas Dilorenzo

#### Live Oak

- February 7 Small Scale Mushroom Production - Small Farms Academy  
February 13 Soil Health & Cover Crop Workshop - Small Farms Academy  
March 10-11 Starting a Successful Hydroponic Business - Small Farms Academy  
March 13-14 Starting a Successful Hydroponic Business - Small Farms Academy

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