



Fast Facts

Vol. 17 No. 1

Timely Communication For Farm Bureau Leaders

January 9, 2009

Published by Florida Farm Bureau • P.O. Box 147030 • Gainesville, FL 32614-7030 • (352) 378-8100 • <FloridaFarmBureau.org>

FARM BUREAU MEMBERS HEADED FOR SAN ANTONIO

More than 5,000 Farm Bureau members from across the nation are expected to attend the American Farm Bureau Federation's 90th annual convention, Jan. 11-14, in San Antonio. While in the Lone Star State, they will receive up-to-the-minute updates on the most important issues shaping agriculture today. The theme of the 2009 convention is "Forward Farm Bureau," which encompasses issues that are relevant to farmers and ranchers involved in all sectors of agriculture. In keeping with the theme, the convention features 14 conferences developed to assist members in sharpening their understanding of a broad range of issues that affect them. Included are sessions on the turbulent global economy and how it relates to U.S. agriculture, the urgent need for livestock producers to become activists, the continuing debate over biofuels, crop and livestock outlooks for 2009 and much more. Several professional development sessions also will be presented. The convention concludes with the annual meeting of state Farm Bureau delegates discussing and voting on the positions that will guide AFBF in 2009. Those attending are reminded that Florida Farm Bureau will host a breakfast for its members at 7 a.m. on Sunday, Jan. 11 at the San Antonio Marriott Riverwalk. **See both the February and March issues of *Florida Agriculture* for convention coverage. Reports also will be available online at <http://FloridaFarmBureau.org>.**

WINTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE CONFERENCE SCHEDULED

FFB Director of Ag Policy Frankie Hall reports that members of all 16 Florida Farm Bureau advisory committees will gather at the University Hilton in Gainesville on Jan. 27 for the Winter Advisory Committee Conference. The theme for the conference is "Navigating the Tides." Among those on the agenda to speak are FFB President John Hoblick, AFBF President Bob Stallman, Marian Johnson, vice president for political strategy with the Florida Chamber and Dr. Joe Joyce, UF/IFAS executive associate vice president. After lunch, participants will break up into committees and do a brainstorming and prioritizing exercise. For more information, contact Adam Basford at (352) 378-8100, ext. 1449.

ARRINGTON NAMED TO UF/IFAS POST

Larry Arrington, dean and director of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension, has been named interim senior vice president for agriculture and natural resources. He succeeds Jimmy Cheek, who in October was named chancellor of the University of Tennessee. Arrington will assume his new position Jan. 12. "Dr. Arrington's 28 years of experience as a faculty member and administrator for UF/IFAS will ensure an orderly transition in the top leadership of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences," said FFB President John L. Hoblick. "Dr. Arrington's record and experience equip him to deal with the challenges UF/IFAS will continue to face." Arrington grew up in Plant City, where he was active in 4-H and FFA. He received his bachelor's degree in agricultural education from UF; a master's degree in education from the University of Georgia; and a doctorate in agricultural education from The Ohio State University. Arrington came to UF in 1981 as a faculty member in agricultural education and communication. He served as the district extension director from 1991 to 1997. He was appointed associate dean for Extension in 1997 and has served as dean since 2003. "Farm Bureau appreciates Dr. Cheek's accomplishments," Hoblick said. "We are looking forward to working closely with Dr. Arrington and the rest of the UF/IFAS leadership team." A start date for the national search for the senior vice president position has not been set.

FARM BUREAU ANNUAL REPORT/CALENDAR AVAILABLE

The 2008 Florida Farm Bureau Annual Report/2009 Calendar is now available. The calendar contains important dates for both the state and county organizations. Copies of the annual report/calendar have already been distributed with additional copies available through FFB field personnel. The calendar features photography (both winning and non-winning) submitted by Florida Farm Bureau members as part of the 2008 Member Photo Contest. For more information contact Chris Miller at (352) 374-1535.

FLORIDA FARMERS NAMED TO NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Thirteen Florida farmers and ranchers have been named to several advisory committees of the American Farm Bureau Federation. The purpose of the Advisory Committees is to gather facts and evaluate agricultural opportunities that benefit the whole of American agriculture and to serve in an advisory capacity to the American Farm Bureau president, Bob Stallman, and the organization's board of directors. "These appointments are an incredible opportunity for Florida agriculture," said Frankie Hall, director of

agricultural policy for Florida Farm Bureau. "This is a testament not only to the knowledge and experience of our member farmers but to the significant roles they play in their respective areas of agriculture on a national scale. We are proud to have them as Florida Farm Bureau leaders and as representatives for national agriculture as well." The Florida Farm Bureau members and their respective committees are: **Richard Carroll** of St. Petersburg, Ag Nursery and Greenhouse; **Ronald Slay** of Center Hill, Aquaculture; **Matt Harrison** of Arcadia, Beef Cattle; **Brant Schirard, Jr.** of Ft. Pierce and **Kyle Story** of Babson Park, Citrus; **Bill Benham** of Astatula, Equine; **Chris Lyons** of Mayo, Hay and Forage; **Steve Cantu** of Zolfo Springs, Honey / Apiculture; **Roland Yee** of Port St. Lucie, Horticulture; **Michelle Williamson** of Sydney, Labor; **Jeffrey Pittman** of Bascom, Peanut; **Carl Perry** of Moore Haven, Sugar; and **Damon Deas** of Jennings, Tobacco. Schirard will serve as chair of the Citrus Committee.

FOOD CHECK OUT WEEK SET FOR FEB. 15-21

FFB Manager of Public Relations Programs **Kathy Richardson** reports that in 2009 and future years, **Food Check-Out Week will be held the third full week (Sunday through Saturday) of February.** The 2009 Food Check-Out Week is scheduled for Feb. 15-21. A new logo, promotional materials, consumer-focused messages and media talking points are being developed to support the new theme and will be available in advance of Food Check-Out Week. The theme for Food Check-Out Week is "Stretching Your Grocery Dollar With Healthy, Nutritious Food." Additional details and background information about the new program will be distributed via e-mail and posted on Silo, AFBF's intranet Web site, as it becomes available. Promotional materials will be available to order online from the Voice of Agriculture Web site at: <http://fb-orders.com/afbf/>. For more information contact Richardson at (352) 374-1533.

UF/IFAS PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE ONLINE

FFB Assistant Director of Ag Policy **Joshua Craft** reports that three new UF/IFAS publications dealing with landscape and irrigation ordinances are now available online. These publications (with online links) are *Frequently Asked Questions about Landscape Irrigation for Florida-Friendly Landscaping Ordinances* (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/WQ142>); *Frequently Asked Questions about Landscape Fertilization for Florida-Friendly Landscaping Ordinances* (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/WQ143>); and *Frequently Asked Questions about Florida-Friendly Landscaping* (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/WQ144>). These online publications address common concerns related to water, irrigation, fertilizers, best management practices and landscapes, and their maintenance. They draw on extensive UF/IFAS research and were created to help guide local government officials in developing regulations based on science.

NEW FARM BUREAU PRESIDENT IN COLLIER COUNTY

FFB Assistant Director of Field Services **Eva Webb** reports that **Gina Blocker** was elected president of Collier County Farm Bureau. She is the first female president of this county Farm Bureau. **Russell Priddy** has also joined the Collier County Farm Bureau board of directors.

WORKSHOP ON ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Florida Certified Organic Growers and Consumers, Inc. (FOG) will partner with UF/IFAS to present a free workshop Feb. 5 at the Manatee County Extension Office in Palmetto for farmers interested in transitioning to organic production. The workshop is part of a FOG program that offers farmers an opportunity to receive free technical assistance to transition to organic production. The program is open to Florida fruit or vegetable producers who are interested in reducing pesticide use or switching to lower-risk alternatives. Those interested can contact **Matt Vargas** at (352) 377-6345. More information and the program application can be found at <http://www.foginfo.org/epa.php>.

TURKEY HUNT BIDDING HEATS UP

The Florida Farm Bureau's Young Farmer and Rancher program is auctioning off a weekend turkey hunt with Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Charles H. Bronson. The highest bidder will purchase a two-person, guided turkey hunt at Evans Farm in North Florida. The hunt will take place the weekend of March 21 or March 28, 2009, based on Bronson's schedule. Hunters will arrive on Friday afternoon and depart after the Sunday morning hunt. The hunt will include full accommodations and a guide service. Bids will be accepted until midnight, Eastern Time, on Friday, Jan. 30, 2009. The auction is being conducted entirely on-line at the Florida Farm Bureau Federation's Web site, <http://FloridaFarmBureau.org>. Click on the photo of the turkey on the left side of the home page. **At press time, the top bid stood at \$1,000.**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Farm Bureau Day is scheduled for March 17 at the Leon County Civic Center in Tallahassee. For more information contact **Chris Scovotto** at (850) 222-2557. • • • **The Field to the Hill** trip to Washington, D.C., is scheduled for May 11-13. For more information, contact **Adam Basford** at (352) 378-8100, ext. 1449.