



Fast Facts

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Timely Communication For Farm Bureau Leaders

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WIN VACATION ACCOMMODATIONS AT THE PALM ISLAND RESORT

Becoming a Facebook fan of *FloridAgriculture Magazine* could win you vacation accommodations at the Palm Island Resort on Florida's southwest coast. Full details will be included in a story prepared by Executive Editor Rod Hemphill in the August issue. If you want to jump aboard early, go to Facebook.com and do a search for *FloridAgriculture Magazine*. When you get to the *FloridAgriculture* page, simply sign up to be a fan. To enter via Facebook you need to be a Facebook member. An alternate way to participate will be announced in the August issue. Paid employees of FFBF and their immediate families are not eligible to enter (but are welcome to become fans).

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FFB Director of Ag Policy Frankie Hall reports that a complete slate of Advisory Committee meetings has been scheduled: **Apiculture**, 7/28/2009, FFB State Office Board Room, Gainesville; **Aquaculture**, 8/20/2009, FFB Office Board Room, Gainesville; **Beef**, 8/7/2009, Florida Cattlemen's Association, Kissimmee; **Citrus**, 8/20/2009, Lee Civic Center, North Ft. Myers; **Dairy**, 8/25/2009, FFB State Office Board Room, Gainesville; **Environmental Horticulture**, 8/12/2009, Mid Florida Research & Education Center, Apopka; **Equine**, 7/23/2009, Volusia County Farm Bureau, Deland; **Forestry**, 8/18/2009, Suwannee County Farm Bureau, Live Oak; **Labor**, 8/10/2009, Hillsborough County Farm Bureau, Valrico; **Oversight**, 9/10/2009, FFB State Office Board Room, Gainesville; **Peanut/Cotton**, 8/21/2009, Jackson County Ag Conference Center, Marianna; **Sod**, 8/25/2009, Florida Cattlemen's Association, Kissimmee; **Sugar**, 8/25/2009, Everglades Research & Education Center, Belle Glade; **Tax**, 8/13/2009, FFB State Office Insurance Conference Room, Gainesville; **Vegetable**, 8/6/2009, FFB State Office Board Room, Gainesville; **Water/Natural Resources**, 8/27/2009, FFB State Office Board Room, Gainesville. For more information contact **Karen Purser** at 352-374-1543.

FUN SHOOT SCHEDULED FOR NEXT MONTH

The inaugural Palm Beach County Fun Shoot is scheduled for Aug. 22 at the Quail Creek Plantation in Okeechobee. Sponsorships are available. For more information contact Lewanna Caruso at (561) 498-5200 or e-mail her at pbcfb1@bellsouth.net.

STILL TIME TO REGISTER FOR COST SHARING PROGRAM

FFB Assistant Director of Ag Policy Andrew Walmsley reports that there is still time to sign up for the Florida Division of Forestry Southern Pine Beetle Prevention Cost-Share Program for non-industrial private forest landowners in 2009. Applications will be accepted during a sign-up period that extends through Aug 12. Program information and application materials are available at <http://www.fl-dof.com>. Click on the SPB link under "Hot Topics." Hard copies of application materials are available at DOF County Forester offices.

AQUACULTURE STIMULUS MONEY AVAILABLE

Agriculture Commissioner Charles H. Bronson recently announced that Florida aquaculturists can apply for federal stimulus money to offset high feed prices experienced during 2008. Bronson's office has mailed Aquaculture Grant Program applications to approximately 600 aquaculturists in Florida. "Sky-high feed costs in 2008 triggered fish farm closings throughout the Southeast," Bronson said. "We are moving these funds to Florida farmers as quickly as we can and we are very appreciative of the opportunity to expedite this federal program." Florida was allocated \$341,806 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as the state's portion of \$50 million feed stimulus funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. All of the funds will be distributed to qualified applicants on a pro-rata basis; none of the funds will be used for program administration. Principal farming segments include tropical ornamental fish, shellfish, food fish (catfish, tilapia, and hybrid striped bass), reptiles (alligators and turtles),

baitfish and game fish. Aquaculturists who apply must return completed applications to the Aquaculture Grant Program, 1203 Governor's Square Boulevard, Suite 501, Tallahassee, Florida 32301-2961, by 5 p.m. on July 24.

RESTRICTIONS ON IMPORTED ANIMALS

Agriculture Commissioner Charles H. Bronson has placed restrictions on the importation of animals from states affected with Vesicular Stomatitis following a confirmed case in Texas, the first such case reported in the United States since 2006. Vesicular Stomatitis is a highly contagious, viral disease that affects horses, cattle, swine and occasionally sheep, goats and deer. It is difficult to distinguish between this virus and foot and mouth disease, another devastating livestock disease found outside the United States. The U.S. Department of Agriculture National Veterinary Services Laboratories have confirmed the finding of a positive horse, with clinical signs on a ranch in Starr County, Texas. Hoofed animals entering Florida from Texas will require prior permission for entry and must be accompanied by an official certificate of veterinary inspection.

AG-VOCATE NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

FFB Manager of P.R. Programs Kathy Richardson shares this report: Do you know someone who is an outspoken defender of agriculture in Florida? Has this person done something to help the industry within the last year? Then it's time to nominate him or her for the Florida Ag Institute's AG-Vocate Award. This award recognizes an individual who effectively communicates with opinion leaders and the general public, thereby increasing recognition of, and appreciation for, the important contributions agriculture makes to Florida's economy and environment. Candidates for the AG-Vocate must have an affiliation with Florida's agricultural industry as a farmer, producer, grower or an affiliated allied industry. All candidates must reside in Florida and represent a Florida-based industry and interests. For complete guidelines, visit the Ag Institute Web site at <http://www.aiflorida.org> or contact **Scott Wallin** at swallin@floridamilk.com. Entries must be received by Aug. 14.

AG WOMAN OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

Nominations for the "Woman of the Year in Agriculture" award are now being accepted. The award, now in its 25th year, recognizes women who have made outstanding contributions to Florida agriculture. "This award spotlights the vital role of women in Florida agriculture and serves to encourage other women to get involved in the business," said **Agriculture Commissioner Charles H. Bronson**. The award will be presented on Feb. 4, 2010, during the opening-day luncheon of the Florida State Fair in Tampa. For more information about the "Woman of the Year in Agriculture" award including screening criteria and biographies of previous winners, or to obtain nomination forms, call **Richard Gunnels** at (850) 488-3022 or visit <http://www.florida-agriculture.com/agwoman/index.htm>.

COLLETTI JOINS FAMA STAFF

Christian Colletti has been hired as assistant operations manager by the Florida Agricultural Marketing Association (FAMA), the direct-marketing subsidiary of the Gainesville-based Florida Farm Bureau Federation. Colletti attended high school in Oviedo and later attended the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, on a shooting scholarship, majoring in wildlife biology. He later studied criminal justice at Valencia Community College. Colletti will assist with sales to Farm Bureau members through the Farm Bureau Buyers' Club and will be responsible for billing, sales, customer relations, product acquisition, distribution of FAMA products and record keeping, according to **FAMA Director Roy Singleton**.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The Association of Florida Conservation Districts Annual Meeting and Conference is scheduled for August 7-8 at the Hyatt Regency Riverfront Hotel in Jacksonville. • • • **The FFB District 8 Leadership Meeting** will take place on August 28, Bonita Springs, Florida. For more information contact **Eva Webb** at (352) 317-0902. • • • **The Santa Rosa County Farm Bureau will be hosting an "Informational/Educational Meeting"** to discuss current rules, regulations and laws concerning the hauling of agricultural products and the driving of agricultural equipment on the roadways of Florida. This meeting will be held Tuesday night, Aug. 11, at the Jay Community Center. It will begin at 6 p.m. with a dinner being served. Dinner is sponsored by Smith Tractor, Farm Credit of Northwest Florida, JHL Insurance and Santa Rosa County Farm Bureau. RSVP is required by Aug. 7. To do so, please call the Santa Rosa County Farm Bureau office at (850) 675-4572 or **Allen Scheffer** at (352) 538-3182.

SOCIAL SECURITY ALERT

During a hurricane or other emergency you should not have to worry about your Social Security checks arriving safely and on time. Be prepared by having your check set up for direct deposit. You know your money is safe in your bank account instead of sitting unsecured in your mailbox. Go to <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/deposit> or call (800) 772-1213 to sign-up or learn more about direct deposit.