

The Voice of Agriculture in Florida

# FloridAgriculture

VOLUME 80, NO. 4 • JUNE 2020

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FOR HURRICANES

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- July 6** **Deadline for USDA Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grant Applications.** For more information, visit <https://www.farmers.gov/manage/urban/opportunities>.
- July 31** **Application Deadline for American Farm Bureau Federation's 2021 Ag Innovation Challenge.** For more information and to apply, visit [fb.org/challenge](http://fb.org/challenge).
- Oct. 21-23** **2020 Florida Farm Bureau Annual Meeting, Orlando.** For more information, send email to [debra.jones@ffbf.org](mailto:debra.jones@ffbf.org).

Cover page: Many Florida farmers have sought alternative markets for their perishable foods during the COVID-19 crisis. See the story on Pages 16-18.

## SECURING RELIEF FOR FLORIDA FARMERS

**WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED** a scene from a nightmare six months ago has become a reality.

The world is now afflicted by a pandemic that has sickened millions of people and exacted a daily toll of death. National economies suffer from serious damage because governments closed down most businesses in an attempt to suppress the public health emergency.

Despite such a crisis, our agricultural producers have not failed us. Florida's farm families have continued to produce a bounty of food for everyone. They remain hard at work, making sure that a rich assortment of nutrition is routinely available when we shop at the grocery store. Their calling makes them essential at any time.

They are also essential as positive contributors to their communities. For example, Farm Bureau members in several Northeast Florida counties have donated more than \$30,000 in a project organized to collect food from area growers and donate it to food-insecure households. They have supported local food banks and even held a distribution for families with a pick-up service.

Many farmers in Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties

have sold winter vegetables to local consumers at prices below production costs, while making large donations to food banks.

Our Florida Farm Bureau Insurance Companies have demonstrated a comparable community spirit by supporting food-insecure families across the state with a \$400,000 gift. This capstone contribution has been distributed to the 12 food banks in the Feeding Florida network.

These generous actions are typical of our farm families. The spirit of volunteer service to others is alive and thriving among them.

But the stability of their farms and ranches has been undermined. The overnight elimination of markets is an unprecedented hardship, forcing many of them to make difficult choices about future production.

For this reason, Florida Farm Bureau has been engaged in a daily goal of securing funding to cover at least some of the enormous losses agricultural producers must contend with to continue their operations. Our staff has mobilized to make sure our farm families are being served by federal economic recovery programs.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has initiated a Farms to Families Food Box program



John L. Hoblick, Florida Farm Bureau President

that will procure \$1.2 billion in assorted, U.S.-grown products. In addition, the agency will soon implement a \$16 billion direct relief program for all affected growers, including the fresh vegetable and dairy sectors.

We want to be sure that relief packages approved by the Congress help our members remain at their noble purposes of growing food, conserving natural resources and providing for their families. We will also monitor the long-term results of relief measures to make certain that they function according to their intended purpose.

There have been many answers introduced for recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. We pray that the implementation of practical remedies will provide good results not only for farmers, but for all Floridians.

## Sweet Watermelon

ENJOY A TASTY VITAMIN-FILLED TREAT

Watermelons are 92% water and free of fat, sodium and cholesterol.

Watermelons are a good source of vitamin C, vitamin A and lycopene, an antioxidant that helps protect the body against heart disease, inflammation and some cancers.

**FUN FACT!**  
Did you know early explorers used watermelons as canteens?

Watermelons are available from late March until mid-July.

Sources: <https://www.fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/Health-and-Safety/Living-Healthy-in-Florida/Healthy-Learning/All-About-Florida-Products/Watermelon>

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# Preparing for a Hurricane

## DURING A PANDEMIC

By Rachael Smith, Communications Manager

**THE ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON** extends from June 1 to Nov. 30. And with this year's hurricane season falling during the COVID-19 pandemic, it has never been more critical for Floridians to prepare.

Dennis Feltgen is the Communications and Public Affairs Officer Meteorologist at the Miami Hurricane Center. He says that planning may be a little different this year due to the impacts of the pandemic. Residents should give themselves more time to prepare and adhere to social distancing safety protocols when staying at emergency shelters.

Researchers and meteorologists at Colorado State University (CSU) issue hurricane forecast models four times a year to help prepare residents, government agencies and emergency personnel for hurricane season. According to the initial forecast issued in April, there will be an above average hurricane season with 16 named storms, with eight being hurricanes and four classified

as major hurricanes. Additional forecasts from the team will be released in June, July and August.

Jhordanne Jones, a graduate research assistant at CSU's Department of Atmospheric Science, says that there will be more pronounced activity this season due to the La Niña climate pattern.

"La Niña conditions create a more favorable environment for tropical storm development," said Jones. "This is due to the unusually cold water temperatures in the Atlantic Ocean and a lack of El Niño."

El Niño is a natural warming of tropical Pacific Ocean water and it suppresses hurricane formation in the Atlantic. La Niña is marked by cooler ocean water and leads to increased hurricanes in the Atlantic.

Jones said that it is especially important to be prepared this hurricane season due to the potential of many national resources being stretched because of the pandemic. She said that remaining aware of local, state and national guidance on how to prepare is critical.

Press Secretary for the Florida Division of Emergency Management, Samantha Bequer, says that hurricane preparedness is still very much a priority as it continues to respond to COVID-19.

"The division has a state watch office that is staffed 24/7 and continuously monitors weather systems that could potentially impact Florida," said Bequer. "The state is developing a contingency plan to address potential needs that could arise during hurricane season."

Bequer said that preparing for hurricane season should be a year-round priority for Floridians. Some of the most important actions everyone should take to remain prepared include:

- ✓ Have a way to receive important weather and other emergency-related warnings. A NOAA [All-Hazards Weather Radio](#) and battery backup is recommended along with signing up for local alerts through the [AlertFlorida](#) system.

- ✓ Build a [disaster supply kit](#) and have a [family and/or business plan](#). Remember to also have a [plan for pets](#).

**Evacuating Yourself and Your Family**

- ✓ Determine if your home is in a storm surge [evacuation zone](#). If so, learn what needs to be done if you [evacuate or stay](#) when a storm is moving toward your area.

**Mitigate Hurricane Damages**

- ✓ Learn how to [prepare your home](#) from wind damage before a storm threatens your area.
- ✓ Consider insuring your home or business from [flood loss](#).
- ✓ Make sure that all other aspects of your home are as [protected](#) from hurricanes as possible.

**2020 TROPICAL STORM NAMES**

|           |           |          |         |
|-----------|-----------|----------|---------|
| Arthur    | Gonzalo   | Laura    | Rene    |
| Bertha    | Hanna     | Marco    | Sally   |
| Cristobal | Isaias    | Nana     | Teddy   |
| Dolly     | Josephine | Omar     | Vicky   |
| Edouard   | Kyle      | Paulette | Wilfred |
| Fay       |           |          |         |

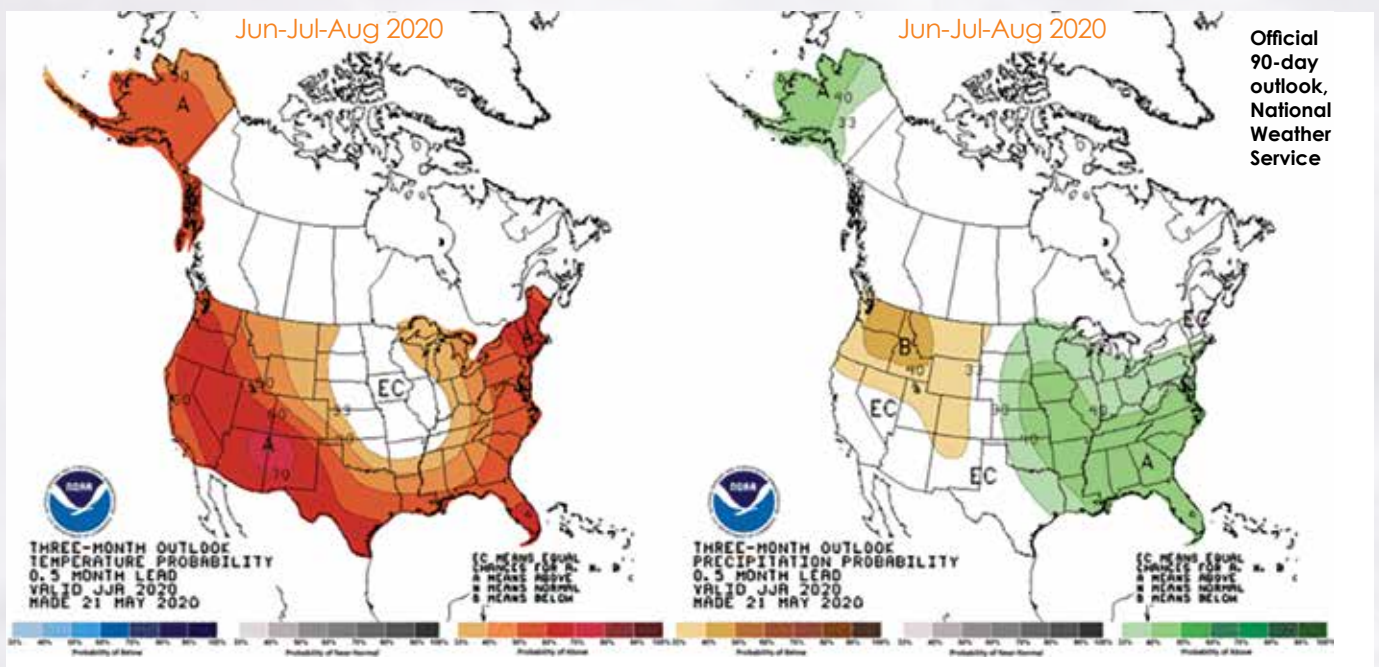
In addition to monitoring weather conditions and preparing a family and business plan, consumers should also take time to review insurance policies and understand their coverages.

Florida Insurance Commissioner David Altmaier urges all Floridians to review their insurance policy now in preparation for hurricane season. “Policyholders should reach out to their agent or insurer to make sure they have the appropriate coverage. Most homeowners’ insurance policies do not include flood coverage and I encourage consumers to consider purchasing flood insurance,” said Altmaier.

From 2000-2019 there have been 10 hurricanes making landfall onto some part of the Sunshine State. Most recently, Floridians remember the destruction of Hurricane Michael in 2018, a category 5 hurricane that ripped through the Panhandle causing \$25.1 billion in damages.

According to CSU researchers, the 2020 hurricane activity will be about 140% of the average season. By comparison, 2019’s hurricane activity was about 120% of the average season.

“It only takes one storm to make it a really bad year,” said Jones.



# From the Ground Up

## THE BENEFITS OF HOME GARDENING

by Amanda Overstreet, Communications Coordinator

An assortment of fresh vegetables, paired with a homemade dressing, makes for a healthy and delicious meal.



**THERE IS SOMETHING SO SATISFYING** in enjoying the fruits of your own labor. Planting a seed, watching it grow and then harvesting it when it's ready brings a feeling of accomplishment and delight that is one-of-a-kind.

The benefits of growing your own go beyond the happiness of a harvest and can actually improve both mental and physical health. Good for both the mind and body, home gardening is the beginning of a life-time of positive effects.

It has been scientifically proven to reduce stress and anxiety while also providing an opportunity for daily exercise.

Using muscles for digging, pulling weeds and carrying bags of soil and mulch can be a full-body workout.

According to studies by The National Institutes of Health, findings support that gardening boasts health benefits that include lowering body mass index (BMI), along with social, physical, and psychological health.

Lori Johnson is the Family and Consumer Science Agent with UF/IFAS Extension in Lake County. She is a Registered Dietician and has dedicated the last 15 years of her life to working in public health, community and school nutrition.

"I look forward to helping the community grow deeper in their knowledge in nutrition and overall wellness," she said. "Developing a healthy lifestyle is key to preventing and/or managing chronic diseases."

"Gardening supports reduced feelings of depression and stress, increased energy levels, improved sleep and better cognitive function – all contributing to overall wellness," Johnson stated.

An avid garden gal herself, Johnson enjoys backyard gardening for more than just the delicious and healthy food it provides. "It gives me time to spend with my husband, a chance in our busy lives to have great conversation and enjoy each other's company," she said.

Summertime is the perfect opportunity to start preparing for a garden in the fall. "One

of the most important things in gardening is to know your season,” said Brooke Moffis, Commercial Horticulture and Florida Friendly Landscaping Agent with UF/IFAS Extension Lake County.

Moffis has worked with UF/IFAS Extension in Lake County for 14 years. She previously served as a Master Gardener Program Coordinator and worked for the Living with the Land Exhibit in Walt Disney World’s Epcot theme park.

“The garden doesn’t take a break,” she said. “Winter is busiest, summer is slightly less productive and a great time to prepare for fall, while ornamentals are year-round, (trees, shrubs, sub-tropical, annuals and perennials).”

Moffis mentioned that if you got a late start on a spring garden, there are some things you can still plant this summer. “Sweet potatoes and okra will do well in the heat, or, you can spend some time really getting your garden ready to plant in the fall,” Moffis said.

She explained that summertime gardening in Florida is limited due to heat, humidity and pest pressure. “Start selecting seeds,

think about what goes where and start composting to a specific area,” she recommended. “Build raised beds and get soil ready, a lot of effort and energy goes into preparing.”

Gardening is a great family project that provides an opportunity for everyone to pitch in. “For vegetable gardens, families can observe and learn about how food grows from a tiny seed through the time it’s picked to harvest,” Johnson said. “They can then gather, trying new recipes and cook together as a family.”

The health benefits that derive from growing your own food are immeasurable. “Growing your own foods keeps foods fresh and in their natural state,” Johnson mentioned. “Foods that are packaged and processed can include more salt, fats and added sugars. Fresh vegetables and fruits are low in calories and contain vitamins and minerals that have a variety of health benefits.

For example, peppers are high in vitamin C which can boost the health of your immune system. Okra contains potassium which can help maintain a healthy blood

pressure and contributes to bone health too. Eating the skin on many fruits and veggies contain fiber, which may reduce your risk for heart disease,” she said.

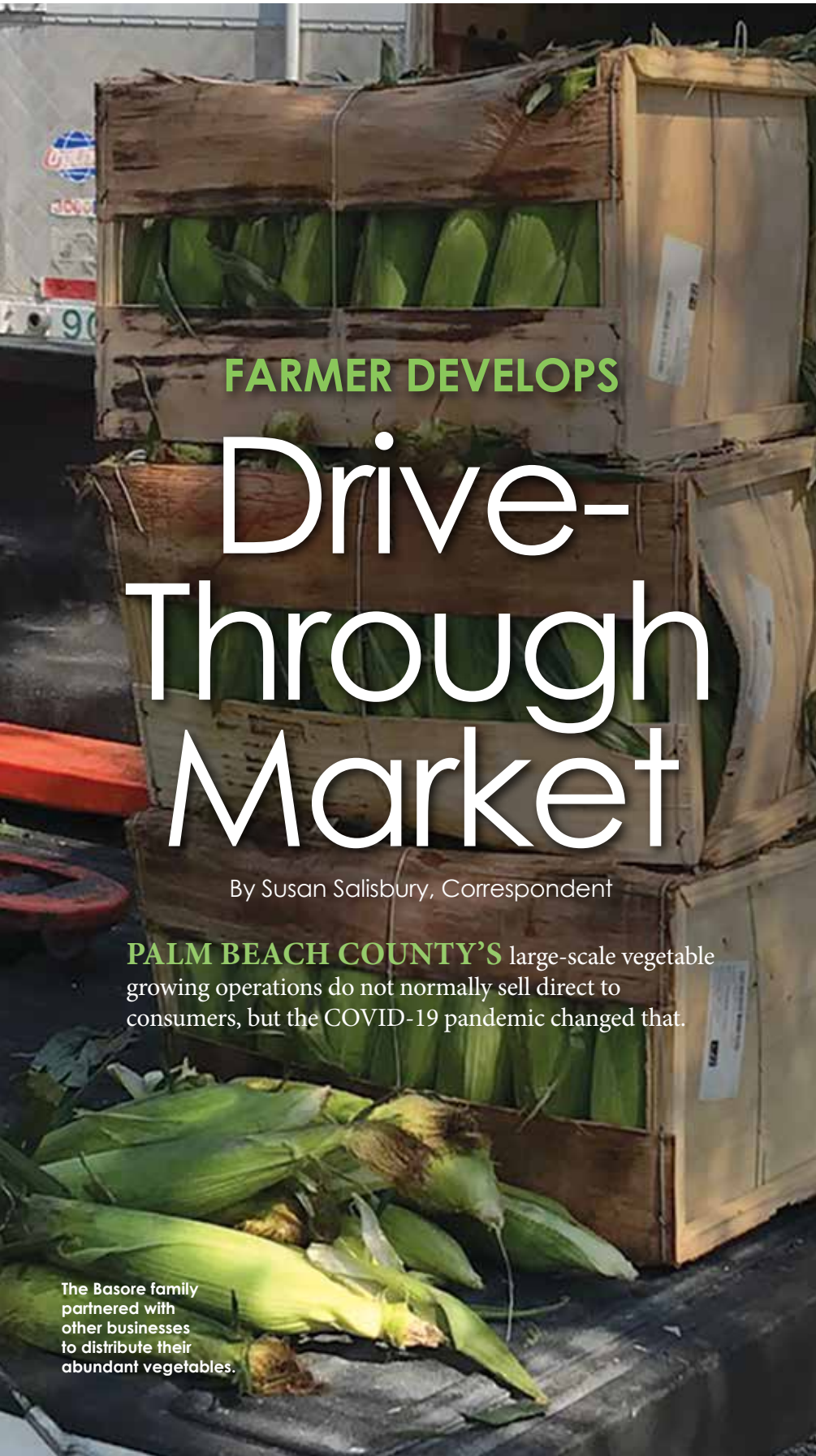
As we maintain recommended guidelines from the CDC and continue to practice social distancing to due COVID-19, UF/IFAS Extension Lake County has launched a new virtual series, “Growing Together from a Distance.”

The virtual gardening classes will take place via Zoom on Fridays at 2:00 p.m. Participants are encouraged to join for free and must register for each of the live, online gardening classes by noon the day before at <https://lakegardeningprograms.eventbrite.com/>.

For gardening tips at your fingertips, download Florida Fresh, an app by UF/IFAS Extension. The download is free for iPhone and Android users.

For more information and resources in home gardening projects, contact your local County UF/IFAS Extension Office at <http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/find-your-local-office/>.





FARMER DEVELOPS

# Drive-Through Market

By Susan Salisbury, Correspondent

**PALM BEACH COUNTY'S** large-scale vegetable growing operations do not normally sell direct to consumers, but the COVID-19 pandemic changed that.

The Basore family partnered with other businesses to distribute their abundant vegetables.

As schools shut down and restaurants were ordered to close their dining rooms in mid-March, demand patterns changed. Farmers found themselves with an excess of produce with no place to go. Although supermarkets bought more, there was still a void.

Instead of selling produce by the truckload to major brands and distributors, some farmers pivoted to selling family-size boxes directly to the public.

The Basore family of Belle Glade-based TKM Bengard Farms, the largest lettuce grower east of the Mississippi, ventured into curbside box sales in early April.

Steve Basore, TKM's director of food safety, said, "This whole box food feeding program has just exploded. It is so cool we were there at the beginning of it. It has been a huge evolution in a short period of time. We have been reacting, changing and adapting. We never quit feeding people."

"Now, all of a sudden, people are painfully aware of how important the food supply is. They are valuing the farmers more than ever," Basore said.

The box programs have gone a long way to bridging the disconnect between farmers and consumers and become a win-win.

"Farmers are flexible. We are better able to handle this COVID thing than most people are as we are always dodging some kind of curve ball," Basore said.

The Basores began by selling boxes of fresh produce in the parking lot of a local restaurant. That mushroomed into supplying thousands of boxes to the non-profit sector.

Palm Beach County officials asked the Basores and others to



supply produce to the families of thousands of students who receive free and reduced-price meals.

The Palm Beach Civic Association, based in the Town of Palm Beach, started a “Save Our Produce” initiative. It raised funds to purchase produce it donated to the Palm Beach County Food Bank.

Between the schools and the food bank, more than 7,400 boxes of produce were distributed weekly.

The box programs ended when the Florida vegetable growing season was over, but Basore said he is willing to start it again next season if there is a need.

The Basores’ involvement began when Mecca Farms near Lake Worth reached out to Myles Basore and started buying lettuce from TKM. Soon the Basores started their own box deal with supplies from Mecca, Belle Glade area vegetable growers Hundley Farms and Pioneer Growers, and blueberry grower H&A Farms, Mount Dora.

The Basores partnered with long-time friend and restaurant owner Juan Gando who operates Oli’s Fashion Cuisine, an upscale Wellington restaurant. Gando already had the retail licenses and permits, and was doing take-out meals and selling groceries, paper towels and cleaning supplies as well.

The \$20 specialty boxes were sold on a first-come, first-served basis. They included green beans, cabbage, lettuce, bell peppers, blueberries, tomatoes and sweet corn. Corn was available at \$20 for 50 ears and blueberries for four pints for \$10.

After the first couple of weeks, due to issues with the property owner, a new distribution spot was needed.

You Farm, a five-acre working farm and event venue in Loxahatchee owned by Stefan and Shelby Horbonis, became the new distribution location. It helped that they have a social media following of 8,000 on Facebook.

“You Farm has taken it and started to run with it,” Basore said.

Stefan Horbonis said while he produced some at his small farm, he needed produce from the larger farms.

“I am big on agritourism and hold events such as seafood festivals, concerts and a pumpkin patch. Once this whole thing affected us, our agritourism operation lost a significant amount of income,” Horbonis said.

“I am not one of the gigantic farms. I do look at myself as a central hub for local farms to be able to sell their product,” Horbonis said.

The original model the Basores developed was changed to become what Horbonis calls a “barn drive through market.” Orders are taken throughout the week starting on Monday evenings when Horbonis updates inventory.

Customers pre-pay online and can pick up their orders only on Saturday. Horbonis offers several options, including a do-it-yourself box where customers can select which produce they want. He plans to keep going through the summer by sourcing from other parts of the country.

You Farm has sold 500 to 700 boxes each Saturday. Each transaction takes 30 to 45 seconds and there is no contact. Customers display their order number on their window, and the produce is placed in their vehicle.

“There is a lot that is going to come from this whole thing, and a lot of new business that will be formed. Consumers love a story. They like to understand where their food is coming from and what they are actually purchasing,” Horbonis said.

“Once we start kicking in local production again, we will push hard. That is what started this drive-through market,” Horbonis said.





# Family Fishing in Florida

By Carolee Anita Boyles, Correspondent

**ANY TIME IS A GOOD TIME TO FISH.** This summer, in this time of social distancing, fishing is a fun family activity that will get you out of the house and help entertain the kids.

Here is a quick look at places to go statewide, with links to more information.

## South Florida Canals

Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties are crisscrossed with brackish and freshwater canals that are home to both native and introduced fish species. Bank fishing is plentiful, and fish are easy to catch on worms or other live bait.

A morning's trip can produce mixed catches of native bluegill, redear sunfish, redbreast sunfish and occasional bass, and exotic species such as Mayan Cichlid, Oscar, Jaguar Guapote, Midas Cichlid and even a Peacock bass now and then. (<https://loom.ly/xyrRSxU>)

You can identify many exotics on the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) website at <https://loom.ly/5TGjgHg>.

## Urban Ponds & Fish Management Areas Statewide

Start talking about urban ponds, and you are talking fishing that almost anyone in Florida can reach in a short time. The point of the Urban Pond Program, which developed Fish Management Areas (FMAs) statewide, was to allow anglers in the cities to have easily accessible fishing opportunities.

Many of them are in outlying parks and other green spaces, making them accessible to all residents of the state. All of these ponds have good access and are excellent places for families with young children to fish, but also have bass and other "adult" species.

Many FMAs have fish attractors close to the shoreline to make good fishing even better.

Piney Z Lake is a 193-acre lake within the city limits of Tallahassee; it is one arm of Lake Lafayette. Piney Z Lake is laid out for bank access, with more than three miles of shoreline and several "fishing fingers" for anglers.

In Jacksonville, the seven ponds of the Bethesda Fish Management Area are in the Northside Recreation Complex of Florida Junior College. This FMA covers five acres and has good bank access. More than two dozen fish attractors are scattered along the banks and in the center of the lakes.

Fish Orlando comprises more than 60,000 acres of fresh water for fishing. The Fab Five are five water bodies managed by the FWC for quality size fish and a unique fishing experience.

The Urban Ponds program includes four water bodies



A good catch is the fisherman's delight.



South Florida canals are easily accessible, but bring sunscreen and a chair.



A couple of hours of fishing in a South Florida canal produced four species from a single location: bluegill, redear sunfish, redhead cichlid and Mayan cichlid.



Some South Florida canals have a lot of rip-rap (rocks that prevent erosion). These additions provide good fishing areas.

managed for beginning anglers and anglers who want to keep and eat their catch. Fish Orlando also oversees several other water bodies in the greater Orlando area that are not part of the Fab Five or the Urban Ponds program.

Not all Fish Management Areas are in urban areas. Tucked away in the Panhandle is a series of hidden gems that contain bass and other species of fish. Like the urban ponds, these ponds offer good access and family friendly fishing. Many other small FMAs are found throughout the state in urban areas such as Tampa, and in more rural settings as well. (<https://loom.ly/7KO9EbY>)

### Saltwater Piers

Bank anglers often overlook saltwater fishing. With Florida's coastline easily accessible from anywhere in the state, saltwater fishing is too good to miss. Many Florida piers are open at night, providing anglers with some

relief from the heat of the day.

Two of the best saltwater piers in the state are the Sunshine Skyway fishing piers, often called the "world's longest fishing piers." These piers – now the Skyway Fishing Pier State Park – are all that remain of the original Sunshine Skyway bridge, the middle of which fell into Tampa Bay when the Summit Venture hit it more than 30 years ago.

What is left of the original spans have been turned into great fishing piers that reach out into deep water and are complete with bait houses and other amenities open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. (<https://loom.ly/32pystY>)

In the Panhandle, check out the Pensacola Beach fishing pier, which is open 24/7. It reaches out into the Gulf of Mexico past two sand bars, which means water of many different depths to fish. The Pensacola Beach fishing pier has a restaurant, gift shop and tackle shop.

On the east coast, the Jacksonville Beach pier is 1,320 feet long, so it reaches well out into deep water. It is handicapped accessible, and has several fish cleaning stations, a concession area, a bait shop, and restrooms. (<https://loom.ly/s5iEox0>)

Many of the fish you will catch in Florida waters make good table fare; most of the South Florida exotics are considered delicacies in their home countries.

If you are going to keep your catch and eat it, pay attention to consumption guidelines developed by the Florida Department of Health and the FWC. A general statewide advisory is on page 28 of the state freshwater fishing regulations at <https://loom.ly/jJ02KEs>.

Guidelines for specific areas are available at <https://loom.ly/6PvEb0Y>. Go fishing and have fun!



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# FEDERAL FARM RELIEF PROGRAMS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED

By JohnWalt Boatright, Director of National Affairs

One could say Florida farmers have become quite accustomed to adversity in recent years. In the past two decades alone, they have had their share of major hurricanes, invasive pests and disease and an avalanche of Mexican imports that only accelerates in volume and impact.

So when a plague forces a global shutdown, including restaurants and all tourist attractions in the Sunshine State, the famed resilience of the Florida grower may reach a breaking point.

Florida Farm Bureau's initial response involved a collaboration with officials at federal agencies to ensure agriculture remained uninterrupted. This included designating agriculture and the food supply chain as "critical infrastructure" under federal guidance and moving H-2A workers across borders as seamlessly and safely as possible during conditions of quarantine.

The forced closures of many facilities utilizing Florida-grown products, ranging from local restaurants to educational institutions to Disney World, were unprecedented. It immediately eliminated key

markets for a host of Florida commodities in season, and the timing could not have been worse. New sources of relief were non-negotiable.

Fortunately, the Congressional scurry to produce the largest stimulus package in American history included agriculture among the sectors identified for targeted relief actions.



"Market loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic affected many Florida producers during their marketing window. Green beans were among the specialty crops primarily impacted."

First, the Small Business Administration (SBA) released low-interest, forgivable loan programs to help employers keep their employees on the payroll. Agricultural entities have been historically ineligible for SBA programs, so producers have been anxious to participate. Nearly half a trillion dollars has been disseminated to small businesses through these programs and there is little sign that the approval process will be interrupted.

Then, Congress sent \$23.5 billion to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the explicit

purpose of grower assistance. USDA responded with an initial plan to expend \$19 billion for food purchases and loss payments. Although the federal response is never as fast or comprehensive as we would like, it is a starting point to deliver aid in a desperate situation.

Congress seems ambivalent on another relief package, and Farm

Bureau will continue to push for flexibilities and additional resources that reflect the reality in the fields.

To paraphrase the stoic outlook of Lyndon Baines Johnson during his presidency: "Sometimes you have to hunker down like a jackass in a hailstorm and take it." For better or worse, the Florida farmer is well practiced in this regard.

The Florida farmer has indeed hunkered down for decades. You cannot help but wonder – when can they catch a break?



Adam and Ashley Cook, along with their children, check out their Gilchrist County farm acreage. The Cooks will add vegetables to their crop mix next year.



Jim Alderman, joined by his son, Jimmy, experimented with direct sales that included delivery to customers in Palm Beach County.

# Connecting With

By G.B. Crawford, Director of Public Relations

**“I HAVE BEEN THROUGH HURRICANES,** drought and any number of other bad times. But this is something nobody has ever seen.”

With these words Palm Beach County vegetable grower James Alderman expressed a perspective on the COVID-19 emergency shared by most Florida farmers as well as other state residents.

Beginning in March, governments at all levels issued orders that closed businesses deemed non-essential in a move to stop the pandemic. The business closures occurred during peak harvest seasons for Florida’s winter vegetables as well as citrus and other fruits. As always, farmers continued to produce an abundance of food.

Large-scale marketing channels disappeared as hotels, restaurants, leisure and recreation facilities, food service companies and other buyers shut their doors. The complex, normally

dependable supply chain could not be quickly reconfigured. Grocery stores were not able to handle and sell the quantity of foods immediately ready for sale. Routine shipping, storage and delivery collapsed.

As a result, growers who produce perishable crops faced an unprecedented challenge because the distribution to consumers was disrupted.

An April 15 survey by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services revealed that the loss of markets for such foods as lettuce, green beans, cabbage, squash, zucchini, peppers and cucumbers had already cost growers collectively more than \$522.5 million.

The problem spread to other farm groups, including beef,

aquaculture and dairy producers. Dairies were under especially intense pressure because processing plants, holding full tanks of milk, could not accept additional shipments.

At the same time growers also faced a surge of subsidized Mexican imports. This trade problem has bedeviled Florida farmers for three decades and continues to slash their share of the U.S. market.

The combination of forces crushed wholesale prices, driving them below the cost of harvest and transportation.

Such bleak prospects led Florida farmers to seek alternative ways of getting food to consumers. Some of them ramped up direct sales. Alderman and his employees arranged a box of mixed organic vegetables, including tomatoes, eggplant, squash, kale and Swiss chard for sale and delivery to customers in the local area.



Miami-Dade County farmer Sam Accursio and his grandchildren pause in one of the family's vegetable fields. Local residents appreciated direct sales of food at his farm.



Using a custom trailer, Tim Clarkson brings fresh specialty foods to customers in Manatee and Sarasota counties.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JENNY ACHESON



# The Consumer

The venture was successful and he will likely continue it next year. But for growers like Alderman with substantial harvests each week, direct sale cannot be a method of sale to maintain his farm.

“There is no way a commercial farmer can get into the retail business,” he explained. “There is certainly a place for it and it is picking up customers. If you have a staff and you want to do that, it would be a side business along with your main business. You are not going to move any volume with it.”

Sam Accursio, a Miami-Dade County farmer, has previously sold a small amount of vegetables to fellow residents. With his main wholesale customers unavailable, he decided to experiment with expanded direct sales.

At his family’s farm workers packed a combination box of squash, cucumbers, zucchini, green beans, okra and other foods. Then

he announced on social media that the farm had a large quantity of food available at a discount price. Area residents quickly responded.

“We did it on April 1 and to my amazement, we had miles and miles of cars waiting to be loaded,” Accursio said. “On the Saturday before Easter we moved 45,000 pounds that morning – all by the box. Everybody was so appreciative that they had reasonably-priced, fresh food at their hands.”

This positive response has encouraged him to offer similar boxes next year. Even so, the farm cannot operate without volume buyers.

“We could not do direct sales alone right now,” Accursio noted. “We have too many acres. Maybe in the future it could come to that so that we could take care of the local area. In South Florida we have 8.1 million people. If I could feed all of them, I would be doing very well.”

In another novel project, coordinated by Dade County Farm Bureau Executive Director Tyra Phillips, Accursio joined with two other farm families to provide the state prison system with fresh foods. The farm group sold a portion of their harvests and saved taxpayers an estimated \$23,000.

“We are trying to figure out how we can make this a permanent program with the Department of Corrections and other state-run entities such as the state universities so they can procure fresh foods from their local farmers,” Phillips said.

Other farmers also struggled as the crisis intensified. Sarah Albritton said her family lost the wholesale market for their blueberry crop. Their U-Pick operation became the best alternative. In previous years retail customers had picked less than 10% of their 170,000-pound crop. That changed in 2020.



“When all of this began – on top of the millions of Mexican blueberries that flooded the market – our market absolutely tanked,” Albritton said. “It cost more to pick it commercially, so we stopped picking. We opened the U-Pick for three to four days each week.”

She said prices for the family’s citrus were already low and the return on beef cattle slipped with the business lockdown. The family may choose to hold their animals on the farm and not sell them until market conditions improve. They intend to adjust their Sarasota County farm business so they can protect against failing markets in the future.

Their plan, said Albritton, is to develop their agritourism enterprise and add strawberries, blackberries and other crops that can extend their harvest window from January to May.

“If the market tanks or if there is another outbreak, we will still be able to sell our commodities

without having just one avenue.”

Some small farmers with loyal retail patrons found that their sales soared. Tim Clarkson uses a website to market foods he produces along with selections from neighboring farms in DeSoto County. The specialty poultry, beef, pork, lamb and vegetables he delivers to various locations in his custom trailer have been popular items.

“Our sales increased,” Clarkson said. “People have more time to shop, so they are placing bigger orders.”

Gilchrist County farmer Adam Cook planted his watermelon crop in early March knowing that he potentially faced a big risk.

“Farmers do a lot of things on faith,” Cook said. “We have faith that it will pan out. We plant seeds with faith that they are going to come up, faith that we will have favorable weather and faith that there will be a market.”

He pointed out that a 40-acre field yields 100,000 melons. This volume requires buyers who can accept substantial quantities. “That is a lot of melons to get rid of in a small area when there are plenty of other melons being grown,” Cook explained. “We have to have large shipments to sell.”

Regular production on the farm includes small grains, grain corn,

hay and beef cattle. For the next year, he will greatly expand his commodity mix with vegetables for local sale. His family’s farm will offer tomatoes, peas, green beans, corn, sweet potatoes and squash.

“It seems that there are many people who really want to have their food coming from a local source and they would love to see where their food is coming from,” Cook observed. “I hope that we can make some headway toward that and satisfy people’s needs along the way.”

The link between farm families and non-farmers may have been considerably strengthened during the COVID-19 pandemic. Regardless of how Florida farmers adapt to the changing conditions of the general economy, they will be giving closer attention to their consumers.

Kimberly Morgan, an agricultural economist at Virginia Tech, is certain that communication between farm families and the rest of society has been enhanced. “This is all showing that we have a connection to our neighbor even if we don’t realize it,” Morgan said.

“Consumers are now open to and connecting to the farmgate and along the supply chain with how their food is grown. They have invested some time in it and they have invested some energy in it. Let’s keep it going.”



Florida’s winter vegetable harvest was at its peak as the pandemic emerged.

# Farm Bureau Salutes Key State Lawmakers

By Adam Basford, Director of State Legislative Affairs

**O**n March 19, the Florida Legislature wrapped up the 2020 legislative session after a six-day extension caused by a delay in budget negotiations.

Each year, Florida Farm Bureau recognizes the legislators who played key roles in promoting FFBF's legislative priorities during the legislative session.

This year, the FFBF Board of Directors have chosen to name Sen. Debbie Mayfield and Rep. Blaise Ingoglia as Farm Bureau's Legislators of the Year. The board also named 18 other legislators as Champions for Agriculture.

Each of these legislators were instrumental in providing leadership on bills and issues that help to benefit Florida's farmers, ranchers and growers. Water quality legislation, E-Verify bills and important budget lines were important issues where these legislative leaders had major positive impacts on FFBF's behalf.

## SENATOR DEBBIE MAYFIELD

Sen. Debbie Mayfield played a leading role for Florida Farm Bureau's main legislative priority during the 2020 legislative session as well as promoting important budget lines.

Senator Mayfield sponsored SB 712, Environmental Resource Management. It contains language that adds credibility to the agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP) program through

the two-year verification process and supports additional research by Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) and UF/IFAS to develop new BMPs.

As Chair of the Agriculture and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee, Sen. Mayfield also played a primary role in providing funding for essential programs at FDACS such as the Fresh From Florida program and the Rural and Family Land's program.

## REPRESENTATIVE BLAISE INGOGLIA

During the 2020 legislative session, Rep. Blaise Ingoglia continued his commitment to farm families by playing a key role in passing most of Florida Farm Bureau's legislative agenda. As Chairman of the State Affairs Committee, Rep. Ingoglia worked closely with the Agriculture Committee to include recommendations offered by the agricultural community.

He sponsored HB 1199, the Environmental Protection Act which ultimately passed as a part of SB 712. This bill contained the Rights of Nature preemption language that prevents local ordinances or charter amendments to grant legal rights to natural bodies like lakes or rivers.

Rep. Ingoglia also co-sponsored and managed HB 1343, Environmental Resource Management, which contained the critical BMP language Farm

Bureau supported and was the main companion bill to SB 712.

## CHAMPIONS FOR AGRICULTURE

Florida Farm Bureau is also honoring 20 Champions for Agriculture – lawmakers who go above and beyond to support and promote legislation that positively impacts agriculture. Farm Bureau named seven Senators and 13 Representatives as Champions for Agriculture in 2020.

### Senate

Ben Albritton  
George Gainer  
Debbie Mayfield  
Bill Montford  
Kathleen Passidomo  
David Simmons  
Wilton Simpson

### House

Chuck Brannan  
Chuck Clemons  
Blaise Ingoglia  
Kristin Jacobs  
Lawrence McClure  
Toby Overdorf  
Bobby Payne  
Tina Polsky  
Holly Raschein  
Paul Renner  
Rick Roth  
Jason Shoaf  
Josie Tomkow

*Note: After a battle with cancer, Rep. Kristin Jacobs passed away in April. She was a tireless advocate for clean water and consistently worked for sound, consistent water policy.*

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# UNEMPLOYED MOM TAKES UP VEGETABLE GARDENING

By Brad Buck, UF/IFAS

**C** OVID-19 may take jobs away from people, but it can't take away Tanya Murillo's resilient spirit and her desire to grow vegetables in her yard.

Murillo's employer closed March 13 because of the coronavirus. So, she went home, where eight people live. No self-pity for Murillo. Everyone in her household needs something to fill vacant time.

"I'm going to do something positive and productive," said Murillo. "My husband is really good at planting. I don't know much about growing. So, I was trying to get some ideas on how to grow some food."

The week after she lost her job, Murillo called UF/IFAS Extension Levy County and talked to program assistant Barbara Edmonds about what to try to grow in sandy soils. Murillo wants to start planting vegetables at her home in Bronson. She's got multiple allergies and can't tolerate gluten, so fresh food is the order of the day.

Her project stems partly from trying to find activity to get her through the days, some from needing to grow fresh food and a bit of an attempt to keep the four children in her home busy.

"This is a challenging point in my life," Murillo said. "I figure it's better to get my children involved."

Edmonds, the UF/IFAS Extension Levy County horticulture program assistant, said she's seen an increase in gardening and landscape calls since the coronavirus started.

"She (Murillo) has time to grow plants, now," Edmonds said.

Edmonds sent Murillo the UF/IFAS vegetable gardening guide, which provides an overview of site selection, preparing the soil, growing season, plant spacing, row spacing and much more.

UF/IFAS Extension works with its statewide partner, Florida A&M University, to deliver science-based information to residents and businesses across Florida.

"As we get used to our 'new normal' with the coronavirus and its ramifications, UF/IFAS Extension faculty and staff work tirelessly to continue providing



(PHOTO COURTESY OF UF/IFAS)

Tanya Murillo and her husband, Scott, now have a home vegetable garden.

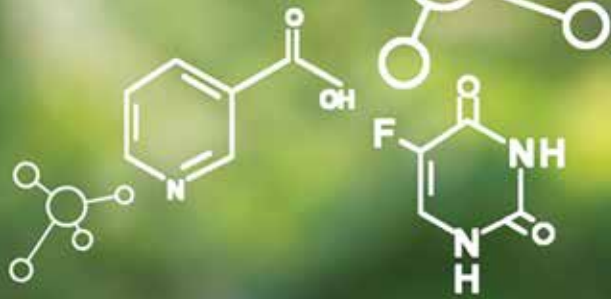
the best science-based information and other services to the people of Florida," said Nick Place, dean of UF/IFAS Extension and director of the Florida Cooperative Extension Service.

"Whether we get questions about gardening, farming, nutrition, natural resources, family or consumer issues, UF/IFAS Extension will continue to collaborate with FAMU Cooperative Extension to answer questions and educate Floridians, using all means available."

FAMU Cooperative Extension is maintaining connections with Florida residents, utilizing non-face-to-face venues, said Vonda Richardson, director of Extension programs at FAMU. Agents and educators are connecting via email, phone and social media. Educational programming will be delivered via Zoom and Facebook Live.

"We are encouraging the public to connect to us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @FAMUEXT for information and resources," Richardson said.





# Rooted in Science

## Doctor of Plant Medicine

By Sophy Mott, Correspondent

### WHY DO CERTAIN PLANTS FIND THEIR ROOTS (literally), flourishing where others do not? How can the effects of invasive pests be minimized?

As urbanization threatens farmlands, how can growers efficiently produce more crops with less resources? Figuring out the answers to these questions and many others is the type of work that students of the University of Florida's Doctor of Plant Medicine program thrive upon.

Founded in 1999 by Dr. George N. Agrios, a renowned researcher and author of the widely used text, *Plant Pathology*, the Doctor of Plant Medicine (DPM) program is the first of its kind – and still one of only two in the nation, though others are emerging.

Being a relative newcomer in terms of educational programs, however, has not slowed the program's footprint. Roughly 100

scholars have graduated since 1999. These graduates are in high demand. Amanda Hodges, DPM program director since 2012, said, "Most grads can be somewhat selective – which isn't necessarily true for other doctoral programs."

Hodges works hard to develop faculty relationships and obtain funding for graduate assistantships, and encourages service learning and professional development involvement for students, all measures which positively impact retention and career outlook.

The value and diversity of this multidisciplinary degree, Hodges shares, mean "graduates are limited by only where they want to go in the world."

Hodges said about one-third of DPM grads are employed directly in agriculture, in roles from sales to crop consultancy.

Sage Thompson of Brevard County – the inaugural recipient of the George Agrios Scholarship – will complete her DPM degree this summer, and while she doesn't have a specific career path mapped out yet, she knows she wants to do work that impacts Florida, possibly working in product development or getting to develop field trials. Also armed with a B.S. and M.S. in Entomology, Sage is positive about her prospects post-graduation.

"With the DPM . . . you have a leg up, because you have experience in so many different areas," she said. "Any other program isn't going to have plant pathogen experience and insect experience and pesticide experience."

Sage encourages prospective students to take advantage of any opportunities they can. Saying “yes” has broadened her horizons, allowing her to experience farm tours in Ecuador and even an internship there with a collaborating university.

Academia and government are other frequented career paths. The intensive course of study – Hodges says there are more courses than any other UF doctoral program – contribute to the degree being a “perfect background” for Extension positions, since those roles benefit from the breadth and depth of knowledge DPM grads are prepared with. Morgan Pinkerton will graduate in August with her DPM and has already accepted a position with UF/IFAS as an Extension Agent in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems, based in Seminole County.

For Pinkerton, the DPM program truly found her. She was a pre-med student and studying for the Medical College Admission Test when she realized she didn’t really want to go to medical school. She was also working in the entomology department at the time – rearing stinkbugs for agricultural studies – and in



2019 DPM student professional development field trip to Ecuador. DPM Alum Dr. Lisbeth Espinoza, third from right, a faculty member at Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL), arranged for many field visits for the students, including the coffee plantation pictured here.

conversations with Dr. Hodges was encouraged to look at the program.

Although she had no idea at the time that science would take her to agriculture, she is very thankful for the switch, as she “absolutely loves” the fields she’s going to be working in.

As one who loves community outreach and collaboration, Extension was a natural fit for Pinkerton. “I really think one of the beauties of being an Extension agent is being able to work with scientists to get the latest technology applied

in the field. Specifically, in my role I’m looking at increasing sustainability.

“And that’s not just environmental sustainability, but we’re also talking about economic sustainability,” she said. “A lot of small-scale producers in Florida definitely feel the pressure and in order for them to be economically sustainable, adopting new practices may be useful for increasing their profit and increasing what they get out of the limited lands that we have.”

Adam Silagyi graduated in 2003 and is a testament to the global reach of the program at UF. As an Agricultural and Food Security Officer for the United States Agency for International Development, Dr. Silagyi’s work now finds him in Zimbabwe, proving, as Dr. Hodges shared, that the future of DPM grads is limited only by where they want to go in the world.



DPM students Morgan Pinkerton and Clayton Bania talk with FFA students at a trade show.




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The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule (PSR) inspections have begun. Sign up now to request a free On-Farm Readiness Review (OFRR), offered in partnership by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and University of Florida IFAS. The OFRR is an educational opportunity to help individual farms align practices with the PSR regulatory requirements in preparation for inspections.

For more information on FSMA and to sign up for an OFRR, visit [FDACS.gov/FSMA](http://FDACS.gov/FSMA) or call (863) 578-1900.

To take full advantage of the OFRR and for PSR compliance, one farm representative should first attend a Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training. Upcoming trainings can be found at: [crec.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/events](http://crec.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/events)



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services



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# AFBF Challenge

OFFERS \$145K IN STARTUP FUNDS

The American Farm Bureau Federation, in partnership with Farm Credit, has opened online applications for the 2021 Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge.

This national business competition showcases U.S. startup companies that are addressing challenges faced by America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities. Farm Bureau will award \$145,000 in startup funds provided by sponsors Farm Credit, John Deere, Bayer Crop Science, Country Financial, Farm Bureau Financial Services and Farm Bureau Bank.

Launched in 2015 as the first national competition focused exclusively on rural entrepreneurs, the Challenge continues to identify the next ag entrepreneurs to watch and supports innovation essential to Farm Bureau member businesses and communities.

Farm Bureau and Farm Credit will select 10 startup companies to compete at the AFBF Annual Convention in January 2021 as semi-finalists. The 10 semi-finalist teams will be announced on Oct. 5 and awarded \$7,500 each.

The 10 teams will compete to advance to the final round where four teams will receive an additional \$7,500 and compete live on stage in front of Farm Bureau members, investors and industry representatives. The final four teams will compete to win:

- Farm Bureau Entrepreneur of the Year, for a total of \$50,000
- People's Choice award, for a total of \$20,000

The top 10 semi-finalist teams will participate in pitch training and mentorship from Cornell University's Dyson School of Applied Economics & Management faculty prior to competing at AFBF's Convention. In addition, the top 10 semi-finalist teams will have the opportunity to network with industry leaders and venture capital representatives.



Presentations by Ag Innovation Challenge Finalists are highlights at the AFBF Annual Meeting.

Entrepreneurs must be Farm Bureau members to qualify as top 10 semi-finalists. Applicants who are not Farm Bureau members can join a state Farm Bureau of their choice. Visit <https://www.fb.org/about/join> to learn about becoming a member.

Detailed eligibility guidelines, the competition timeline, videos and profiles of past winners are available at [fb.org/challenge](https://fb.org/challenge). Applications must be received by midnight Eastern Time on July 31, 2020.

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# Fresh Summer Salad

## Grilled Florida Steak and Corn Salad

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 Florida steak (your favorite cut), grilled and sliced
- 1 ear Florida sweet corn, grilled and cut off cob
- 1 Florida avocado, grilled and sliced
- 2 Florida tomatoes, cut into wedges
- 1 red onion, sliced thin
- 1 (5-ounce) package Florida arugula
- 6 ounces crumbled blue cheese
- 4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste

### DIRECTIONS:

- In a small bowl combine vinegar, mustard, one-quarter teaspoon of salt and one-quarter teaspoon of black pepper.



Slowly drizzle in olive oil, while whisking. Store in the refrigerator until you are ready to assemble salad.

- Preheat the grill to a high temperature. Season the steak, avocado, and corn with salt and pepper. Sear the steak for three to four minutes on both sides (for medium rare), sear each avocado half for two to three minutes and sear the corn for three to four minutes or until the desired char is reached.

- Allow the ingredients to cool, then slice the steak, cut corn off the cob and thinly slice the avocado.
- In a large bowl toss the greens, tomatoes and onions in just enough vinaigrette to lightly coat all ingredients. Arrange the steak, avocado and corn over greens. Add crumbled blue cheese and serve in family style or in individual portions.

*(Courtesy of Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services)*



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# Healthy, Easy Treats for Kids

Snacks are a way of life for people of all ages, but especially children, who consume about 25% of their daily calories from snacks, according to research published in the “Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior.” Providing nutritionally balanced snacks for your children at home can make for a happy and healthy day.

Planning snacks that are as delicious as they are healthy is a winning solution, and snacks are a simple way to add more nutrition to your child’s diet.

For example, low-fat and fat-free dairy foods are essential to children’s growth and overall wellness. They provide calcium and vitamin D, two nutrients kids don’t get enough of, according to the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The guidelines recommend 2-3 servings of low-fat and fat-free dairy foods every day, depending on the child’s age.

Giving kids a role in the preparation can give them added incentive to enjoy healthy treats, and these recipes are all easy enough that kids can make them on their own (or with minimal assistance). Giving your kids the ability to play a role in the kitchen and create is a gift that can last a lifetime. The culinary skills they develop early in life can give them the confidence and know-how to cook nutritious meals for themselves as teens and adults.

Get more ideas to get kids cooking and snacking smart at [milkmeansmore.org](http://milkmeansmore.org).

## Red, White and Blue Greek Yogurt Bar



PREP TIME: 5 minutes | SERVINGS: 12

### INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups plain non-fat Greek yogurt
- 1/3 cup honey, plus additional for drizzling (optional)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup strawberries, sliced into rounds
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 1/2 cup raspberries, halved
- 

### DIRECTIONS:

- In medium mixing bowl combine Greek yogurt, 1/3 cup honey and vanilla.
- On parchment paper-lined baking sheet, spread Greek yogurt mixture to 1/4 inch thickness. Press strawberries, blueberries and raspberries into yogurt. Freeze at least 3 hours. Break into pieces upon removing from freezer.

*(Courtesy of Family Features)*

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Bass, Bream, Catfish, Tilapia, Koi, Grass Carp, Shinners and Gambusia Minnows. Pond Supplies. Licensed and experienced. Call today! Cal Trotter. 1-321-952-9176. Palm Bay, FL.

## SHONGALOO FISHERIES

Channel catfish, certified Florida bass, bluegill, grass carp, shellcrackers, warmouth, koi, and gambusia for stocking. See complete list at [www.shongaloofisheriesinc.com](http://www.shongaloofisheriesinc.com). Hampton, FL. 352-468-1251.

## GOOD THINGS TO EAT

### FARM BUREAU BUYER'S CLUB

Check out the Florida Farm Bureau Buyer's Club on the back of the magazine. We're offering pudding cakes, Pictsweet vegetables and so much more during our Summer Sale!

## LEGAL SERVICES

### Charles F. Woodhouse, Esq.

MBA, JD, MS Food Safety  
Graduate Certificates in  
Food Law and Packaging Attorney  
Specializing in Agriculture and Food Law  
Food Safety Modernization Act Compliance  
PACA and Florida Broker/Dealer Complaints  
Crop Insurance and Risk Management Programs  
Representation before County Committees, State Committee, and National Appeals Division Matters

### Woodhouse Shanahan PA

Agribusiness Industry Regulatory Compliance  
Washington, DC & Cedar Key, FL  
E-mail: [cfw@regulatory-food-science.com](mailto:cfw@regulatory-food-science.com)  
Website: [www.seafood-and-produce-law.com](http://www.seafood-and-produce-law.com)  
Blog: [www.food-label-compliance.com](http://www.food-label-compliance.com)  
Tel Cedar Key, FL 352-278-1110  
Tel Washington, DC 202-293-0033  
FAX 202-478-0851

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Email: [Mike@martinpa.com](mailto:Mike@martinpa.com)  
Website: [www.martinpa.com](http://www.martinpa.com)

## LIVESTOCK

Registered Angus Cattle For Sale  
Ohana Farms  
Bull Calfs, Cows, Heifers, Pairs  
386-212-1006

### REGISTERED BLACK ANGUS BULLS

for sale bull calf 1 year, gentle  
\$1,000.00  
Solid Performance Bloodlines  
813-713-6345

## MISCELLANEOUS

**AKC Registered Beagle Puppies** for sale in NW Florida. Call 850-554-1062 or email [Allenmanning59@gmail.com](mailto:Allenmanning59@gmail.com).

Cemetery Plot For Sale:

Meadowood, Timberlane Road - Veteran Garden, Block 150, Lot C, Grave 1 - \$2000  
OBO - I pay transfer fee - 229-251-5510.

## PLANTS & SEEDS

Native Southern Red Cedars

15g, 6'-8', \$35  
386.418.8031

Alternative Fruit Crops

All of the latest and greatest varieties of avocado, dragon fruit, guava, longan, lychee, macadamia nut, mango, peach, pomegranate, and more. Call Pine Island Nursery (305)233-5501. [www.PinelandNursery.com](http://www.PinelandNursery.com)

## REAL ESTATE

### Maury L. Carter & Associates, Inc.

Licensed Real Estate Broker  
CONTACT

### Daryl Carter or John Evans

407-422-3144 - [www.maurycarter.com](http://www.maurycarter.com)

### HOG BAY FARM FARM & SOLAR OPPORTUNITY! UNDER CONTRACT -

DeSoto County 1,387± Acres - This property is 1,387± gross acres and 1,300± net acres of tillable land. Although formerly used for an organic citrus operation, this property has been used for the farming of alternative crops. This property can offer potential income streams from various uses: tomatoes, watermelons, citrus, cattle, hay, sod and many other varieties of row crops. Solar companies take notice! There is a high tension transmission line that runs the northern boundary of the property. Given the amount of usable acreage, the subject site would work nicely as a solar farm. ASKING PRICE: \$7,351,100 or \$5,300/acre.

### AUNT ZELMAS BLUEBERRY FARM

Alachua County 26± Acres - Active commercial and U-Pick Florida blueberry farm for sale! 22 net growing acres. Varieties include Farthing, Scintilla, Star, Prima Donna, Sweet Crisp, and Windsor. All bushes planted in 2011. This property boasts both commercial harvesting and U-Pick. However, the U-Pick operation is robust and brings customers from all over the state. The property has a small store on site to accommodate customers that come for U-Pick season. For more details information on the farm, please visit: [www.auntzelmasblueberries.com](http://www.auntzelmasblueberries.com). ASKING PRICE: \$650,000.

Continued on next column...

## REAL ESTATE

### CENTER HILL BLUEBERRY FARM

Sumter County 20± Acres - ORGANIC CERTIFIED BLUEBERRY FARM AVAILABLE FOR SALE! A turn-key ready blueberry farm to add to your portfolio. Farm equipment available for sale too! See production information. This highly productive blueberry farm is located in Sumter County, FL, just east of I-75. Good inter-connectivity for sending fruit to packing house as well as easy access to farm. ASKING PRICE: \$450,000

### HAW CREEK RANCH - Flagler County-

190.5± Acres - Various land tracts for sale that are available between 20 and 40± acres. These lots are perfect for estates, ranchettes and recreational purposes. PRICED TO SELL. Use this land as a place to transform and make an estate, a small recreational property, use for agricultural purposes and more. These pieces can be perfect for small hunting properties as well. 20 to 40 Acre Tracts - \$5,500/Acre to \$7,500/Acre (1,200± acres available in total - Call for details)

### SPRINGWATER RANCH PRICE REDUCED!

Lake County 1,241± Acres - This property offers the comforts of the country with proximity to major cities. Springwater Ranch is located roughly an hour northwest of Downtown Orlando and is just a short twenty minute drive north of Mount Dora, FL. The ranch is mostly improved pasture and boasts gorgeous elevation changes throughout the property. This property is a working cattle ranch but would double nicely as a sod operation. THIS WON'T LAST! NOW: \$5,584,500 or \$4,500/acre  
~~WAS: \$6,205,000 or \$5,000/acre~~

### LONGLEAF LAND COMPANY

Land for sale in Northwest Florida and South Alabama  
Contact Jody Jones  
334.493.0123  
[longleaf@longleafland.com](mailto:longleaf@longleafland.com)  
[www.longleafland.com](http://www.longleafland.com)

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## REAL ESTATE

### FOR SALE

- 21 +/- acres, near Boone, Beech mountain and Banner Elk NC on beautiful native trout Stream-Beech creek. Baptizing cascading waterfalls, timber, hunting, fishing, recreation. 2 counties. \$225,000.
- Avery County, NC - 346 +/- acres, located in Spruce Pine mining district. Open mines, gold, feldspar, mica. \$2.9 Million.
- Avery County, NC - 200 +/- Acres, located in mountain community Cranberry. Fishing, hunting, timber, trails, recreation. Price: \$1.8 Million
- Watauga County, NC - 3 Beds|2baths Single family home located on 4.92 acres of mountain land. Hwy 105, commercial, creek. \$350,000
- Citrus County, FL # 401 +/- Acres of private islands. Direct frontage on the Gulf of Mexico. Fishing, camping, hunting, docks, helicopter pad. \$1.5 Million.

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ow@owacc.com

912-375-3366 Ext 306 or 352

### Southern Pine Plantations

North and Northwest Florida

377 Acres, Jackson Co,  
148 acres Cultivated farm land, Irrigated,  
15,400 sq. ft. packing shed,  
2,400 Sq. ft. Cooler.  
\$2,950/acre

7,611 acres managed commercial  
timberland, Planted Pine, Hardwood  
Bottoms,  
Excellent Hunting. \$1,200/acre. SOLD!!  
Call Pat Duane at 352-867-8018  
Southern Pine Plantations of Fla.  
Owns the property it sells.

### 50 Acres of beautiful Old Florida with shady oaks trees and flowing creek.

\$375,000. Tons of wildlife and great  
for hunting deer, hog and turkey.  
3 bed, 2 bath home with well and  
septic. On Hwy 31, south of Arcadia,  
DeSoto County. Welcome to your  
peaceful, quiet country paradise with  
lots of opportunity for hunting and  
fishing. Zoned A-5. This beautiful  
property is priced to sell at only  
\$7,000 per acre! Melissa  
Bajsa, CMTG Real Estate Group,  
863-430-3977.

## APRIL/MAY SOLUTION

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| F | R | E | E | A | B | B | O | T | A | G | E | D |
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| A | R | G | O | M | O | D | E | M | R | I | S | E |
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| P | E | E | R | O | C | T | E | T | E | C | H | T |

## REAL ESTATE

### National Land Realty Real Estate Brokerage 863-293-5600 - www.NationalLand.com

DESOTO COUNTY - Arcadia, FL  
- 535 AC Grove & Farm - \$3,600,000 -  
Call Chip Fortenberry 863.673.9368 or  
Squire Smith 863.559.0307

DESOTO COUNTY - Arcadia,  
FL - 400 AC Premium Farmland -  
\$2,600,000 - Call Justus Koester  
239.898.0163

POLK COUNTY - Fort Meade, FL -  
2,543 AC - AG Land- \$8,899,500 -  
Call Trevor C. Willams 863.289.7222

POLK COUNTY - Lakeland, FL - 100  
AC - AG Land- \$425,000 -  
Text Neil Combee 863.559.6585

CHARLOTTE COUNTY -  
Punta Gorda, FL - 40 AC Farmland  
Homesite- \$469,000 -  
Call Justus Koester 239.898.0163

LAKE COUNTY - Yahala, FL - 260  
AC Equestrian Estate with 6,100ft of  
frontage on Lake Harris - \$11,000,000  
- Call Squire Smith 863.559.0307 or  
Ben Crosby 863.293.5600

## PERENNIAL PEANUT PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION



Perennial Peanut is a high  
quality persistent tropical  
forage legume that can be  
grazed or fed to livestock. It  
can be stored as dry hay or  
silage and is an ideal substitute  
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[Perennialpeanuthay.org](http://Perennialpeanuthay.org)

## PUBLIC NOTICE BY FLORIDA PORK IMPROVEMENT GROUP AND THE NATIONAL PORK BOARD

The election of pork producer delegate  
candidates for the 2021 National Pork  
Producers (Pork Act) Delegate Body  
will take place at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday  
September 17, 2020 in conjunction with a  
Board of Director's meeting of the Florida  
Pork Improvement Group at the Florida  
FFA Association Office, 5600 SW 34th  
Street, Gainesville, Florida. All Florida pork  
producers are invited to attend.

Any producer 18 or older, who is a  
resident of the state and has paid all  
assessments due may be considered as  
a delegate candidate and/or participate  
in the election. All eligible producers are  
encouraged to bring with them a sales  
receipt proving that hogs were sold in their  
name and the check off deducted. For  
more information, contact the Florida Pork  
Improvement Group at 352-384-2633.

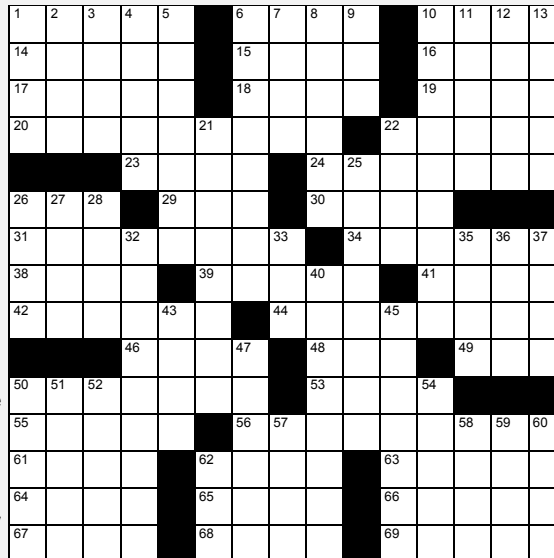
# JUNE CROSSWORD

## Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

### ACROSS

- Orange Bowl site
- Pointer's word
- Tip off
- Bit of high jinks
- Wedding shower?
- Aide's anagram
- Landscaping material
- Played for a sap
- Whitewater vessel
- Bride-to-be's stash
- Sire, in the Bible
- Two-man fight
- Figurative writing
- Give it \_\_\_\_ (try)
- Life story, briefly
- Hernando's home
- Use sparingly
- Fix, as a dog
- Inventory unit
- Brief reprieve
- Donated
- Pioneer product
- Eating disorder
- Adored one
- Wonderment
- Under the weather
- Family doter
- Sheen's wing
- Stallone role
- Gladiator played by Kirk Douglas
- Teeny bit
- \_\_\_\_-friendly
- Watchful
- Full of oneself



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- Stir up
- Fiji neighbor
- It can be bold
- Brings home
- Step in
- Metal thread diameter
- Old saying
- Pass along
- 1985 film, "The Journey of \_\_\_\_\_ Gann"
- Item handed down
- Barracks locale
- Staffing level
- Went for the gold?
- Cola cooler
- Soul mate
- Snake's warning
- Type of acid
- One of the Kennedys
- "Get \_\_\_\_!"
- Bad way to be caught
- Whirlpool-like current
- Say again
- Long-time TV dog
- Ground grain
- Spacious
- Misbehave
- Prey grabber
- Trapper's trophy
- Small price to pay
- Hankering
- Rating unit
- Big coffee holder

Solution available online at [FloridAgriculture.org](http://FloridAgriculture.org) or in next issue.



Find us on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/  
FlaFarmBureau](http://www.facebook.com/FlaFarmBureau)

## LABOR HOUSING

### ATTENTION GROWERS

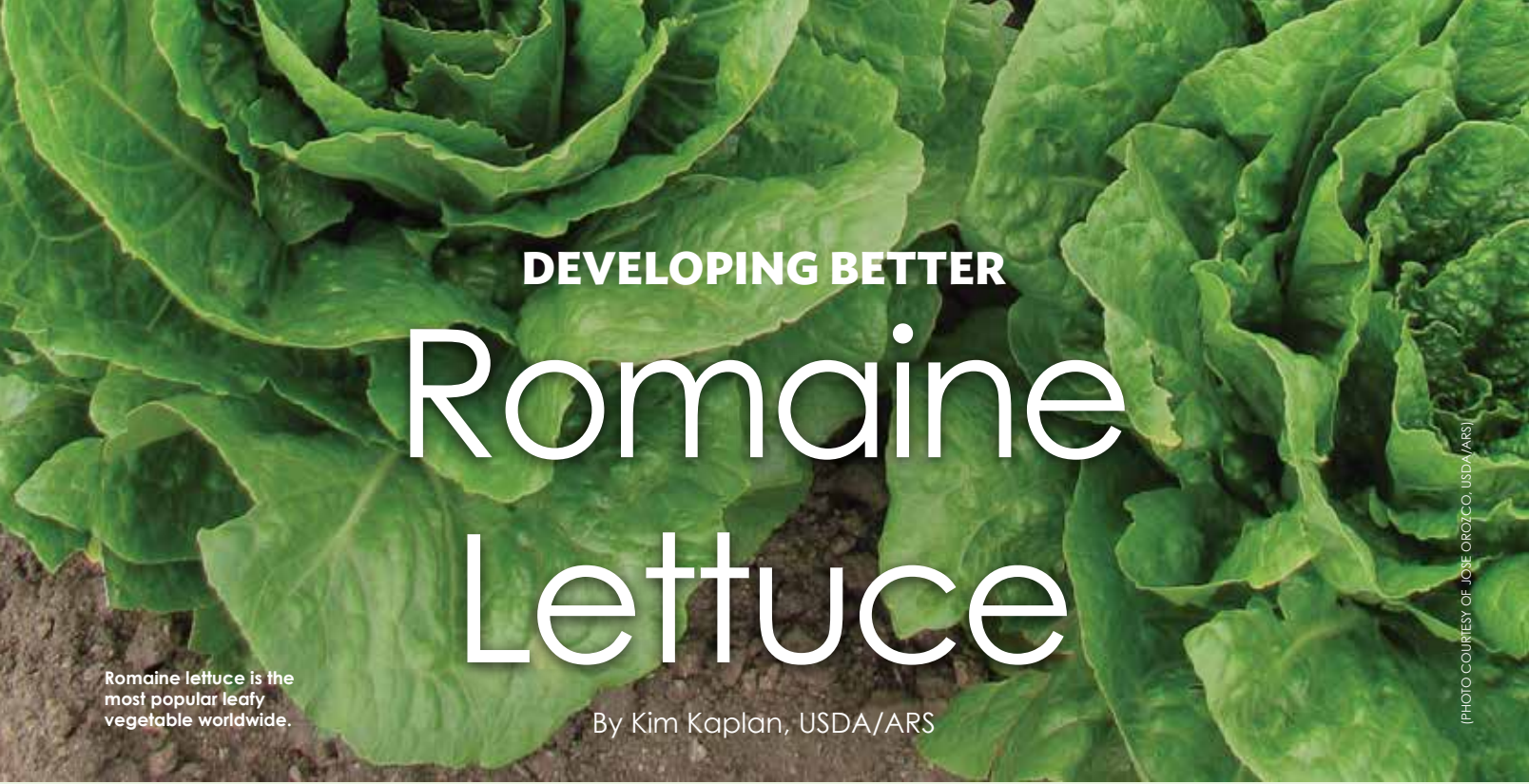
Labor Housing for H2A and/or  
Domestic Workers available...

EXCELLENT LOCATION  
(Western Palm Beach County)  
Approx. 1 hr. drive to Boynton/Delray,  
Vero/Ft. Pierce and Devils Garden

Full Kitchen and Mess Hall  
Permitted and ready for  
immediate occupancy

Capacity: Up to 1,000 persons  
Contact: Chuck Royal  
(561) 996-6581 Ext. 113

Also additional location in Moore Haven -  
Glades County. Call for details.



DEVELOPING BETTER

# Romaine Lettuce

Romaine lettuce is the most popular leafy vegetable worldwide.

By Kim Kaplan, USDA/ARS

(PHOTO COURTESY OF JOSE ORTIZCO, USDA/ARS)

**U**SDA scientists have identified five Romaine lettuce varieties that both brown less quickly after fresh-cut processing and are slower to deteriorate postharvest.

They also are determining the genetic basis for deterioration. The researchers have identified the location of genes associated with postharvest deterioration of fresh-cut lettuce and are in the process of identifying genes associated with browning – two economically important traits.

This will speed up development of new Romaine varieties with better shelf life because now lettuce breeders will be able to check that offspring carry these genes without needing to grow out and destructively test for browning and deterioration resistance.

Lettuces are the most popular, commercially produced, leafy

vegetables in the world. They had a farmgate value of more than \$2.5 billion in the United States in 2017, making it one of top ten most valuable crops for the country. But fresh-cut lettuce is a highly perishable product.

“Now having these molecular markers means that slow deterioration and eventually less browning can be more easily integrated into lettuce breeding, traits that are important economic considerations,” said research geneticist Ivan Simko with the agency’s Agricultural Research Service Crop Improvement and Protection Research Unit in Salinas, California. Simko led the study.

The researchers found the chromosome region that contains the genes for slow deterioration also contains four genes that code for resistance to downy mildew – one of the most-costly lettuce diseases.

There is a strong linkage between one or more of four genes and the rate of deterioration. DNA-based markers can be used to develop new breeding lines with a slow rate of deterioration and desirable combinations of resistance genes.

Deterioration is the rupture of cells within lettuce leaves, leading to waterlogging and the lettuce turning to mush. Browning is the discoloration of the edges of lettuce after cutting or tearing. Either development can spoil the leafy vegetable’s value by decreasing shelf life.

Like deterioration, there was a significant correlation between high resistance to browning and pedigree, which gives promise that lettuce breeders will be able to improve the trait and incorporate it into new varieties.

This research was published in *Horticulture Research and Postharvest Biology and Technology*.

BE THE  
**VOICE**  
LIVE THE LEGACY



Farm Bureau volunteers from the Putnam/St. Johns County Farm Bureau work to prepare food boxes and educational materials promoting agriculture for the District 3 community service project. The event helped local farmers who lost markets due to the COVID-19 pandemic distribute their harvest to local, non-profit food banks.



# Summer Spectacular Sale

**HURRY!** Order by July 15th. *Finest Quality-Super Savings!*

Delivered to your County Farm Bureau August 3rd - August 21st



**They're BACK**

## Delicious ... Southern Pudding Cakes!

From The Coffee Cake Company - Samson, AL

- Variety Pack** - (includes 1 of each; Mississippi Mud, Sock It To Me, Orange Pineapple and Lemon Pound) ..... 4/24 oz. cakes ..... **\$31.95**
- Mississippi Mud Cake** - Super moist chocolate cake topped with pecans and a sweet glaze! ..... 4/24 oz. cakes ..... **\$31.95**
- Sock It To Me Cake** - Blend of cinnamon, coconut, brown sugar and pecans! ..... 4/24 oz. cakes ..... **\$31.95**

- Banana Nut Cake** - A banana flavored cake topped with pecans! ..... 4/24 oz. cakes ..... **\$31.95**
- Lemon Pound Cake** - A delicious cake with a taste of lemon! ..... 4/24 oz. cakes ..... **\$31.95**
- Strawberry Cake** - An extremely moist flavorful cake with a burst of strawberry! ..... 4/24 oz. cakes ..... **\$31.95**
- Orange Pineapple Cake** - A excellent combination of orange and pineapple flavors! ..... 4/24 oz. cakes ..... **\$31.95**



## PICTSWEET FEATURING PICTSWEET FROZEN VEGETABLES!

Last chance to purchase until 2021! PACKED BY PICTSWEET OF BELLS, TN.



**SPECIAL**

- Breaded Green Tomatoes** ..... 6/12 oz. pkgs ... Was \$15.45... NOW **\$13.45**
- Butter Beans - Whole** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$16.45**
- Butter Peas** ..... 6/24 oz. pkgs ..... **\$18.95**
- Blackeye Peas** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$16.45**
- Brussel Sprouts** ..... 6/24 oz. pkgs ..... **\$17.45**
- Baby Lima Beans** ..... 6/24 oz. pkgs ..... **\$18.95**
- Butternut Squash - diced** ..... 6/24 oz. pkgs ..... **\$18.95**
- Corn - cut** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$14.95**
- Corn - white cut** ..... 6/22 oz. pkgs ..... **\$15.45**
- Collard Greens - chopped** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$17.95**
- Field Peas w/ Snaps** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$16.45**
- Fordhook Lima Beans** ..... 9/10 oz. pkgs ..... **\$18.95**
- Green Beans - cut** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$15.45**
- Italian Green Beans - cut** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$16.45**
- Kale - Cut leaf** ..... 5/14 oz. pkgs ..... **\$9.45**
- Mixed Vegetables** (carrots, corn, green beans and peas) ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$14.95**

- Okra - breaded - Imported** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$17.95**
- Peas & Carrots - Diced** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$16.45**
- Purple Hull Peas** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$16.45**
- Soup Mix w/Tomatoes** (potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, corn, green beans, onions, peas & celery) ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$17.95**
- Spinach - Chopped** ..... 6/24 oz. pkgs ..... **\$17.45**
- Speckled Butterbeans** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$16.45**
- Stew Vegetables** (potatoes, carrots, onion & celery) ..... 6/24 oz. pkgs ..... **\$16.45**
- Skillet Potatoes** (potatoes, onions w/ red and green peppers) ..... 6/16 oz. pkgs ..... **\$15.95**
- Turnip Greens w/ Diced Turnips** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$17.95**
- White Acre Peas** ..... 6/24 oz. pkgs ..... **\$18.95**
- White Sweet Cream Corn** ..... 12/16 oz. chubs ..... **\$20.45**
- Yam Patties** ..... 6/2 lb. pkgs ..... **\$26.95**
- Zucchini, Yellow Squash & Onions - Sliced** ..... 6/28 oz. pkgs ..... **\$19.45**

## Mississippi Farm Bureau & Catfish Farmers of America

Delicious Catfish from Simmons Catfish Farm!  
Freshly Harvested and Quick Frozen (IQF) for your convenience!  
Cook up a couple or a whole batch!



- FILLETS** ..... 5-7 oz. fillets (4 pounds) ..... **\$30.95**
- FILLETS** ..... 3-5 oz. fillets (15 pounds) ..... **\$106.45**
- STRIPS** Precut from Fillets ..... 5-7 oz. strips (4 pounds) ..... **\$30.95**

## Country Smoked Sausage

Packed by Nettles Sausage "Florida's Best" brand

- Variety Pack Sausage** For grilling, breakfast, or anytime!  
1-Mild Country Sausage (2.5 lb. pkg.) • 1-Hot Country Sausage (2.5 lb. pkg.)  
3-Andouille Country Sausage (2.25 lb. pkgs.) • 3-Jalapeno Country Sausage (2.25 lb. pkgs.)... 9.5 lbs. total **\$37.95**
- Country Smoked Sausage** Fully Cooked - Specify Mild, Hot, Andouille or Jalapeno
- Mild** ..... 4/2.5 lb. pkgs. .... **\$37.95**
- Hot** ..... 4/2.5 lb. pkgs. .... **\$37.95**
- Andouille** ..... 12/12 oz. pkgs. .... **\$37.95**
- Jalapeno** ..... 12/12 oz. pkgs. .... **\$37.95**



## Troyers Cheese from Amish Country!

Packed by Troyer Cheese from Millersburg, OH



- Mild Cheddar Cheese** ..... 3 lbs. (6/8 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$18.45**
- Sharp Cheddar Cheese** ..... 3 lbs. (6/8 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$21.45**
- Variety Cheese Pack** - Contains 2 Mild, 2 Colby and 2 Sharp blocks  
3 lbs. (6/8 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$18.95**
- Green Onion** ..... 3.5 lbs. (6/9.5 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$16.95**
- Cheddar Garlic** ..... 3 lbs. (6/8 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$25.45**
- Hickory Smoked Cheddar** ..... 3 lbs. (6/8 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$15.45**
- Farmers Block** - Semi Soft, smooth, creamy white, mild to mellow flavor  
3 lbs. (6/8 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$22.45**
- Marble Cheese** ..... 3 lbs. (6/8 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$17.45**
- Colby Cheese** ..... 3 lbs. (6/8 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$16.45**
- Pepperjack Cheese** ..... 3 lbs. (6/8 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$18.95**
- American Cheese Slices** ..... 5 lbs. (120 slices) ..... **\$15.95**
- Baby Swiss Cheese** ..... 2.8 lbs. (6/7.5 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$20.95**
- Summer Sausage** ..... (4/12 oz. pkgs) ..... **\$18.45**

## NUTS .... Stock Up!

"Florida's Best" brand

- Brittle Bites** Peanut Brittle Squares ..... 12 oz. can ..... **\$4.00**
- Cashews - Whole** ..... 16 oz. can ..... **\$9.95**
- Mixed Nuts** ..... 16 oz. can ..... **\$6.95**
- Milk Chocolate Pecans** ..... 12 oz. can ..... **\$6.95**
- Chocolate Peanuts** ..... 12 oz. can ..... **\$3.95**
- Honey Roasted Pecans** ..... 8.5 oz. can ..... **\$6.95**
- Butter Toffee Peanuts** ..... 12 oz. can ..... **\$3.95**
- Honey Krunch Peanuts** ..... 12 oz. can ..... **\$3.50**
- Almonds - Roasted & Salted** ..... 9 oz. can ..... **\$4.50**
- Southern Fried Skinless Peanuts** ..... 16 oz. can ..... **\$3.50**
- Orange Blossom Honey** ..... 2 lb. Squeeze Bottle .. **\$12.00**
- Wildflower Honey** ..... 2 lb. Squeeze Bottle .. **\$12.00**
- Palmetto Honey w/comb** ..... 12 oz. jar ..... **\$13.95**



PLACE YOUR ORDER WITH YOUR LOCAL COUNTY FARM BUREAU

## Member To Member ORDER FORM

| PRODUCT | QUANTITY | PRICE |
|---------|----------|-------|
|         |          |       |
|         |          |       |
|         |          |       |
|         |          |       |
|         |          |       |

Use another sheet of paper for additional orders

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd Phone \_\_\_\_\_