



FARM BUREAU DAY
NOVEMBER 30, 2021

BRIEFING PACKET



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Group Events

7:00-9:00am—Legislative Briefing Breakfast

Donald L. Tucker Civic Center

505 W. Pensacola St.
Tallahassee, FL 32301
Lower Level

11:00am-12:00pm—Group Meeting with Legislators

Senate Chamber
4th Floor Capitol

5:00-7:00pm—Taste of Florida Agriculture Reception

Capitol Courtyard

FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

310 W. College Ave.
Tallahassee, FL 32301
850.222.9927



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Trolley Service

Trolley service will be provided for Farm Bureau members between 8:30am and 7:30pm.

The shuttle service will run from the Capitol, hotels, and other downtown locations within two miles of the Capitol. Farm Bureau members are encouraged to park their vehicles at the Civic Center and utilize the trolley service throughout the day.

Event: Farm Bureau Legislative Briefing Breakfast

Location: Donald Tucker Civic Center – 505 West Pensacola

Time: 7am-9am

Trolley will be outside of the Civic Center box office. Please look for the Farm Bureau sign in the trolley window.

Event: Farm Bureau Legislative Reception

Location: Capitol Courtyard

Time: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Trolley will make periodical stops around the Capitol Complex. Please look for the Farm Bureau sign in the trolley window.

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Presumed Contamination of Agricultural Property

Bills in Drafting: Sen. Ben Albritton, Rep. Bobby Payne

Background

Recently, the Miami-Dade County Division of Environmental Resource Management (DERM) has enacted a guidance that essentially presumes that all current or former agricultural lands are contaminated because they may have had agricultural chemicals applied to them.

This guidance would force any current or former agricultural land that would be going through a land use change to receive a phase 2 site assessment. These assessments are costly, time consuming and unnecessary unless customary assessments show the need for them. This requirement goes far beyond the current requirements and customary assessments in other parts of the state.

Dade County Farm Bureau has worked to oppose this guidance at the local level, but to this point DERM has continued to move forward in enforcing this overly burdensome regulatory process.

We strongly believe in the validity of the federal registration process for agricultural chemicals as well as the legal requirement to adhere to labeling restrictions. When used in accordance to the law, agricultural chemicals are safe and in no way should create a presumption that agricultural lands are contaminated.

Effect of Legislation

This proposed legislation is still in the drafting process. Its goal is to prevent local governments from forcing unnecessary additional site assessments simply because agricultural chemicals have been applied on the property. Among other things, the bill seeks to:

- Unify regulatory authority over site assessments for current or former agricultural lands by making FDEP the sole authority for evaluating environmental conditions and assessing potential liability for the presence of contaminants on current or former agricultural properties.
- Allow the owners of current or former agricultural land to subdivide the land to separate pesticide mixing areas into separate parcels for environmental evaluation and remediation.
- Create a presumption that pesticides have been applied in accordance with the label unless evidence of a discharge exists.

Policy

Right of Producers to Use Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals

We support the right of individual producers to use chemicals and pharmaceuticals in accordance with label restrictions. If the user has followed label directions, he or she shall not be held liable for damages.



Nutrient Rate Tailoring

SB 1000: Sen. Ben Albritton, House bill in drafting

Background & Importance

Florida farmers, ranchers and growers depend on the Best Management Practices Program because it provides a presumption of compliance with water quality standards in a science-based, common sense way while providing meaningful cost-share opportunities when available.

The program has come under attack in recent years by environmental activists who claim that BMPs are ineffective and have made attempts to move the program into a more “command and control” regulatory system under the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Obviously, the effectiveness of the BMP program is dependent on good science and data. For the credibility of the program to remain high, the BMPs must continually be improving while taking into consideration environmental impact, practicality and cost effectiveness.

As a result of fertilization records collected by FDACS during the Implementation Verification process, discrepancies have discovered in some crops where nutrient application exceeded BMP fertilization recommendations as the recommendations are out-of-date due to varietal and cropping improvements. Additionally, the citrus greening disease pressure in citrus creates an environment where additional fertilizer is required due to root die-off and inefficiencies in nutrient uptake by the tree.

University of Florida/IFAS immediately started addressing the fertilizer recommendations that were found to be out-of-date but the workload is intense and will take several years to bring recommendations in line with current varieties being grown and current cropping methods.

Effect of Legislation

A pathway is needed so farmers can continue to farm in a profitable manner while being compliant with Florida Statutes. Senator Albritton filed Senate Bill 1000 to provide “Rate Tailoring” in certain situations wherein the farmer will depend on a Certified Professional to advise written nutrient rates that may be outside of the current BMP recommendations but in fact are site-specific BMPs that will provide for the nutrient needs of the crop while complying with state water quality standards.

Policy

Best Management Practices

We support scientific, economically feasible and technology-based Best Management Practices (BMPs) for all commodities with manuals adopted by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS).



FDACS Program Funding

Fresh From Florida—\$8.74 million

“Fresh From Florida” is a known and trusted brand that has been used to market Florida agricultural products since the Legislature created FAPC in 1990. Since that time, the “Fresh from Florida” brand has become recognized worldwide and serves to represent the state’s 47,000+ growers.



This program is vital to not only help safeguard the economic impact agriculture has on the state, but also to protect the safety and security of the food supply. Florida growers have experienced major impacts from imports from other countries, most notably, Mexico, which produces a wide array of similar agricultural products during the same time of year as Florida.

Rural and Family Lands Program

The Rural and Family Lands Protection Program, created in 2001 with the passage of the Rural and Family Lands Protection Act, is an agricultural land preservation program designed to protect important agricultural lands through the acquisition of permanent agricultural land conservation easements. Easements for this program will complement agricultural producers to ensure sustainable agricultural practices and reasonable protection of our natural resources.

In 2013, FDACS expressed the need for additional funding for the program to ensure the future of agriculture in the state of Florida. That year, the Legislature funded the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program at \$35 million. Since that time, funding has been reduced to zero. FFBF supports funding this program at a significant level.

Water Quality Funding

- \$10 million Trust for Statewide Water Restoration
- \$5 million Trust for Lake Okeechobee Restoration
- \$3.4 million Trust for Best Management Practices (BMP) Implementation and Verification
- \$3.3 million Trust BMP Research
- \$5 million Trust for Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) Focused Cost Share



UF/IFAS Legislative Priorities

Nutrient Application Research—\$2,263,753

- This research project will provide modernized, science-based fertilizer (nutrient) application rates ensuring farmers can protect the environment while growing food for the nation. This research project will assess, update, and validate the recommended amount of fertilizer that should be applied to two of Florida's largest vegetable crops and citrus with the intention of expanding to additional crops as needed in the future. Simultaneously, UF/IFAS will continue developing an artificial intelligence database on nutrient recommendations that will be developed through students in agriculture and engineering disciplines working with local farmers.

Quantifying Ecosystems Services with Artificial Intelligence—\$2,017,876

- The program will develop an artificial intelligence (AI) tool through the formation of a statewide ecosystem services (ES) monitoring network to quantify, validate, and develop ecosystem services delivered by agricultural and natural systems in Florida. The AI tool and monitoring network will provide guidance to policy makers, decision-support tools to agricultural producers and land managers, and opportunities to market “climate-smart” products. An ES monitoring system will also allow the quantification of services that are provided by unmanaged lands encompassed in the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

UF/IFAS Workload—\$3,615,000

- Provide for increased research and Extension workload demands. This funding is requested to increase UF/IFAS capacity and will allow for hiring a combination of faculty and staff to provide support for both rural and urban needs in different locations.



Watch List

[Roadside Farm Stand Signage](#)—HB 427-Rep. Kevin Chambliss

This bill would create a directional sign program similar to the Florida Wineries program to direct traffic to on-farm roadside stands where farmers market their own crops. FFBF supports efforts to help market agricultural products.

[Agritourism](#)—HB 717-Rep. Josie Tomkow

This bill will ensure buildings used in agritourism activities do not jeopardize the agricultural classification of a bonafide farm.

[YF&R Matching Grant Program](#)—SB 922-Sen Keith Perry/HB 597-Rep. Melony Bell

This bill would create a grant program to help offset start-up and development costs for beginning farmers and ranchers.

[Aquaculture Land Valuation](#)—HB 0149-Rep. Kaylee Tuck/SB 404-Sen. A. Rodriguez

This bill seeks to provide consistency in taxes relating to aquaculture facilities.

[Heat Illness Protection](#)—SB 732- Sen. A. Rodriguez

This bill would create additional standards and enforcement for employers relating to heat illness. FFBF opposes the bill in its current form because these matters are already regulated in other ways.

[Aggravated Animal Cruelty](#)

Several bills, including HB 121, SB 256, and others have been filed relating to animal cruelty. Currently none of these bills contemplate further regulation of animal agriculture. FFBF will watch these bills to ensure that livestock continues to be regulated as it is.