Welcome to the autumn issue of Panhandle Agriculture. This is the 4th issue of our regional newsletter. These newsletters reflect the combined efforts of your Agriculture Extension Agents in the UFL/IFAS Northwest District. Panhandle Agriculture provides information on row-crops, livestock, vegetables, alternative crops, pesticides, ponds, and more. In this fall issue you will find articles on harvesting cotton, wintering goats, and selecting winter forage. Also, we are honored to list in this issue, the 2009 Outstanding Farm Families of the year from our NW District counties.
Protect Your Horses Against Infectious Disease

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The following is adapted from references listed below.

Infectious disease control programs are important to maximize the health, productivity and performance of horses. Disease results when horses are exposed to infectious agents potent enough to overcome the level of resistance or immunity acquired through prior natural exposure to the disease or through vaccination. Infectious disease control programs should strive to reduce exposure to infectious agents in the horse’s environment and to minimize other factors, such as stress, which reduce resistance to disease. Programs which rely solely on vaccination often fail or are less effective because vaccines can be overridden by massive challenge. Proper feeding, pasture management, dental care, parasite control, training/exercise routines, housing, fly control, transportation management, sanitation and other management practices are critical to the overall effectiveness of an infectious disease control program.

What is a vaccination (immunization)?

Vaccination involves the injection, with a sterile syringe and needle, of bacteria or viruses that are inactivated or modified to avoid causing actual disease in the horse. Two or more doses are usually needed to initiate an adequate immune response. Once the immunization procedure is completed, the protective antibodies in the blood stand guard against the invasion of specific diseases. These antibodies gradually decline over time, however, and a booster shot is needed at regular intervals.

The vaccination program appropriate for an individual horse or herd needs to take into account things such as age, sex, and geographic location, use of the horse, pregnancy status and risk for developing the disease. Not every horse will be protected exactly the same or for the same amount of time following vaccination. A primary series of the vaccine with booster doses will be required for an appropriate immune response before exposure to the disease. It will take one to two weeks after a completed vaccine series for your horse to be protected against the disease. After the initial vaccine series, most horses will require annual or semi-annual booster vaccinations.

Amanda M. House, DVM, University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine, gives the following basic guidelines for immunizing the adult pleasure or performance horse.

Tetanus: A booster should be given two months after the initial dose and revaccinate yearly.

Equine Encephalomyelitis: (Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE), Western Equine Encephalomyelitis (WEE), and Venezuela Equine Encephalomyelitis (VEE). All horses should be vaccinated for EEE/VEE every six months and some veterinarians recommend
every four months in Florida’s coastal counties.

West Nile: This virus is transmitted by mosquitoes; horses should be vaccinated annually for possible protection.

Rabies is an uncommon disease in the horse. However, in any areas where rabies is endemic in the wildlife population, horses can be exposed through a bite from an infected animal. Vaccination is recommended followed by a yearly booster.

Equine influenza is one of the most infectious respiratory diseases in the horse. The virus is highly contagious and can be transmitted through the air from horse to horse as a result of coughing. Vaccination is recommended every six months.

Rhinopneumonitis generally affects the upper respiratory tract causing fever, nasal discharge, and sometimes cough. Adult horses determined to be at risk for infection are usually vaccinated every six months.

Vaccines for strangles and Potomac horse fever are available here in Florida; their use should be discussed with your veterinarian.

Remember these are basic guidelines for pleasure and performance horses. For a more thorough immunization program, please consult with your veterinarian, or see references used for this article below.

*Developing a Vaccination and Deworming Program for the Adult Horse*

EDIS Fact Sheet VM 170, By Amanda M. House

*Understanding Equine Strangles: Signs of Disease, Management and Prevention*

EDIS Fact Sheet VM 172, By Amanda M. House

*Equine Immunizations,*
http://www.dclahdvm.com/Articles/immunizations.htm

Wintering Meat Goats

A wintering program for meat goats should have as its main objective to provide the nutrients necessary to maintain a reasonable body condition prevent weight loss and keep warm. Although extreme cold weather for long periods is not a factor in Florida, the basic wintering needs for meat goats persist. One of the major effects of cold weather is the increased need for energy. Energy to generate body heat comes from food or stored fat. Other livestock such as cattle and horses add layers of fat on the side and under the skin. The fat layers serves as body insulation in cold weather and a place of stored energy. Goats add fat to the inside before the outside; therefore, they are vulnerable to cold weather and require protection from wind chill and cold rain. Animals that are not fed more during periods of cold weather will burn body fat and lose weight. If cold weather con-
tinues and the goat’s stored fat is used up, signs of hypo-
thermia will appear as animals becomes weak, stop eat-
ing and become depressed. During periods of severe or
prolonged cold goats must be kept warm and fed.

Good quality hay is the best way to increase body heat
while maintaining a safer, more consistent energy
intake. Forages and hay produce more heat than concen-
trate mixes. Concentrates contain more total digestible
energy than hay, but the amount of actual heat given off
by the digestion and fermentation of hay is considerably
more.

Nutrition

The nutrients goats need are proteins, carbohydrates,
fats, vitamins, minerals and water. Carbohydrates and
fats provide energy. Protein is required by the body for
muscle growth, milk production, disease resistance, re-
production and body maintenance.

Goats being natural browsers thrive on a combination of
year round grazing and preserved forages. As natural
browsers, goats are able to survive under more harsh
conditions than either sheep of cattle. Goats selectively
use a wide variety of shrubs, woody plants, weeds and
briers. This as a source of nutrients will provide very
good nutrition for the meat goat during the wintering
period. A wintering program should consist of forage and
supplements. Forages are: hay, stockpiled forages
or some by-product roughage feed. Supplements that
are commonly used and inexpensive are: shelled corn,
which provide energy; range cubs, protein blocks,
molasses blocks or tubs and liquid feed serves as protein
and energy source. Without sufficient energy, goats
conception rates, milk flow, and kid growth rates will be
compromised.

The single most significant cost in any livestock opera-
tion is feed. It averages 45% to 64% of the cost of pro-
duction. To be economically viable, meat goats must get
most of their required nutrients from forages. When
available forage is inadequate to provide the protein, en-
ergy or minerals needed for the desired levels of goat
performance appropriate supplementation should be
available, keeping in mind the cost benefit. Winter graz-
ing of small grain pastures for 1-2 hours per day will
provide adequate supplementation of protein and energy
when using dry pastures or low quality hay. The con-
tinuous use of roughage (even poor quality) is important
during this type of protein supplementation to economi-
cally allow the animal to assimilate the protein being sup-
plied.

High protein supplement feedstuffs commonly used are
cottonseed meal, soybean meal, whole cottonseed and
gluten feeds. When declining pastures and browse
reaches an unacceptable low energy level, good quality
hay, along with 0.5 -1.0 pounds of shelled corn or cot-
tonseed should be added to the feeding program.

Shelter and Water

Goats are vulnerable to cold wet weather and need ac-
cess to shelter to protect them from wind chill and cold
rain. Animals in general that are newborn, thin, stressed
or sick are at risk in bad weather and need shelter. Un-
der weight newborns, multiple births and pregnant does
are more susceptible to herd losses during cold weather
without good shelter.
Water supply is essential for livestock whether confined or pastured. The water intake of the goat may vary depending on the season of the year. More water is generally required during warmer times of the year. No matter the temperature, clean water should be available at all time. Goats will refuse to eat if adequate water is not available.

Meat goats provided with enough high quality feed, clean water supply, and shelter will be able to withstand the winter well.

References:


Harvest preparation is one of the last, but key, decisions of the season for a cotton farmer. Knowing when to “pull the trigger” is not always easy, and many factors have to be considered. Proper timing of harvest aid applications is important for optimizing both yield and quality of the crop. Preparing for harvest is a season-long process.

Defoliation decisions should be based on the crop and the crop environment. Plant maturity is usually the most important consideration, but other factors such as picking capacity, custom harvesting, and weather are also important. The goal for the producer is to determine the boll population that contributes significantly to yield, and to harvest that crop of bolls at the optimum time.

Left - mature boll with dark seed coats and filled-out seed. Right - immature boll with pale seed coats and "jelly" in the seed.
Photo Credits: Mike Donahoe, Santa Rosa Extension
Percent Open Bolls

Percent open bolls is a useful tool to determine when to defoliate cotton—but it’s only one of several methods to use to make a decision. We need to look at a combination of factors. An old rule of thumb is to defoliate when 60% of the bolls are open. However this method has limitations and depends on fruit distribution and gaps (no bolls present at fruiting sites). Research in Louisiana and other states has shown maximum yield can be achieved with application ranging from 42 percent to 81 percent open, depending on crop maturity and fruit distribution.

Nodes Above Cracked Boll (NACB)

Another method is nodes above cracked boll (NACB). NACB is determined by locating the uppermost first-position boll that is cracked open and counting the number of main-stem nodes to the uppermost harvestable boll. Research has shown that once NACB reaches four, the crop can be safely defoliated without significant weight or quality loss.

Heat Unit Accumulation

Measuring accumulated heat units (DD 60s) past cutout is another method to help schedule defoliation. Generally, cutout is defined as the time when five mainstem nodes are present above the uppermost first position white flower (NAWF = 5). DD60 heat units are calculated using the formula: maximum daily temperature + minimum daily temperature divided by 2, minus a base temperature of 60°F equals total daily heat units [(TMax + TMin /2) – T 60 =DD60s]. For example, a daily high and low of 88 and 76°F results in (88 + 76 /2) – 60 = 22 DD60s for the day. In general, when 850-950 DD60s are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Estimted Minimum Temp. (°F)</th>
<th>Mature Leaves</th>
<th>Juvenile Growth</th>
<th>Regrowth prevention</th>
<th>Boll opening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Def 6/Folex 6 EC</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thidiazuron</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Harvade</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginstar EC</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ET</td>
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<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource</td>
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<td>Excellent</td>
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<td>Poor</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blizzard</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep/SuperBol, others</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish 6 Pro</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FirstPick</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Poor-Fair</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glyphosate</td>
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<td>Fair</td>
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<td>Excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sodium Chlorate</td>
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<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paraquat</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Desiccation</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
accumulated from NAWF = 5, the field should be mature enough to defoliate. However, this may vary from year to year and from field to field due to rainfall patterns, soil types, or daily high temperatures. Therefore, the field should also be physically examined before a harvest aid is applied.

The most important thing to remember is that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to defoliation timing. You have to make decisions on a field-by-field basis and not rely on any one method. With any method, check fields regularly to track the development of the crop and sample enough plants in different areas of the field to ensure that the sample is representative of the overall field status. It’s often best to use a combination of these methods to make a final harvest aid treatment decision.

**Harvest Scheduling**

In addition to crop maturity, another other major consideration for harvest-aid application is picker availability. Applications should be timed so that harvesting can keep up with defoliation. Harvest aids should be applied approximately 12 to 14 days ahead of picking. Under optimum conditions, the crop could be ready to harvest within 7 days after application. The interval between application and harvest may increase as temperatures drop later in the season.

Harvest aid performance is affected by temperature, plant condition, spray coverage, and product rate. Temperature is the main factor in determining harvest aid rate and it can have a significant impact on the activity of various defoliants. Defoliants work best on mature cotton under warm, humid conditions. Cool temperatures at the time of application, and for 3 to 5 days afterwards, can retard defoliant activity and cause less than desirable results. If possible, materials should not be applied during cool snaps. If temperatures drop below 70°F, activity of thidiazuron products (i.e. Dropp, Freefall, Klean-Pik, Thidiazuron, etc.) begins to decline. Table 1. lists expected activity of various defoliants.

Harvest-aids do not translocate throughout the plant. Therefore, thorough spray coverage is essential for acceptable results with all harvest aids. Most labels call for ground applications in 10 to 25 gallons of water per acre (GPA) and aerial in at least 5 GPA. Lower carrier volumes increase the likelihood of needing a second application.

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**Cutting Bolls**

Whatever method is used, growers should check bolls for maturity. Mature bolls are difficult to cut in cross section with a sharp knife without stringing the fiber. The seed will be completely filled out with no “jelly” in the center. The seed coats of mature seeds are tan to brown as opposed to the white and pale color of immature seeds. The presence of a thin, brown line around the seed indicates the boll is mature enough not to be adversely affected by application of a harvest-aid chemical. Bolls require 40 to 60 days from bloom to mature, depending on temperature. Bolls set late in the season take longer to mature and may never be harvestable. In most years, blooms after the first week of September will not have enough time to develop into open bolls in north Florida.
Mode of Action of Harvest-Aids

Harvest-aids work in one of two ways; by herbicidal or hormonal activity. Herbicidal harvest-aids injure the leaf, stimulating the production of ethylene. The ethylene promotes abscission, or leaf drop. If these are applied at rates too high for the temperature, they kill the leaf too quickly before ethylene can be produced. This results in desiccation or “leaf stick” instead of leaf drop. Aim, Blizzard, Def, Folex, ET, Harvade, and Resource are herbicidal-type defoliants.

Hormonal harvest-aids increase the ethylene concentration in the leaves and plant without causing any injury. Dropp, Freefall, Klean-Pik, and ethephon (Prep, Finish, FirstPick, etc.) are hormonal harvest-aids. Because these hormonal-type defoliants do not cause the leaf injury like the herbicidal types, they are not as likely to cause desiccation or “leaf stick”.

There is no best harvest aid material that will defoliate, stimulate boll opening, prevent regrowth, and perform equally well under various conditions. Combinations of products can result in good performance under a broad range of conditions that normally occur in north Florida. Boll-opening materials, listed below, are often used in combination with defoliation materials to increase the percentage of the crop harvested during the first picking or possibly to eliminate the need for a second picking.

Regrowth suppression is important if you cannot harvest the crop within 10 days following application. According to Dr. Mike Patterson, Extension Weed Scientist with Auburn University, on Roundup Ready or Roundup Ready Flex cotton, the only materials that provide significant re-growth suppression are those that contain thidiazuron as an active ingredient. These products include Dropp SC (and generic versions) and Ginstar and will usually suppress re-growth for up to three weeks if used at the appropriate rate. On conventional (non-transgenic) varieties, glyphosate (Roundup, etc.) can be used to suppress re-growth.

Updated listings of harvest aid materials and combination choices can be found on the university web sites referenced below.

The use of trade names is solely for the purpose of providing specific information. University of Florida IFAS Extension does not guarantee or warranty the products named, and references to them does not signify approval to the exclusion of other products of suitable composition.

References


### Commercial Vegetable Varieties

#### Cole Crops
- **Broccoli**: Arcadia, marathon, major, Packman, Patriot, Pirate
- **Cauliflower**: Majestic, White Passion, snow crown
- **Cabbage**: Green: Atlantis, Augusta, Blue Dynasty, Bravo, Cheers, Ducati, Emblem, Gideon, Gloria, Green Cup, Isalco, Matsuma, Puktor, Ramada, Rio Verde, Royal Vantage, Solid Blue, Tropicana
  - Red: Cardinal, Red Dynasty, Red Success, Red Rookie
- **Collards**: Blue Max, Flash, Georgia, Top Bunch, Top Pick, Vates
- **Mustards**: Florida Broad Leaf, Southern Giant Curled, Tendergreen
- **Turnip**: Just Right, Purple Top, Royal Crown, White Knight
- **Turnip Greens**: Seven Top

#### Cucurbits
- **Cucumber**: Pickling: Calypso, Excel, Eureka FMX 5020, Jackson Classic, Napoleon Classic, Royal, Transamerica
  - Slicing: Cobra, Dasher II, Daytona, General Lee, Indy, Lighting, Panther, Prancer, Speedway, Thunder
- **Squash**: Yellow: Dixie, Enterprise, Gentry, Goldbar, Lemon-drop, Madalion, Prelude I & II, Sunbrite, sunglow, Suwannee
  - Zucchini: Agriset, Cash Flow, Dividend, Envy, Green Eclipse, Payroll, Senator, Seneca Zucchini, Spineless Beauty
- **Butternut**: Ultra, Waltham, Zenith
- **Watermelon**: Diploid: Celebration, Fiesta, Gold Strike, Jambor-ee, Mardi Gras, Regency, Royal Star, Royal Sweet, Sangria, Sentinel, Summer Flavor 790, 800, & 900
  - Seedless (Large): Freedom, Genesis, Gypsy, Millionaire, Olympia, Revolution, Sugar Heart, Sugar crisp, SummerSweet 5244 & 5544, SuperSeedless, Tri-X-313, Tri-X-Carousel, Tri-X-Palmar, Triton
  - Seedless (mini): Extazy, Mohican, Petite Treat, Solitaire, Valdoria, Vanessa, Wonder
- **Legumes**
  - **Snap/Pole beans**
    - Green Bush: Ambra, Benchmark, Bronco, Capri-corn, Charon, Dusky, Fandango, Hialeah, Leon, Mercury, Mirada, Opus, Prosperity, Sville, Sonata, Storm
    - Yellow Bush: Gold Mine, Gold Rush, Golden Rod
  - **Green Pole**: Dade, Macaslan, Fordhook 242
- **Lima bean**: Early Thorgreen, Jackson Wonder, Nemagreen
- **Southern pea**: Early Ace, Knuckle Purplehull, Magnolia, Pinkeye Purplehull, Texas Cream 40, White Acre, Zipper Cream
- **Snow pea**: Oregon Sugarpod II
- **Okra**: Annie Oakley II, Cajun Delight, Clemson Spinless 80, Spike, Clemson Spineless, North and South
- **Solanaceae**
  - **Eggplant**: Epic, Night Shadow, Santana
  - **Pepper**: Bell: Aladdin (yellow), Aristotile, Brigadier, Crusader, Double-up, Enterprise-X3R, Excursion II, Heritage, Lafayette (yellow), Legionaire, Olympus, Orion, Paladin, Patriot, Polaris, Revolution, Sentry, Snapper, Telestar, Wizard-X3R
  - **Cubanelle**: Aruba, Biscayne, Key Largo
  - **Specialty**: Anch Villa (ancho), Cherry Bomb (cherry), Grande (jalapeno), Hercules (jalapeno), Inferno (Hungarian Wax), Large Red Thick (cay-enne), Mesill (cayenne), Mitla (cayenne), Ventura (jalapeno)
- **Potato**: Atlantic, Harley Blackwell, Red LaSoda, LaRouge, LaChipper, Sebago, Yukon Gold, Gold Rush
The most important decision a commercial vegetable grower can make in any given year is proper variety selection. Variety selection can be an extremely dynamic procedure. Growers should only plant those varieties that demonstrate great quality and production based on University of Florida variety trials and standards (Olson et al., 2008). Variety selection in Florida may require special regional considerations because of the broad range of climates throughout the state. Due to this fact, growers should be prepared to evaluate several different varieties on a trial basis to see how specific varieties perform on their farm (Olson et al., 2008). A limited number of new varieties should be evaluated and grown at one time so that growers can accurately assess these varieties and not get overwhelmed with keeping up with variety data. When evaluating varieties on the farm, growers should record plant performance and characteristics along with yields and disease occurrence in the field. When deciding which variety to use, growers should take the following into consideration: yields, disease resistance, quality of plant and seeds, adaptability, and marketability (Olson et al., 2008).

When talking about variety yields growers should look for varieties that have proved to produce consistently high yields. The selected variety should at least have the potential of producing yields to that of those already grown on the farm (Olson et al., 2008).

Disease resistance is one of the most important aspects along with yield when selecting proper varieties. Planting disease resistant varieties is the most effective and economical method of managing diseases in the field. By planting disease resistance varieties, growers can reduce inputs from fungicide application. This will reduce, but not eliminate, the need for fungicide and other pesticide applications; thus lowering input costs and improving yields (Olson et al., 2008).

Plant and seed quality is another factor in proper variety selection. Vegetable producers need to select varieties with acceptable characteristics and plant habit as it relates to their environment and production practices (Olson et al., 2008).

The next consideration is adaptability. Similar to plant and seed quality, varieties must perform well under a wide range of environmental conditions that may be experienced on a particular farm. Proper varieties should be able to demonstrate the ability to adjust and acclimate to the changing environment around them without reducing yields (Olson et al., 2008).
The last, but not least important, consideration to keep in mind when selecting the proper variety is marketability. Broader consumer appeal translates to better sales potential. Varieties should be widely accepted among consumers. The product must exhibit desirable consumer, retailer, and wholesaler traits like excellent flavor and taste. Also important are size and shape, good marketable appearance, attractive coloring, great nutritional value, ample shelf life, and limited packing and shipping constraints. (Olson et al., 2008).

For more detailed information on commercial vegetable varieties and production practices please visit http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vph or contact your local University of Florida IFAS Extension office.

LITERATURE CITED:


Recommended Forages for Winter Pasture

It’s time to plant winter pastures, and for livestock producers preparing to plant, University of Florida IFAS Extension Forage Agronomists Ann Blount, Joao Vendramini, and Yoana Newman recommend the following varieties.

(The following is adapted from the UFL EDIS publication SS-AGR-84 “Fall Forage Update” by A.R. Blount, Y.C. Newman, D.W. Hancock, R.D. Barnett, G.M.

Prine, K.H. Quesenberry and J.M.B. Vendramini )

Rye – Rye is the small grain most widely used for winter grazing. Rye is more cold tolerant than oats and generally produces more forage than either oats or wheat. If rye is planted very early in the season, there may be a decreased stand caused by various seedling diseases. Normally rye developed from northern states will produce little forage in late fall or early winter and will usually be severely damaged by leaf rust; therefore, plant only varieties recommended for the Southeastern U.S.

Recommended varieties: FL 401 (for early grazing or for use in blends), AGS 104, Wrens 96, Wrens Abruzzi, Bates, Oklon, Wintergrazer 70, and Early Graze.

Oat – Oat is very palatable, but is susceptible to freeze injury. Oat may be planted and grazed earlier than rye. Horizon 474, Horizon 270, and Horizon 201 are relatively new varieties that have improved crown rust resistance, winter hardiness, and good grain and forage production. In some years, some varieties, like NK-Coker 227, may be injured by Barley Yellow Dwarf Virus (BYDV).

Recommended varieties: Horizon 270, Horizon 201, Horizon 321, Horizon 474, SS76-40, RAM LA99016, and TAMO 406.

Wheat – Wheat is similar to oat in forage yield and palatability. Wheat is less susceptible to freeze injury than oat. Wheat should not be planted for grazing before October 15 and precaution to plant only Hessian-fly-resistant varieties for grazing should be taken.

Recommended varieties: SS8641, USG 3592, and Pioneer 26R61

Triticale- Triticale is a cross between wheat and rye. It is well adapted to the southern U.S. and Peninsular Florida. Triticale has the forage quality of wheat and the excellent disease resistance of rye. Triticale does not respond well to close grazing and therefore is only recommended for haylage or silage. If used in grazing, consider
blending with ryegrass to promote a longer growing season.

**Recommended varieties for silage:** Trical 2700, Trical 342, and Monarch

**Ryegrass** – Ryegrass is a valuable winter and spring grazing crop for use on flatwoods soils or the heavier sandy loam soils in northwest Florida. Ryegrass may be seeded alone or with a small grain on a prepared seedbed or overseeded onto permanent grass pastures. Seeding ryegrass with a small grain crop lengthens the grazing season.

**Recommended varieties:** Attain, Big Boss, Bulldog/Grazer, Ed, Flying A, Jumbo, Maximus, Rio, TAMTBO, Verdure.

Early: Attain, Big Boss, Bulldog/Grazer, Ed, Flying A, Oregro DH-3, Rio, TAMBO, and Verdure

Late: Attain, Big Boss, Jumbo, Marshall, ME94, Rio, TAMTBO, and Verdure

Season-long: Attain, Big Boss, Ed, Jumbo, Rio, TAMTBO, and Verdure

These varieties were selected based on their recent three-year, multi-location performance.

Other ryegrass varieties, such as Prine, Florlina, Surrey II, Jackson, Big Daddy, TAM 90, Passeral Plus, Brigadier, Fantastic, Graze-N-Gro, King, Beefbuilder III have also performed well in regional trials. (Other new varieties may be suitable but have not been adequately evaluated in Florida.)

**Tall Fescue** – In general, fescue should not be planted in Florida. It does not persist as a perennial, and as a cool-season annual, small grains and ryegrass are more productive. A few producers have had limited success with Ga-5 when planted on low, wet, clay soils in northwestern Florida.

**Recommended varieties:** Max Q endophyte-friendly fescue where adapted.

**White Clover** – White clover is usually a winter annual but may act as a perennial under optimum soil fertility and moisture conditions. It is adapted to moist soils throughout Florida. Production and persistence of white clover can be limited by nematodes and other pests.

**Recommended varieties:** Osceola (developed in Florida), Louisiana S-1, and Regal Ladino. Durana and Patriot are also well adapted but have a prostrate growth habit and lower initial forage yields, but persist well under grazing.

Calhoun County winter wheat.

**Photo Credits:** Judy Luldow, Calhoun County Extension

**Red Clover** – Red clover behaves as a winter annual under Florida conditions and usually does not reseed itself. It does not tolerate poorly drained soils. Red clover provides long-season forage production in north Florida.

**Recommended varieties:** Southern Belle, Cherokee (seed will be unavailable in 2009), Bulldog Red, and Redland. Cherokee and Southern Belle were developed in Florida and both are non-dormant (earlier forage production) types that produce greater total-season forage yields than dormant varieties.

**Alfalfa** – Alfalfa is usually grown as a winter short-term perennial in Florida. Alfalfa is used for haylage, green chopping or hay. Alfalfa requires good management and high soil fertility. It is not tolerant of flooding or soils with high water tables. Alfalfa is not widely cultivated in Florida because of the cost of production and manage-
ment requirements.

**Recommended varieties**: Florida 99 (seed will be unavailable in 2009), Bulldog 805, and Amerigraze 702.

**Crimson Clover** – This clover is a reseeding annual that is adapted to fertile well-drained soils. It has a relatively short grazing season. Crimson clover may be grown in combination with ryegrass or a small grain crop.

**Recommended varieties**: Dixie and AU-Robin. Flame, Chief, and Tibbee may be available but commercial seed production for these cultivars will be limited in 2009.

**Arrowleaf Clover** – Arrowleaf clover is an annual that is similar to crimson clover in soil adaptation, management and fertility requirements. It is mainly grown on heavier soils in northwestern Florida. Arrowleaf clover makes more growth in late spring than crimson clover.

**Recommended varieties**: Yuchi and Apache. Apache has improved virus resistance compared to Yuchi.

**Lupine** – Lupine is an annual plant adapted to well-drained soils in northern and western Florida. It is an excellent cover crop. In recent years seed supply has been low, and forage production has been limited by diseases and insects. Only sweet lupine varieties are suitable for forage.

**Recommended varieties**: Tifblue. Tifwhite and Frost are also recommended, however commercial seed production of these lupine varieties has been limited and seed is currently unavailable.

**Sweetclover** – Sweetclover grows on slightly drier soils than white clover. It will not tolerate flooding. Sweetclover has an earlier but shorter grazing season than white clover. Sweetclover should be reseeded each year.

**Recommended varieties**: None at present. New varieties should be commercially available shortly.

**Austrian Winter Peas** – (Common). This annual legume is best suited to well-drained soils with high clay content.

**Recommended varieties**: Common

**Vetch** – Vetch grows best on well-drained, fertile, loamy soils. Although it is well adapted, it is not a highly productive forage in Florida.

**Recommended varieties**: Hairy, Americus, AU-Early Cover, Cahaba White, and Nova II. Commercial seed production of most vetch varieties will be limited in 2009.

**Ball Clover** – Ball clover grows on a wide-range of soil types. Although it is well adapted, it is not considered be a highly productive forage in Florida.

**Recommended varieties**: Segrest and common. Pre-inoculated seed is available in 2009.

**Berseem Clover** – Berseem clover has low bloat potential and is well-adapted to many soil types in Florida, including more alkaline and wet soils. Care should be given to the management of berseem clover when grazed. It is advisable to graze at about 10 inches and leave a 3-4 inch stubble height.

**Recommended varieties**: Bigbee.

Contact your local County Extension office for details on planting dates and seeding rates.
Successfully Marketing Products You Grow

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“Imitation is the sincerest (form) of flattery,” wrote English cleric and author Charles Caleb Colton in his 1820 book Lacon. While it may be true in fashion and music, in the business of agriculture it is a model for certain failure.

One path to a successful commercial agriculture business is to market a product, not a commodity. Many products are known locally for their quality by reputation and little else, such as Ruskin tomatoes and Plant City Strawberries.

Some products move on to the national scene through a coordinated, and expensive, marketing effort. These promotion programs maintain the identifier’s high visibility and quality status, real or imagined. Examples include Florida Orange Juice, Blue Diamond Almonds, and Vidalia Onions.

A few agricultural products have a global reputation, and many imitators. The logos and reputations are recognizable in even the remotest of locales and sometime, but not always, take centuries to establish. Parma Ham, Kobe Beef, Champagne, and Coca-Cola all have adherents willing to pay the market price on every continent.

To the uninitiated who are perplexed at the classification of Coca-Cola as an agricultural crop, the product is a major purveyor of high fructose corn syrup. The National Corn Growers Association list it as a major component of field corn demand worldwide.

Each of these products has one thing in common, an identifiable, unique quality. Whether it was through centuries of word-of-mouth satisfaction, or a skillful modern marketing campaign, enough buyers view it as a product, not a generic commodity with many substitutes.

Small farmers selling through community markets are facing the same market dynamics as any multi-national corporation. Each can choose to sell on price or product identity.

One farmer who has chosen to sell based on the quality of his produce and his unusual product offerings is Rich Pouncy of Bumpy Road Farm. He sells through a variety of local marketing channels.

Mr. Rich Pouncy of Bumpy Road Farm, standing by one of his uncommon, yet marketable, vegetables.
Photo Credits: Les Harrison, Leon County Extension

“I set up at the community farmer’s markets every week and serve a lot of repeat customers,” said Pouncy. “My buyers know they’ll get excellent quality at a fair price, and some unusual vegetables, too,” he said.

Bumpy Road Farm is Pouncy’s third career and he is pursuing growth through customer satisfaction. Formally he has served in the U.S. Navy and worked in the forestry industry.
While community market visitors will find common vegetables at his spot, such as tomatoes and bean, the unusual can be quite surprising. “My customers can get snake gourds and bitter melon here,” said Pouncy.

Pouncy’s entry into the exotic vegetables was a result of his contact in Tallahassee’s Asian community. “A friend gave me the seed and asked if I could grow them,” he said. “The response was overwhelming, so I put in some other varieties provided by friends,” said Pouncy.

The actions of Rich Pouncy were good business from several perspectives. First, he was alert and made the most of a customers’ request. He saw the opportunity to serve customers something nobody else had.

Second, he let market demand, not convention, direct his resources. He could have put in more squash or tomatoes, but he had a new product wanted by his customer base.

Third, he is pursuing more Asian vegetables to plant, and offering demonstrations and information on how to prepare them. In a short period of time, he has set Bumpy Road Farm on a course of growing product, not commodities.

In all probability, Bumpy Road Farm will never rival Coca-Cola for market share or revenue. But even the multi-national soft drink giant was once the unique offering of an obscure Atlanta pharmacy.

Farm Tax Records: Best to Prepare Now!

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Autumn has begun and there are only three pages left on this year’s calendar. Halloween candy, Thanksgiving decorations, and Christmas ornaments for sale in stores are just a few of the indicators 2009 is soon to be in the history books.

While not a task to be relished, the shortening days are a good time to begin the review of your tax records for 2009’s farming activities. April 15 will always arrive too soon, especially if you are not prepared. 2010 will be no exception.

For the producer who files an IRS 1040 Schedule F, one relatively easy task is to start sorting expense receipts into usable categories. This activity has several benefits and can be accomplished, with a modicum of attention, even during advertisements while watching your favorite college football team on television.

Part II of Schedule F provides readymade categories for arranging receipts. The groupings, such as feed, fertilizer and lime, seed and plants, leave very little ambiguity, but there is an “Other expenses” heading just in case.

A quick visit to your favorite office supply store and you can secure ample file folders to accomplish the task. Be sure to save the receipt as the cost of the folders is deductible, too.

If one receipt has multiple categories, say seed and chemicals, it is a simple matter to make a photocopy. Highlight or circle the expense on each copy and place in the appropriate folder.

The cost of tractors, implements, farm buildings and other high value inputs can be deductible expenses on a multi-year basis. These are depreciated over the useable life of the asset based on an IRS schedule.

Records must be clear when placing a depreciable asset into service during the tax year. The deduction must be prorated to reflect the amount of time the asset was employed if purchased midyear.
It’s tax time! IRS Form 1040, Schedule F - Profit or Loss from Farming.

While there are several allowable ways to figure depreciation, it can be calculated simply by the declining balance or straight line methods. The choice is left to the farmer who should select the most financially advantageous method.

Using declining balance depreciation allows for the deduction of most of the allowable expense early in the asset’s useful life. This method results in quicker recovery of the expense as a deduction against farm income.

Straight line depreciation takes the cost of the asset and divides the cost equally over the usable life of the input. It provides a consistent deductible expense annually.

The farm related depreciated expenditure is calculated on IRS Form 4562 and reported against farm income on the Schedule F. The mathematical methodologies are explained in the instructions for IRS Form 4562, and both forms must be filed with the IRS Form 1040.

One notable exception to depreciation expenses is land. Land does not wear out, become obsolete or get used up, so it cannot be depreciated. Cost associated with land, such as clearing, grading, and planting may qualify as a farm related deduction.

Aside from getting the jump on your neighbors, one benefit to starting early is to evaluate what has been spent during the year. Determining the total farm expenses is the first step to measuring a farm’s financial performance. Unless you have an accountant on staff or are diligent about record keeping, the results can be sobering at the very least.

Another benefit to starting before 2010 is there may be farm related purchases which will lower the 2009 tax liability if made this year. The only way to know this is to keep good records and start early.

Take advantage of rainy days and advertisements during ball games and get your farm expenses organized. While it may not make April 15 any more fun, at least you will be ready.

Palmer Amaranth – Weed? Or Insect?

I’m beginning to think of Palmer Amaranth the same way I think of a serious insect pest. It warrants the same planning and scouting dedication as any worm or stink bug. Palmer amaranth has quickly become our worst weed problem in cotton and peanut. Research indicates that one Palmer amaranth per ten feet of row can reduce cotton yields by 10% (Table 1.) In a full-season crop like peanut, 0.6 Palmer amaranth per meter of row can reduce yields by 20% (Figure 1.). Now that it’s in our fields, we need a season-long plan to manage it.
Timing is critical for effective control of Palmer Amaranth. It is common for Palmer amaranth to grow 1.5 inches a day during the summer. You need effective (complete) control during the entire season. Weeds that escape herbicides or cultivation need to be addressed when Palmer amaranth is small (3-4”). Like an insect, Palmer amaranth can grow quickly past the stage where they can be easily controlled.

Our best pre-plant and at-plant herbicide treatments will control Palmer amaranth for 30 to 60 days. Follow-up treatments should target small weeds and offer residual control to prevent subsequent flushes. Late-season escapes will still reduce crop yields and produce thousands of seed that will germinate in following years. Some farmers have used salvage treatments of wick applications of Ignite® or Gramoxone® to control Palmer amaranth growing above the crop canopy. These applications do reduce competition and weed populations but have to be repeated as smaller Palmer amaranth grows above the cotton or peanut canopy. Many producers have resorted to pulling or chopping Palmer amaranth to prevent them from going to seed. These hand-treat-
ments can cost upward of $40 per acre but may be the only way to prevent further problems.

Young Palmer Amaranth. Scout and treat early in the season!
Photo Credits: Joseph M. DiTomaso, University of California - Davis, Bugwood.org

Palmer amaranth should also be managed after harvest to prevent seed production. Disking, plowing, or contact herbicides can be used to prevent plants from producing seed between harvest and frost. Fields with Palmer amaranth should be targeted for a complete weed control program in the successive crop. Cover crops can reduce Palmer germination and combined with pre-plant or at-plant herbicides will reduce early-season competition. Post-emergence herbicides or cultivations should target small Palmer amaranth to increase their effectiveness. Residual herbicides should be used whenever possible to prevent rapid flushes of new weeds. Any late-season escapes should be controlled or removed to reduce Palmer seed reserves.

Palmer amaranth must be managed with dedication to prevent it from becoming a bigger problem in crop production. If you have questions contact your local UF/IFAS Extension Office. For weed control information on specific field crops go to http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_guide_wg_weed_management_in_field_crops_and_pasture_grasses

AgriVine
Items of Interest, Calendar of Events, CEU Opportunities & More

Outstanding Farm Families of the Florida Panhandle!

Congratulations Your 2009 Outstanding Farm Family of the Year!

By Judy Ludlow, Calhoun County Extension

Our careers as County Extension Agents with the University of Florida are very diverse, and one of the rewarding things many of us do is support the selection of the Outstanding Farm Family of the Year. The Florida Panhandle has a rich farming history, and many counties have been presenting this award for over 50 years. Each year, Farm Families are honored by the North Florida Fair, and locally, by counties, Florida Farm Bureaus, and IFAS Extension Offices. The Outstanding Farm Family of the Year Award is given to a family whose pride, dedication, and commitment to farming, is a way of life. These qualities are also reflected every day by their interactions with family, community, and colleagues. Join us in congratulating your local 2009 Outstanding Farm Family of the Year!

Bay County - The Reno Plenge Family
Calhoun County - The Steve & Michele Yoder Family
Escambia County – The Vernon Hiebert Family
Gadsden County - The James Harold Thompson Family
Gulf County - The Eddie Causey Family
Holmes County - The Marty Majors Family
Jackson County - The Dale & Cindy Eade Families
Expiration of DPL 555 cotton and transition to Bollgard II and Roundup Flex cotton

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Delta and Pine Land Company (D&PL) DPL555 cotton has been grown on about 90-95% of Florida acreage over the past several years. It is a single Bt gene cotton called “Bollgard” and will be replaced by Bollgard II cotton after the 2009 season.

All remaining original Bollgard cotton seed must be purchased by the expiration date of September 30, 2009 and can be planted in the 2010 season. Seed treatment will be applied by D&PL and will be their standard seed treatment. All Bollgard will be sold in 250,000 seed count bags only. Seeds will be shipped by February 28, 2010 and all seed sales are final. Growers will be invoiced $25/bag for seed cost at time of purchase and trait fees will be invoiced in July of 2010. Price of the technology will be flat with 2009 for the BGR technology in DPL 555. There will be no credit or returns. There will be a replant provision, but it will be with Bollgard II variety if a replant is needed. There is currently about 24% of the amount of DPL555 (Bollgard) seed available for 2010 as has been available over the past few years, so supplies will be tight and will be on a first come, first served basis. There will be no restrictions on how much an individual grower can get except supplies are limited. Any unplanted Bollgard seed in 2010 must be returned to Monsanto or destroyed including partial bags.

A Wise Farmer Once Said...

A bumble bee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor.

Your fences need to be horse-high, and bull-strong.

Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.

If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop diggin’.

Always drink upstream from the herd.

Good judgment comes from experience, and a lotta that comes from bad judgment.

The University of Florida IFAS Extension Needs You!

The University of Florida IFAS Extension works towards agricultural, environmental, and economic sustainability in our rapidly growing state and communities.

We accomplish this through research-based educational programs, publications, and opportunities provided to you locally.

Please consider donating to the UF IFAS County Extension office in your county. Your monetary gift is greatly appreciated, and will be used to continue our efforts at providing information and education you want and need.

To find out more about making donations and endowments to University of Florida IFAS Extension, please contact your County Extension Agents listed below, or Joe Mandernach, IFAS Development Office, at 352-392-5457, jmandern@ufl.edu.

Thank You!
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