For Covid19 Update from UF and IFAS please visit these links:
http://www.ufl.edu/health-updates/

https://ifas.ufl.edu/covid19-information-updates/

As of today, August 14, 2020 GCREC remains closed to the public. Our research continues with a limited number of essential staff and we are so grateful for their continued dedication.

Dr. Natalia Peres Awarded 2020 APS Fellow Honor

The society grants this honor to a current APS member in recognition of distinguished contributions to plant pathology or to The American Phytopathological Society. Fellow recognition is based on significant contributions in one or more of the following areas: original research, teaching, administration, professional and public service, and/or extension and outreach. Peres is a superbly gifted and dedicated mentor of undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate researchers. Her excellence in this area has served to generate multipliers of her research and outreach effort. She has produced a generation of skilled and broadly trained researchers and crop advisors. Her commitment to mentor international students and postgraduate researchers is particularly notable. She has been an effective advocate of closer ties between the American Phytopathological Society and Brazilian Society of Plant Pathology and has been frequently engaged in these efforts by the leadership of APS. She has mentored 27 such undergraduate and 10 graduate and postgraduate researchers in her program since 2010. With Peres's support, the foregoing students have made 65 oral and poster presentations at APS national and regional meetings. During the same period, these students received 24 awards from APS Foundation, the University of Florida, and others, in recognition of their research and extension achievements, an incredible achievement in light of her off-campus responsibilities at UFL- GCREC. Peres has also served her profession through her engagement in APS, having

served as associate and senior editors of Plant Disease; as the society representative to ICPP, as a coordinator and volunteer translator for the Portuguese language for the APS Education Center, and as the lead editor of the upcoming 3rd edition of the APS Compendium of Strawberry Diseases, Disorders, and Pests.

New Plant Breeding Website Features GCREC Breeders and More

https://programs.ifas.ufl.edu/plant-breeding/

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Peruse the produce section of a grocery store and you can find citrus, strawberries, blueberries, tomatoes, sugarcane, corn and lettuce developed by UF/IFAS researchers.

Go to a business that sells plants, and you'll see lantanas, coleuses, caladiums and a litany of your other preferred ornamentals – also bred by scientists at the UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

UF/IFAS Associate Professor Vance Whitaker has bred new strawberry varieties from the fields and labs at the UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center (GCREC) in Balm (Hillsborough County), Florida.

" 'Florida Brilliance' and Sweet Sensation® will make up 90% percent of Florida's strawberry acreage in the coming season," Whitaker said. "These varieties work well to keep high-quality strawberries in the grocery store from Thanksgiving to Easter."

Now, a new website gives you information about the UF/IFAS plant breeding program. In addition to produce and ornamental plants, UF/IFAS scientists breed trees, grasses, grains, peanuts and cattle forages.

"The overall goal of the website is to provide a comprehensive information hub for plant breeding at UF/IFAS," said Whitaker, chair of the UF/IFAS Plant Breeders Working Group. "This includes information on our new interdepartmental graduate degree program, which will go online in Fall 2021, plant-breeding research from faculty who genetically improve over 50 plant species and the real-world impact of the plant varieties we develop."

The UF/IFAS-bred Tasti-Lee® tomato came out in 2006 and due to numerous factors, one of which was flavor, it ascended to the No. 1-selling tomato in America in 2015.

More recently, Sam Hutton, associate professor in tomato breeding and genetics at the UF/IFAS

GCREC, developed the newest tomato hybrid, called ‘Solar Dancer,’ which was released in 2019.

“This hybrid has resistance to several important diseases, it has excellent internal fruit color and heat-tolerant fruit setting, making it an attractive option for fall production in Florida and in the Southeast,” Hutton said.

Fred Gmitter, a UF/IFAS professor of breeding and genetics, has released several mandarin varieties, including most recently, the ‘Marathon’ in 2018. The fruit’s ability to hang onto the tree for an extended period led researchers to give it the ‘Marathon’ moniker.

‘Marathon’ now is available from licensed Florida citrus nurseries, and already tree orders have been placed for planting in the winter of 2020-21, said Gmitter, a faculty member at the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center in Lake Alfred, Florida.

“Citrus growers are cautious by nature and careful when taking on new varieties. But based on the promising performance seen in some trial plantings, interest is beginning to increase substantially,” he said. “The good fruit traits — completely seedless, attractive and easy to peel — with good flavor, make them more attractive to consumers and growers.”

‘Marathon’ has other qualities that are catching industry attention: long on-tree and post-harvest fruit storage ability, early-season maturity and good yield. ‘Marathon’ is also tolerant to HLB (Huanglongbing or the “citrus-greening disease”) in vigorously growing trees.

On the residential front, home and property owners often enhance their landscapes with the beautiful lantana. However, some of the plant’s varieties may escape yards, spread to areas where they shouldn’t go and cross-pollinate Florida’s native lantana.

That’s why, in 2004, the head of the Tampa Bay Wholesale Growers Association asked UF/IFAS plant scientist Zhanao Deng if he could breed sterile, non-invasive lantana plants.

In response, Deng has developed three varieties that satisfy nursery managers, retailers and consumers. Bloomify™ Red, Bloomify™ Rose, and Luscious® Red Zone Royale™ are beautiful – so they will continue to enhance landscapes. But they don’t produce fruit and seeds, don’t spread and don’t cross-pollinate Florida’s native lantana, Lantana depressa, said Deng, a professor of environmental horticulture at the UF/IFAS GCREC.

“Growers, landscapers and gardeners like these sterile lantana varieties,” Deng said. “They have become a desirable replacement of the fertile, invasive types. More varieties with these characteristics are being developed.”

Featured in Morning Clips –Brad Buck, UF/IFAS

GCREC Diagnostic Clinic Status

Our ways to do research and diagnostics have definitely changed during COVID-19, but we have not stopped. Although we are working at limited capacity, the clinic is still operational. Samples can be dropped-off by the GCREC front lobby or they can be mailed. It is very important to include a detailed description of the sample in the Plant Clinic Submission Form, which can be found at the UF-GCREC website (https://gcrec.ifas.ufl.edu/plant-clinic/Samples). Printed copies are also available at the GCREC drop off station.

As a reminder, samples that exhibit early symptom development and have plant parts that are still partially alive (green) offer the best quality samples for accurate plant disease diagnosis. Samples that are totally necrotic, dry, and long dead are not adequate for an accurate diagnosis. Whenever possible, it is also best to submit a generous amounts of plant material representing a range of symptoms. We recommend that samples are taken before pesticides are applied, otherwise the ability to recover pathogens may be limited. If sending samples by mail, do not add water or pack a sample that is wet, and do not mix samples in the same submission bag. Moisture from root samples will contribute to the decay of foliage samples if they are mixed together. Plant disease identification procedures do not utilize soil. Excess soil can be hand shaken from root systems but leave enough soil to keep roots at field moisture levels. Samples should be kept refrigerated after collection until they are submitted. Especially during the hot summer months, a good sample could be ruined if allowed to bake in the sun or on the back seat of a car prior to submission. Finally, mailing samples early in the week to avoid a weekend layover in the post office is preferred. Once your sample is submitted, it may take up to a week for results from our lab, and you will be personally contacted with the outcome and possible recommendations. Dr. Jim Mertely is available by phone (813-434-7543) if there are any questions during the drop-off or to check on sample results.

Kudos to these Fine Employees Who are Marking an Anniversary with UF/IFAS GCREC this year! Thank you all for your years of service and dedication!

Sujeet Verma, Biological Scientist II/Strawberry Breeding – 5 years
Luis Osorio, Biological Scientist IV/Strawberry Breeding– 15 years
Jose Moreno, GCREC Farm Manager – 30 years
Todd Test, GCREC Mechanic/Maintenance – 30 years

Citrus Expo will include Presentation by GCREC Nematologist

Dr. Johan Desaeger, Assistant Professor at GCRE,C will be discussing new non-fumigant nematicides at the virtual 2020 Citrus Expo and Vegetable & Specialty Crop Expo on August 20! Registration: http://citrusexpo.net/registration/

GCREC Hops Research Continues with Great Success

Check out the latest video of our 2020 Harvest
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Av4v72dbdlo

Tomato Food Safety Workshop / T-GAP Renewal

16th Annual Meeting: Virtual Program via Zoom
Wednesday, September 9, 2020
1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

REGISTRATION AND PROGRAM CAN BE FOUND HERE

Upon registration (PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device), connection information and the ability to add to Outlook, Google, or Yahoo calendar will be provided from Zoom.

The annual Tomato Food Safety / T-GAP Certification workshop will be held virtually on September 9 from 1:00 to 5:00 pm. Participation is free thanks to the sponsorship of the Florida Tomato Committee. Due to the ongoing pandemic, this workshop will be held virtually using Zoom Webinar. If you do not have Zoom on your computer already, you will be prompted to download when signing in. Please give yourself about 10 extra minutes if you've never used Zoom before.

This year, the pre- and post-test will be conducted using the polling feature in Zoom Webinar and/or using Qualtrics surveys. We will prompt you to take the exam at the appropriate time. Attendance and completed the pre- and post-test are required to get your renewal certificates. We know this is a new format for some of you and thank you in advance for your understanding and participation. We look forward to presenting to you on Sept. 9th.

PLEASE NOTE: To receive a certificate of participation, all participants MUST complete the pre- and post-tests. Certificates will be sent by email.

UF/IFAS CCA CEU Sessions Notification

Dear CCAs Workshop Participants:

In view of the continued restrictions due to Covid-19, the CCA-CEU session, originally scheduled in April 2020, will now be offered on-line through UF/IFAS web site. This session will have Nutrient Management- 5.0 CEUs and Pest Management -5.0 CEUs- for a total of 10 CEUs. We are hoping to make the session available by early September. This session can be accessed using a userid/password that you will set up at the time of registration. We are estimating that the registration will be $60 for the session. The session will be available online

for a period of 3 weeks from the opening date and presentations (one hour each) can be accessed individually, at your convenience within those three weeks. We will send you the link for registration and fees in the coming 2-3 weeks. We are planning to offer the October CEU session also online sometime during the second half of October. This session will have Soil & Water (5.0 CEUs) and Crop Management (5.0 CEUs).

Recent GCREC Publications

Biopesticides for Management of Bemisia tabaci MEAM1 (Hemiptera: Aleyrodidae) and Tomato Yellow Leaf Curl Virus, Hugh A Smith, Associate Professor GCREC
Journal of Economic Entomology, toaa131, https://doi.org/10.1093/jee/toaa131

Using Supplemental Lighting to Control Flowering of Hops in Florida: HS1365, 4/2020, Shinsuke Agehara, Assistant Professor GCREC https://doi.org/10.32473/edis-hs1365-2020