# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Press Release</td>
<td>p.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The UF and FAMU partnership</td>
<td>p.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Overview and History</td>
<td>p.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Activities and Events</td>
<td>p.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar of Events</td>
<td>p.6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Information</td>
<td>p.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your interest in the 2011 **Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference**! We hope you find this packet helpful. For more information, please visit us online at [http://www.conference.ifas.ufl.edu/smallfarms/index.html](http://www.conference.ifas.ufl.edu/smallfarms/index.html) and be sure to join our email list at the bottom right of the home page for important updates. You can also follow us on Facebook by clicking the Facebook icon, again on the home page. For specific questions, please contact Mandy Stage, Conference Coordinator, at 352-392-5930 or [mstage@ufl.edu](mailto:mstage@ufl.edu). Thank you!
Contact:
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THE 3RD ANNUAL FLORIDA SMALL FARMS AND ALTERNATIVE ENTERPRISES CONFERENCE: JULY 15-17, 2011

Gainesville, Fl, May 9, 2011: The University of Florida’s (UF) Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) and Florida A&M University’s (FAMU) Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Focus Team are pleased to announce that the third annual Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference will be held in Kissimmee, Florida July 15 – 17, 2011.

The goal of the annual Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference is to provide farmers with up-to-date, research-based, in-depth educational information. As well, the conference aims to facilitate solutions-based collaboration by encouraging networking and an open dialog among members of Florida’s small farms community. Additionally, the conference is an excellent vehicle for increasing awareness of Florida’s small farms industry, which organizers accomplish by actively marketing to decision makers, supporting institutions and agencies, and other agricultural professionals.

The annual Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference has been successful from its inaugural year and is attended by a wide range of interested parties: small family, transitional, beginning, and experienced farmers; allied-industry representatives; educators; researchers; policy makers; small farm commodity associations; foundations; and others interested in continuing to strengthen Florida’s small farm community. The majority of attendees and exhibitors return to subsequent conferences.

The conference is an outstanding opportunity for Florida’s small farmers to hear noted experts speak about the latest science and research relevant to their industry while networking with other small farmers in a relaxed atmosphere and sampling locally grown foods. Florida’s small farmers find that, in this forum, their diverse experiences, coupled with their universal challenges (economics, regulatory pressures, marketing, and so forth), create a unique opportunity for collaborative problem solving and resource sharing. It is also an excellent chance for exhibitors to demonstrate their products and services to some of the most forward-thinking small farmers, educators, and researchers in Florida.

Through concurrent educational sessions led by industry experts and noted researchers, the annual Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference provides opportunities for attendees to learn about groundbreaking research and access educational support about topics such as operating sustainable and profitable enterprises, integrating cost-effective methods to meet state regulations, and applying the latest research to real-world problems. Attendees also participate in workshops, hands-on demonstrations, and organized networking activities, enabling them to share their knowledge while interacting with peers from all over the state.

For more information on attending, exhibiting at, or sponsoring this year’s Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference, please visit us online and sign up for our email updates at http://www.conference.ifas.ufl.edu/smallfarms/index.html. For specific questions, please contact Mandy Stage, Conference Coordinator.
The Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Focus Team

Based in Gainesville, Florida, The University of Florida (UF) has a strong presence, not only in educating its own students, but also in offering high quality, purposeful educational opportunities to Florida’s public. UF’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is particularly involved in providing such educational opportunities to the state’s small farms community. UF-IFAS and Florida A&M University’s (FAMU) Small Farms Focus Team, have developed a partnership, involving a core group of over 50 research and extension faculty, known as the Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Focus Team, who execute educational programs statewide.

The Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Focus Team is dedicated to supporting Florida’s small farmers through education, public outreach, and networking. In particular, the Small Farms team focuses on those issues identified as almost universal challenges to the state’s small farmers: accessing profitable markets, developing business skills, understanding and utilizing technical information, and learning about alternative crops and enterprises. To better accomplish their goals, the Small Farms teams of UF and FAMU have launched a tremendously successful website, providing Florida’s small farmers with much needed resources and information. The website (http://smallfarms.ifas.ufl.edu/) hosts articles, resource materials, and links to outside information on such general topics such as “getting started” and “finding a market” to more specific subtopics including farm planning and management, livestock and forages, agronomics, hydroponics, forestry, freshwater aquaculture, organic production, and much more.

In addition to their academic efforts through the Small Farms website, the Small Farms teams are involved in annual conferences throughout Florida. Their cornerstone event is the annual Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference, a three-day affair during which Florida’s small farmers attend and participate in educational seminars and hands-on training exercises while networking with industry partners, exhibitors, and colleagues. For information, please visit the conference website at http://www.conference.ifas.ufl.edu/smallfarms/index.html and review the enclosed press release.

Visit us Online!

- Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises conference:
  http://www.conference.ifas.ufl.edu/smallfarms/index.html
  When you visit, be sure to sign up for email updates and follow us on Facebook!
- Small Farms Team website:
  http://smallfarms.ifas.ufl.edu/
Conference Overview and History

The Hosts
The Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference is an annual event orchestrated by the Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Focus Team. This team, comprised of over 50 research and extension faculty from The University of Florida’s (UF) Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) and Florida A&M University’s (FAMU) Small Farms Focus Team, began holding the now-annual statewide conference in 2009 in response to overwhelming requests from the small farms community.

Conference Attendees
Successful since its inaugural year, the annual Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference is an opportunity for Florida’s small farmers to hear noted experts speak on the latest science and research relevant to their industry while networking with other small farmers in a relaxed atmosphere and sampling locally grown foods. Typically, the conference hosts an average of 800 attendees including a variety of interested parties: small family, transitional, beginning, and experienced farmers; allied-industry representatives; educators; researchers; policy makers; small farm commodity associations; foundations; and others dedicated to strengthening Florida’s small farm community. With the majority of attendees and exhibitors returning to subsequent conferences, this year’s conference has been eagerly awaited by newcomers and conference veterans alike.

The Goals
The main purpose of the annual Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference is to provide farmers with up-to-date, research-based, in-depth educational information. As well, the conference aims to facilitate solutions-based collaboration by encouraging networking and an open dialog among members of Florida’s small farms community. Additionally, the conference is an excellent vehicle for increasing awareness of Florida’s small farms industry, which organizers accomplish by actively marketing to decision makers, supporting institutions and agencies, and other agricultural professionals.

The Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference provides a forum for discussions, not only on local issues, but also on those issues relevant to small farmers throughout the state. Although county and regional educational programs are extremely helpful in satisfying many of the educational needs of Florida’s small farmers, this conference is unique in its ability to allow the state’s small farmers to come together as a whole. Past attendees have reported that, through this conference, their diverse experiences, coupled with their universal challenges (economics, regulatory pressures, marketing, and so forth), create a unique opportunity for collaborative problem solving and resource sharing.
Conference Activities and Events

Through concurrent educational sessions led by industry experts and noted researchers, the annual Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference provides opportunities for attendees to learn about groundbreaking research and access educational support about topics such as operating sustainable and profitable enterprises, integrating cost-effective methods to meet state regulations, and applying the latest research to real-world problems. Attendees also participate in workshops, hands-on demonstrations, and organized networking activities, enabling them to share their knowledge while interacting with peers from all over the state. Here are some of the topics addressed at the Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference.

Educational Sessions Include The Following Topics (and more!):
- Business and Marketing
- Horticulture
- Livestock
- Organic and Sustainable Farming
- Policy and Regulations
- Protected Agriculture

Additional Conference Highlights Include:
- Address by Senior Vice President of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Farmer-to-Farmer Roundtable Discussions
- Featured Florida Farmers
- Large Exhibition, Showcasing Products and Technologies
- Livestock Arena with Live Animal Exhibits
- Saturday Evening Networking Social
- Signature Luncheon - Florida’s Finest: A Celebration of Local Food

Pre-Conference Events Include:
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Workshop
- Exhibit Preview
- Food Safety Plan Workshop
- Horticulture Tour
- Livestock Farm Tour
Calendar of Events

The third annual Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference will be held in Kissimmee, Florida July 15 – 17, 2011.

Friday, July 15, 2011

Please note: Friday’s events consist of setup, pre-conference workshops, tours, and an evening exhibit preview with a reception for conference attendees, sponsors, and exhibitors. Please see the Saturday and Sunday agendas for the educational program schedules and information on conference activities.

10am – 5pm:
- Livestock educational demonstrators only: Animal arrival and housing
- Food Safety Plan workshop: Optional workshop on building your farm’s own food safety manual.*
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher workshop: Optional workshop.*
- Invitation-only meetings for small farms stakeholders and IPM NRCS Agency members

1pm – 5pm:
- Exhibitors only: Registration for exhibitors, arrival and setup.
- Livestock Farm Tour: Optional pre-conference tour of two local livestock farming operations. Please see conference website for more information.*
- Horticulture Tour: Optional pre-conference tour of two local growers of Asian and traditional vegetables. Please see conference website for more information.

5pm – 7pm:
- Exhibit preview and opening reception for conference attendees, sponsors, and exhibitors
- Conference registration open

* Pre-registration is required. Space is limited.
(Continued on next page)
Calendar of Events (continued)

Saturday, July 16, 2011

Please note: Many sessions run concurrently. Please plan accordingly.

Concurrent Educational Session Schedule by Topic

**Horticulture / Organic and Sustainable Farming / Policy and Regulations**
- 11am – 12:30pm
- 2pm – 3pm
- 4:30pm – 5:30pm

**Protected Agriculture / Business and Marketing / Livestock**
- 11am – 12pm
- 1:30pm – 3pm
- 4:30 pm – 5:30pm

**Morning Activities**
7am – 9am: Registration, Morning Refreshments, Exhibitor Visits, Livestock Barn Visits
9am – 9:45am: Conference Kickoff, Address by Senior Vice President of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Innovative Farmer Awards
9:45am – 11am: Break, Exhibitor Visits, Livestock Barn Visits

**Afternoon Activities**
12pm – 2pm: Florida’s Finest: A Celebration of Local Food (lunch provided), Exhibitor Visits, Livestock Barn Visits
3pm – 4:30: Afternoon Break, Exhibitor Visits, Livestock Barn Visits
4:30: Exhibit hall closes. Exhibitors break down.

Please note: The exhibit hall is not open on Sunday, so please get your visits in today!

**Evening Activities**
6pm: Livestock barn closes
5:30pm – 8pm: Networking Social with entertainment, beverages, and hors d’oeuvres

Sunday, July 17, 2011

7:30am – 9am: Breakfast
9am – 10:45am: In-depth Workshops and Farmer-to-Farmer Roundtable
10:45am – 11am: Morning Break
11am – 12pm: In-depth Workshops and Farmer-to-Farmer Roundtable
12pm: Conference adjourns

For more information on attending, exhibiting at, or sponsoring this year’s Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference, please visit us online and sign up for email updates at http://www.conference.ifas.ufl.edu/smallfarms/index.html. For specific questions, please contact Mandy Stage, Conference Coordinator.
Registration Information

Registration for the third annual Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference is now open! The conference will be held in Kissimmee, Florida July 15 – 17, 2011. Please register in advance to secure entrance to the conference, and remember that space is limited for Friday’s pre-conference tours, so sign up for those when you register!

To register, please visit our online registration:
http://www.conference.ifas.ufl.edu/smallfarms/index.html

For registration, exhibition, and sponsorship questions, please contact:
Mandy Stage, Conference Coordinator
University of Florida, IFAS
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Tel: 352-392-5930 Email: mstage@ufl.edu

For questions regarding the educational program, please contact:
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Visit us Online!
- Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises conference:
  http://www.conference.ifas.ufl.edu/smallfarms/index.html
  When you visit, be sure to sign up for email updates and follow us on Facebook!
- Small Farms Team website:
  http://smallfarms.ifas.ufl.edu/