The role of UF/IFAS extension in tropical agriculture & horticulture

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Statement of the Problem: United States land grant universities have a third mission in addition to research and teaching, called Extension. At the University of Florida (UF) Extension is located within the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) and is called UF/IFAS Extension. Extension agents/educators provide research-based, practical information to agricultural producers and other clients. South Florida's subtropical climate allows for production of a variety of crops, however, the same favorable environmental conditions are also ideal for many production challenges year-round.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: UF/IFAS Extension faculty developed, implemented and evaluated educational programs outcomes and impacts in commercial agriculture production for five years in south Florida. Programs delivered included classroom workshops, one–on-one consultations and site visits to nurseries.

Findings: The UF/IFAS Commercial Agriculture/Ornamental Extension Agent trained 2,245 participants in 64 Integrated Pest Management (IPM) workshops conducted in English and Spanish. 652 participants out of 1,165 (55.9%) answered a survey and reported an average class satisfaction of 4.4 out of 5.0 Likert scale (Where 1= least, 5= greatest value) and knowledge gain of 4.0 out of 5.0 in identification of pests threatening south Florida agriculture. Training covered such pests as Oriental Fruit Fly (OFF) and Giant African Land Snail (GALS), including their management.

Conclusion & Significance: To date UF/IFAS Extension continues to provide timely and relevant tropical agricultural education on a variety of topics to producers who rely on unbiased and research-based educational trainings. It is estimated than for every $1 invested in agricultural research and Extension, there is a return of $20 to the community.

Figure1: UF/IFAS Extension Agent providing trainings at plant production areas

Recent Publications

1. Gazis, R., Poudel, B., Dey, K., Zhang, S., Palmateer, A.J., Campoverde, E.V., Baker, C. and Adkins, S. 2018. "First report of cactus virus X in Hylocereus undatus (dragon fruit) in Florida". Plant Disease. 102. https://doi.org/10.1094/PDIS-05-18-0725-PDN
2. Da Silva S., Babu B., Paret M. L., Knox G., Iriarte F., Riddle B., Orwat M., Steed S. T., E. V. Campoverde, and

Folimonova S. Y. 2018. "Rose Mosaic Virus: A Disease Caused by a Virus Complex and Symptoms on Roses and Management Practices". Publication # PP338. Gainesville: University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences from http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/PP/PP33800.pdf

3. Campoverde, E.V., Sanahuja, G. and Palmateer, A.J., 2017. A high incidence of Pythium and Phytophthora diseases related to record-breaking rainfall in south Florida. HortTechnology, 27(1), pp.78-83.
4. Campoverde E.V., Marble, S.C. and J. Norcini G. 2016. "Herbicidas Postemergentes para Uso en Ornamentales" (Postemergent Herbicides for Use in Ornamentals in Spanish). Publication #ENH95-S. Gainesville: University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences from http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep533
5. Campoverde E.V. 2018. "Mosca Oriental de la Fruta" (Oriental Fruit Fly in Spanish) Fact Sheet: N°01–2018. http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/media/sfylifasufledu/miami-dade/documents/nursery-production/OrientalFlyFactSheetSPANISH_Final1.pdf

Biography

E. Vanessa Campoverde is a University of Florida/IFAS Extension Educator/Agent. Vanessa's work is focused on empowering her clientele with research-based trainings including but not limited to Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Best Management Practices (BMP), work safety and financial literacy. Prior to joining UF/IFAS in 2008, she worked at the International Potato Center in Peru. Vanessa holds a master's degree in Plant Pathology from UF and a Bachelor's in Biological Sciences from Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos. She is a member of Florida and National Association of County Agricultural Agents, Association of International Agricultural and Extension Education, American Society for Horticultural Science, American Association of Pesticide Safety Educators, The American Phytopathological Society and Epsilon Sigma Phi Associations, where she has served on several committees. Vanessa was also the 2015 UF/IFAS Award for Excellence in Internationalizing Extension recipient. In her free time, Vanessa enjoys travelling and try international cuisine.

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