

FINAL REPORT  
2011 IFAS EXHIBITION AT THE SOUTHEASTERN FARM EXPO  
MOULTRIE, GEORGIA

1. The IFAS Senior Vice-President and Deans for Extension, Research and Teaching asked Wayne Smith to coordinate the IFAS presence at the 2011 Sun Belt Agricultural Expo at Moultrie, Georgia. Wayne reviewed the 2010 Final Report and its recommendations. Among those was the recommendation that we have a food or beverage gift for visitors. Joe Joyce indicated he had a contact and would pursue the opportunity to gift citrus juices. They then discussed the recommendations for a theme. When the 2010 Final Report was received and reviewed by Interim VP Larry Arrington, he expressed favor in the theme—Florida, it's a Swamp Thing. The group concurred and that theme was chosen. A proposed budget was approved. That budget and the actual expenditures are reported in Appendix A. They then appointed the 2011 Sunbelt Committee to lead planning and execution of the IFAS exhibition.
2. Sunbelt 2011 Committee: Beach, Benjamin, Butterfield, Judith, R Clark, Mark, W Emerson, H Charlotte, Grant, Henry, Johnson, Steven Albert, Langeland, Ken, Ludlow, Judith Anne, Olson, Clay B, Jackson, Scott, Taylor, Scott, Vergot, Pete, Warren, Mark W.
3. In the Committee's first meeting, Smith reviewed the discussions with the administration and reported that Dr. Joyce was successful in procuring a gift of 15,000 citrus juice containers. Then, the committee recommendations from 2010 were reviewed and the following modifications were suggested.
  - a. Continue to reduce the number of displays to about 10.
  - b. Require that all displays be interactive, attended at all times by at least one knowledgeable person, while excluding passive poster type displays and any that are non- attended.
  - c. Encourage more department level gee-whiz science and state specialist with wow me educational modules.
  - d. Need a porch attractant, like the clams of past of photo op with Albert, Alberta or Blow up Gator and an inside attractant to slow the traffic (perhaps the OJ giveaway both will do this).
  - e. Outside signage (recognizing that both front and back are entrants) listing what is inside and inside common signage using the banner stands purchased last year.
  - f. Need food and beverage give away and common-look shirts.
  - g. Clearer statement of responsibilities for County Resource Faculty—perhaps like guidelines for exhibitors.
  - h. IFAS store back but with more appropriate for-sale items.
  - i. Adhere to set up and tear down protocols.
  - j. Continue on-line camera.
4. The committee then discussed the theme, Florida; it's a Swamp Thing, and recommended possible displays that they or their colleagues might pursue. Enough potential displays were identified to make it un-necessary to do an all IFAS solicitation. Assignments were made and members were

asked to report when they had procured a commitment. We then went over the operational assignments.

- a. Building Preparation and Maintenance. Smith, Taylor and FOP. Trip postponed to June 14. Anyone wanting to join the trip was asked to call Wayne or Scott.
- b. Website redesign and updating, and on-line camera. Ben Beach with help from Wayne, Pete, and Charlotte.
- c. Facebook and other social network utilization. Pete Vergot and county faculty.
- d. Blow up Gator, Albert/Alberta Photo Op. Emerson.
- e. Plants. (Try to obtain swamp species. Cypress, Tupelo gum, etc.). Olson and Emerson.
- f. Signage. Front and Back and Inside. Smith and Emerson.
- g. Evaluation and Impact Assessment. Ludlow.
- h. Orange Juice Storage. Taylor.
- i. Orange Juice Display and Distribution. County Faculty (Vergot) and Ambassadors (Emerson).
- j. Fan distribution management. Emerson.
- k. Gate Passes and Parking Permits. Henry Grant.
- l. Schedule IFAS Participants including VIPs. Smith, Vergot, Grant, and Beach.
- m. Set up, open up, close, and close down. Smith, Vergot, Taylor, and Emerson.  
Later it was learned that Ludlow would assume Vergot's responsibilities.

5. The Exhibitor Application Form was reviewed, revised and placed on-line at the CALS' website. Leaders who had been confirmed as willing exhibitors were asked to complete the form to provide the Committee the needed Information for confirming compatibility with the theme and space available in the IFAS building.

6. IFAS exhibitors at the 2011 Sun Belt Expo and key contacts. \*
  - a. **Nurseries of the Sea—Swamps and Marshes.** Scott Jackson, Bay County and Florida Sea Grant Extension, and School of Forest Resources and Conservation, FAS.
  - b. **Laurel Wilt- Kills Red Bay in Swamps—Threat to crops.** Jason Smith, School of Forest Resources and Conservation.
  - c. **Beekeeping—Swamp Tupelo to Prized Honey.** Jamie Ellis/Mark Dykes. Entomology and Nematology Department and Judy Ludlow, Calhoun County and NWD Extension Agents.

- d. **Tracking Everglades Alligators and Crocodiles.** Frank Mazzotti/Rebecca Harvey, Ft Lauderdale REC.
- e. **Swamp Critters.** Chuck Cichra, School of Forest Resources and Conservation, FAS
- f. **Plants at the Water's Edge.** Gail Hansen, Environmental Horticulture Department.
- g. **Winging it in the Swamp.** Heather Kent, Northwest District 4-H Extension Agents.
- h. **Big Scary Invaders of the Swamp.** Jeffery Hill School of Forest Resources and Conservation, FAS/TAL, Ruskin.
- i. **Silent Invaders of Swamps and Wetlands.** Amy Richard, Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants.
- j. **Tailgating in the Swamp—Safe and Healthy.** Heidi Copeland, Leon County, NWD Family and Consumer Science Extension Agents.
- k. **Academic Programs Fit the Swamp.** Cathy Carr and Ambassadors CALS Dean's Office.
  - **A list of all participants and display staffers may be seen on the IFAS Sunbelt Website**

A Checklist for Exhibitors was placed at the IFAS Sunbelt Website to provide guidance to IFAS Exhibitors

7. Exhibition Arrangement and Staffing.

- a. The exhibits were generally arranged along the outside wall with a center island with the Tailgating in the Swamp display which included the giveaway point for the Citrus Juice. 15,000 containers of juice were distributed
- b. Resource Faculty and Staff assisted in accordance with the Guidelines for Resource Faculty and Staff which was prepared and placed on the IFAS SUNBELT website.
- c. In advance of the Expo, Pete Vergot prepared a model news release for county faculty to use with their newsletters and other clientele contacts.
- d. Charlotte Emerson arranged for Tyler Jones the IFAS photographer to come on opening day to do professional quality photographs of the IFAS exhibition. The photos may be view at these URL's.  
IFAS Sunbelt Expo exhibits in Moultrie, Ga.

Gallery:

<http://kingdom.ifas.ufl.edu/tylerljones/UFEVENTS/SunbeltAgExpoMoultrie101811/Gallery/>

Hi Res Downloads:

<http://kingdom.ifas.ufl.edu/tylerljones/UFEVENTS/SunbeltAgExpoMoultrie101811/Hi%20Res%20Downloads/>

- e. Henry Grant obtained Name Tags (Exhibitor Gate Passes) and parking permits for set-up day and VIP tickets and passes.
- f. Ben Beach set up video cams to show on-line activities in the building. About 90 people with UF/IFAS participated in some way with the IFAS Exhibition.
- g. Approximately 60 faculty assisted with the IFAS presentations at the EXPO with about one – fourth from State Faculty and the remainder County Faculty. All IFAS faculty, staff, and volunteers who assisted with the EXPO are listed at the IFAS SUNBELT Website.

8. Promotional Items. Gator Head Fans and plastic tote bags, left over from previous years, were distributed. We do not recommend purchasing more bags since many other exhibitors give away bags. The fans are unique to us and an excellent vehicle for sending our contact information away with visitors.
9. Results of the IFAS Participant Questionnaire. Data were obtained from exhibitors and other faculty participating with the IFAS Sun Belt Exhibition a few days after Expo closure and are summarized below.
  - a. Just over half of the 60 IFAS Participants responded to the questionnaire distributed within a few days of closure of the Expo. Most responses were from county faculty. About 65 percent had participated before in the Sun Belt Expo.
  - b. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents said their time was well spent. The problem with expectations experienced in the past seemed to be mostly solved by posting Guidelines for Resource Faculty and a Checklist for Exhibitors on the IFAS Sunbelt Website. Eighty-eight percent strongly agreed or agreed that these were helpful.
  - c. The IFAS Building. 90% said the IFAS building was superior or as good as the other similar exhibit halls while one person said it could be improved.
  - d. The exhibits were arrayed around the outside walls with a center island. The survey asked respondents to list the positive and negative features relative to their time and effort expended at the Sun Belt expo. Some items below were mentioned several times.
    - i. Made IFAS look good.
    - ii. Good, interactive, well staffed displays
    - iii. Reached a lot of people and got valuable feedback for future efforts. Items ii. and iii. were the most common response.
    - iv. Learning experience for the future.
    - v. Good layout, sharing research with large audience
    - vi. Great theme
    - vii. Difficult to measure contacts, impacts and gains.
    - viii. Need fewer exhibits.
    - ix. Cost, long day and time away from office (county) was a problem
    - x. Unpredictable weather
    - xi. Lack of common dress.
  - e. Regarding traffic to specific displays, 85 percent said they were pleased with the traffic and a similar percentage said the level of interest and engagement with the visitors were excellent. A similar percentage said their space to interact with visitors was fully adequate or just right.
  - f. Participants were asked if the sandwich boards at the front and back of the building attracted people to the building. Eighty percent agreed but indicated that being bigger would increase their effectiveness.
  - g. Participants were asked what was needed to improve the building and presentation.
    - i. Cannot think of anything, the exhibit was excellent. Most common response.
    - ii. More space between displays, maybe one fewer.
    - iii. Display for-sale items.
    - iv. Clear plastic curtain outside to weatherize.

- v. Something to appeal to children.
  - vi. Matching dress.
  - vii. Trash management. Difficult to find trash bags. Juice containers should have been recycled.
  - viii. Displays should be practical as well as interesting.
  - ix. Bigger flag and bigger sandwich boards to be more competitive with neighbors.
  - x. More consistent orange and blue color scheme inside.
- h. Participants were also asked what was best about the IFAS exhibit.
- i. Displays were interactive. By far the most favored response.
  - ii. Citrus juice, honey straws, and Gatorhead fans for the visitors.
  - iii. Traffic flow and numbers.
  - iv. Engagement of IFAS People with visitors.
  - v. Welcoming, happy atmosphere.
  - vi. Display layout.
  - vii. Best building and attractive landscaping.
  - viii. Diversity of displays.
- i. Participants were asked to indicate ways the exhibition could be improved.
- i. The most common answer was no improvements needed, attractive building, excellent displays, and great traffic.
  - ii. Fewer exhibits could improve traffic.
  - iii. Involve FCS faculty in selection of theme.
  - iv. Less scientific and more engaging exhibits
  - v. Exhibit staff dresses alike.
  - vi. Albert and Alberta photo OP.
  - vii. Recycle bins if give a ways are recyclable.
  - viii. Improve lighting in corners or ask exhibitors to bring task lights
  - ix. Consistency of message. Display on invasives, while decorative plants chosen were invasive or problematic—Lantana and Nandina
  - x. Lack of focus on needs of landowners, esp. small and medium farmers.
  - xi. More freebies.
  - xii. Give away food and drink in middle caused some to skip entry displays.
  - xiii. Need better balance--some topics not included in 10 years
- j. When participants were asked if they are willing to participate next year, all but 3 said yes.
- k. When asked if they participated again what would they change, these are the answers.
- i. More interactive.
  - ii. Have more content for kids.
  - iii. Make food safety more interesting—e.g., gro germ to emphasize hand washing.
  - iv. Have more handouts compatible with theme.

- v. Bring more EDIS publications and publications of more general interest.
  - vi. Improve my lighting
  - vii. Make less susceptible to bad weather.
  - viii. Not a thing.
- I. Participants were asked to suggest themes for next year. Those are:
- i. Not sure, let me think - was the most frequent response.
  - ii. Self-sustainability/ Environmental Sustainability.
  - iii. Ag/forestry and small farms along with invasives.
  - iv. On-line. Ask the Extension Professional.
  - v. Solving Problems around the World.
  - vi. Environmentally Friendly Gardening.
  - vii. Resource Management.
  - viii. Focus on the Morrill Act.
  - ix. Biofuels.
  - x. Solutions for your Land/Family.....Life
  - xi. Urban Farming—Gardens and Animals.
  - xii. A Florida Vacation—Ecotourism, Agri-tourism, Heritage Tourism.
  - xiii. Healthier Living through Science, Engineering and Technology.
  - xiv. Water Supply and Conservation
  - xv. Steps to Health and Wealth
  - xvi. Healthy Life Styles
  - xvii. Food, Fiber, and Fuel with limited resources
  - xviii. Disease awareness—from farm to table.
- m. Finally, participants were asked to provide comments that would not be captured in the earlier questions. These responses are below.
- i. Get Gator for-sale items available. Consider the AG Econ. Club that sells such as a fund raiser.
  - ii. Improve parking pass and set up information and make timelier.
  - iii. Have better maps for the location
  - iv. Improve educational component beyond show and tell.
  - v. Provide map of building layout and table set up options and assign spaces in advance.
  - vi. Provide financial support for exhibitors.
  - vii. The organizing committee did a great job (most common response) in spite of the fact that it is impossible to be perfect; the balance between flexibility and organization was great.

Editor's note. We were not successful in getting Exhibitors and Resource Faculty to visit the IFAS Sunbelt Website since many of the items identified as needed were posted there early in the process.

- viii. The Gatorhead fans are sought out by visitors. There is a lot of white space that should be used and better organized to add specific IFAS program info.
  - ix. Need a common look. Provide a shirt for all to wear.
  - x. Food and Beverage “give away” like other states.
  - xi. Event Sign in front and back.
  - xii. Need more departments involved.
  - xiii. A highly interactive display to slow down traffic.
  - xiv. Post a list of exhibits at front and rear door.
10. Recommendations and Timeline for Next Year. The Participant Survey and the Questionnaire addressed to visitors were gleaned to determine guidance points of most importance for next year. We recognized that there are many valid suggestions identified throughout the report; thus we recommend that those to be engaged in future ESPO’s make a careful reading of the report. Specifically, we give priority the following:
- a. Continue the sought out Gatorhead Fans but do not purchase more tote bags.
  - b. Continue food and beverage gifts to visitors. Richard Barber volunteered to help arrange for peanut gifs.
  - c. Encourage more department and REC involvement.
  - d. Try again to get IFAS or UF Bookstore to have Gator items and relevant literature that fits theme and need.
  - e. Limit displays to 9 or 10 and use both sides of porch only if essential.
  - f. Chose a theme and then a committee to recruit to that theme and avoid and “IFAS All” solicitation if possible.
  - g. Make sure that at least one Resource Faculty member in each work shift has the assignment of counting visitor traffic in a valid sampling scheme and one assists with visitor impact survey to improve impact assessment.
  - h. March-April. Administration appoints Chair and Committee
  - i. April. Committee meets, determines theme and identifies additional members for implementation.
  - j. April- May. Committee meets, revises Exhibitor Application Form, and gets it out to prospective exhibitors to acquire their display information. Share with Department Chairs, Center Directors, and District Directors.
  - k. July. Review exhibitor applications and make selections by August 1.
  - l. Notify Administration of the displays chosen and share information via Website and email to IFAS All
  - m. August. Meet with exhibitors as possible to explain space allocations and to learn details of their planned display, review limitations on space and acquaint them with Sunbelt Layout and website Checklist for Exhibitors.
  - n. By September 1. Obtain the names of the key staff for each display, compile VIP list and obtain name tags for the principal displayers and committee personal. Then obtain 3 or 4 per exhibitor and allow them to fill in their names.
  - o. October. Sept up and participate

p. November. Follow-up thank you notes and prepare Final Report.

APPENDIX A. Operating Budget and Expenditures for 2011 IFAS Sunbelt Exhibition.

**Budget**

Common signage.	\$1000
Travel	4000
Display Develop	5000
Miscellaneous supplies, clean up etc.	2000
TOTAL	\$12000

**Expenditures.**

Travel	
State and Administrative faculty	\$2483
County Faculty	1215
Display development and Enhancement	4811
Signage, Building Services, and Supplies	1777
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$10286

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DOES NOT INCLUDE THE EXPENDITURES BY FACILITIES OPERATIONS FOR CLEANING THE FLOOR, PEST CONTROL, SIGN HANGING, AND FOR LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE. NOR DOES IT INCLUDE COMPENSATION TO WAYNE SMITH FOR COORDINATION. We made a trade with the landscape company allowing his company to place signs in the landscaped area in exchange for power washing the building.

We are pleased that we came in under budget even though we had some expenditures that were not expected. This was possible because most of the faculty assumed the cost of their travel associated with the expo and most of the development cost associated with their display construction.



**Appendix B. 2011 Survey of Selected Visitors to Sunbelt\***

*(Page 1)*

<b>Total Number of surveys Completed</b>	51
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<b>Gender</b>	Male	Female
	25	26

<b>Age range?</b>	under 18	19-25	26-50	51+
	15	6	16	13

<b>State</b>	Florida	Georgia	Alabama	Other
	7	37	2	4

<b>Florida County</b>	Clay	1
	Hillsborough	3
	Leon	1
	Orange	1
	Taylor	1

<b>How many times visited Sunbelt</b>	First time	1-5 times	6-15 times	20+
	12	26	8	4

<b>Did you learn anything new from the UF/IFAS displays?</b>	Yes	No
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	50	1
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**Appendix B. 2011 Survey of Selected Visitors to Sunbelt**

*(Page 2)*

<b>Which Technologies do you use?</b>	Email	Internet	Text Messaging	Facebook	Twitter	None
	35	39	28	29	1	4

<b>Because of your visit today, will you seek out UF/IFAS Extension for information and solutions?</b>	Yes	No	Not Sure
	23	3	19

<b>How up to date was the information in the displays?</b>	
Mostly up to date	47
Somewhat up to date	2
Slightly up to date	1
Not at all up to date	

<b>How easy were the displays to understand?</b>	
Very Easy	47
Fairly Easy	3

Not at all easy	
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**Appendix B.  
2011 Survey (page 3)**

<b>How relevant were our displays for you?</b>	
Mostly relevant	38
Somewhat relevant	10
Slightly relevant	2
Not at all relevant	1

\*Constructed and conducted by Judith Ludlow.

The survey results were encouraging and indicate success in reaching a diverse audience. Next year, more effort needs to be made in getting commitment from Resource Faculty to participate in each work segment such that there is a larger population contacted and the responses are supplemented with sample counts to arrive an estimate of attendance. We know that we gave away 15,000 containers with juice but do not know if this is a valid estimate of attendance.