

FINAL REPORT

2009 IFAS EXHIBITION AT THE SOUTHEASTERN FARM EXPO

MOULTRIE, GEORGIA

1. The IFAS Vice-President and Deans for Extension, Research and Teaching asked Wayne Smith to coordinate the 2009 IFAS presence at the 2009 Sun Belt Agricultural Expo at Moultrie, Georgia and then appointed the following to a Steering Committee to assist with the initial planning for the IFAS exhibition.

Amy Simonne, Art Teixeira, Charlotte Emerson, John Arthington, Marilyn Norman, Nick Comerford, and Pete Vergot.

The Steering Committee reviewed recommendations from the previous year and discussed the various options for a 2009 Theme. Sustainability—Family, Farm, Food, Fuel and Environment was proposed to the IFAS leadership who endorsed the theme. Afterwards others were added to assist the effort and the combined group was called the Implementation Committee. Those named to join the above were: Ben Beach, Clay Olson, Diann Douglas, Heather Kent, Joe Sowards, Les Harrison, Henry Grant, Louise Ryan, Mark Warren, and Steve Perry.

2. Other recommendations were reviewed and the following modifications were made to the building and building site at Moultrie.
 - a. Improve building esthetics and showcase some IFAS developments in open areas around the building. Steve Perry with Facility Operations modified the water system to accommodate an irrigation system which was installed by a crew from the NFREC. Clay Olson then planted the North side with Perennial Peanut and John Beuttenmuller introduced Captiva™ St. Augustinegrass sod to the South side of the building. Shrubs including knockout roses were introduced as were two citrus trees. The landscaping was done by David Marshall and Master Gardener volunteers from Leon County. The irrigation and periodic visits by a maintenance crew from NFREC assured establishment, weed control and other practices needed. By Expo time the landscape was very attractive. Appropriate signs were placed in the sodded areas to identify and credit the sources.
 - b. Some electrical modifications were also made by Perry to facilitate the electrical controls for the irrigation system. Arrangements were made for support to the NFREC to provide care and maintenance for the landscaped area throughout the year.
 - c. White fencing was added to the front porch areas. The side fences had gates to facilitate access for exhibit set-up and the front panels can be removed (for example if it were needed to back a trailer onto the porch).
3. Ten Banners (40" x 13'—four and 40" x 19'—six) were developed under leadership of Diann Douglas which used pictures to display the breadth of IFAS programs. Banners had themes presented graphically, such as animal agriculture agronomic crops, horticultural plants, natural resources(including forests, soils, wildlife and water) , family and community sciences, careers,

etc. We attempted to include 4-H activities throughout the array. The guidance list of example content provided the designer and the actual banners as they appear in the building are in Appendix A1 and A2.

4. The Exhibitor Application Form was reviewed by the committee and placed on-line at the CALS website and Departments, RE Centers and County District Directors were notified of the theme and the availability on the CALS website. To assure that the information got to all faculty with possible interest, the information was also sent to the IFAS-All distribution list. By closing date we had 17 Exhibitors apply. Because of the large number and some redundancy one was withdrawn and leaving 16 to be accommodated. They were.

IFAS Exhibitors at the 2009 Sun Belt Expo and Display Attendants

- a. Academic Programs in the College of Agricultural and Live Sciences. Charlotte Emerson and Elaine Turner and 6-8 CALS Ambassadors each day.
- b. UF/IFAS Research: New Plants from Florida—Featuring Captiva™ St. Augustinegrass Turf, Sustainable with lower inputs. John Beuttenmuller and John Watson and Tom Stadskev
- c. Florida 4-H Centennial Year with Biofuel Blast—A Demonstration of a Sustainable Energy Source. Marilyn Norman, Heather Kent, Judy Butterfield, Yolanda Goode, Julie Dillard, Julie Wilson, and Jordan Barney, Diann Douglas, Heidi Copeland, Betty Miller. Judy Corbus
- d. Save Energy, Save Money for Sustainable Living. Monica Brinkley, Shelly Swenson
- e. Biorefineries for Florida—Source of Sustainable Renewable Energy. Shellachu Gomez, Anna Studstill, Robert Studstill and Antonio Gomez
- f. Biofuels for Sustainable Energy. Art Teixeira, Jamie Chavez, Abhay Koppa, and J.A.P. Sierra
- g. Fast Growing Trees for Sustainable Renewable Energy, Fiber and Environmental Protection. Donald Rockwood, Gerald Krewer, Jeff English, S Hunt, and Mark Crawford.
- h. Citrus Canker and Greening Extension for a Sustainable Citrus Industry and Dooryard Plantings. Jamie Yates
- i. BMP 3-D Model Farm for Sustainability. Carolyn Saft, Bob Hochmuth, Leillana Davis, Linda Landrum, Mary Sowerby, Chris Vann, Randi Randell, Debbie Gast, Lauri Osbourne
- j. Use of Waste Products to Grow Ornamentals—Sustainability through re-use. Kimberly Moore Cheryl Zegelborne, Michelle Curtis, and Lucie Fisher,
- k. Sustainable Landscaping and Gardening and the Northwest Florida Horticulture Team. Carrie Stevenson, Larry Williams, Alex Bolques, Anita Crossley, Charles Brasher, Anita Crossly, David Marshall, Zulema Wibner, Carol Schee, Sue Adamczyk and Dale Taylor. Sheila

Dunning, Saari Brooke , Ken Rudisell , Scott Jackson and Master Gardeners, Sally Waxgiser and Pat Brayson.

- l. Climate and Weather Information for Sustainable Agriculture. Clyde Fraisse
- m. Better GAPS Practices through Worker Hygiene for Sustainable Production and Health. Keith Schneider and Renee Goodrich
- n. Bringing Sustainability to your Household Finances. Michael Gutter and Jeong Lee.
- o. Management of Grasslands in South Florida for Sustainable Ranching. Reyna Speckman, John Arthington Brent Sellers and Joe Vendramini
- p. Smart Irrigation Controllers for Sustainable Water Use. Michael Dukes and Dan Rutland

The exhibits were generally arranged along the outside wall with a center island with the 4-H Centennial Celebration exhibit centered with a ceiling sign at the front entrance.

- 5. Resource Faculty assisted with answering questions from visitors, served as greeters and provided other support as needed.
Resource Faculty. Judy Ludlow, Clyde Smith, Doug Mayo, Roy Carter, Heidi Copeland, Les Harrison, Jo Law, Dan Fenneman, Libbie Johnson, John Atkins, Bruce Ward, Mike Goodchild and Libbie Johnson and other faculty who assisted with IT operations, set-up, plant care, clean up and take down included: Ben Beach, Pete Vergot, Trevor Hylton, Louise Ryan, Wayne Smith, Clay Olson, Amy Simonne, Steve Perry, Charlotte, Emerson, and Henry Grant. Some exhibit attendants also served as resource faculty among the two-hour shifts.

The dates, times and tasks (exhibitor, greeter, etc.) for all attendees were arrayed in a Work Schedule by Les Harrison, placed on the IFAS/Sunbelt website by Louise Ryan and used as the data source for Henry Grant to obtain Name Tags (Exhibitor Gate Passes) and parking permits for set-up day.

Ben Beach set up video cams to show on-line activities in the building. He and Louise Ryan also set up computer stations and supervised their operations.

In summary about 90 persons with UF/IFAS participated in some way with the IFAS Exhibition.

- 6. Monrovia Nurseries with the help of Elizabeth Felker and the hard work of Clay Olson loaned the trees and shrubs for “dressing up” the building. In addition we purchased a few flowering shrubs for color. Beyond this we used the IFAS Banner stands to enrich exhibits and hide “uglies”
- 7. Promotional Items. No new items were purchased this year. However we did deplete the stock of Gator Head Fans and used some of the plastic tote bags (too many others give these away). The fans are an excellent vehicle for sending our contact information away with visitors.
- 8. Results of the Evaluation Data obtained from exhibitors and other faculty participating with the IFAS Sun Belt Exhibition are summarized below. About half of the responses were from county

faculty and half by state level faculty. Similarly about half had participated before in the Sun Belt Expo.

- a. Extension agents were asked about effective use of time, if time requirements were excessive and if they understood what was expected of them. Almost all felt their time usage was effective, not excessive and believed they understood expectations. Some felt that they should not be defined as Wal-Mart Greeters but educators of attendees. There were a few criticisms about dress and directions, all of which was on the IFAS Sun Belt website but was not made known to them.
- b. Eighty –six percent of the respondents said their time was well spent and worth the effort.
- c. The IFAS Building. Forty four percent said the IFAS building was superior to other similar exhibit halls, while thirty eight percent said it was as good. Seventeen percent said it could be improved,
- d. The exhibits were arrayed around the outside wall with a center island. Eighty four percent said they liked this arrangement. Twelve percent favored a serpentine arrangement with a single path and one person preferred a linear arrangement with nothing in the center.
- e. 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. Always rewarding—meet people and gain ideas,
 - ii. Positive, wide range of displays, but fans caused table skirts to balloon up when on high,
 - iii. Not only did we reach a lot of people but got valuable feedback for future efforts.
 - iv. Able to reach multi-state clients, but it was time away from locals.
 - v. Appropriate theme, some good interactive displays, building interior more attractive, new landscaping helped. Some signage was not good; maybe an exhibit or two too many, some faculty think their job is to give away stuff and not to answer questions of attendees, sometimes their appeared to be over staffing.
 - vi. Good exposure to a good number of visitors, some good leads obtained.
 - vii. Drove over to greet but would rather serve more of an educational role.
 - viii. Good to be in touch with people so we can better respond with our research.
 - ix. FCS needs to have a presence.
 - x. Good experience and works to serve clients.
 - xi. Good to connect with citizens and provide latest information, networked with state colleagues, working with a team. Nothing negative.
 - xii. We get calls and contacts all year as a result of visits to the expo. Cohesive concept lacked for theme this year.
 - xiii. My expertise in family and consumer science was used which I thought was a good use of my time.
 - xiv. Worth and I am better prepared to help in the future.
 - xv. No money for projects or materials, we borrowed from a power company and the handouts were printed by a specialist.
Good exposure for potential students. Good opportunity to connect. (It seems that two agent were criticized for interacting with attendees and not just being greeters)

- xvi. Exhibit was criticized before completely set up.
 - xvii. Required extra time to plan, secure load and unload, not sure of value, did provide good multi state opportunity. Should provide adequate travel funds. I traveled on my own money.
 - xviii. Felt better working with an exhibit in my area rather than just being a greeter. Long drive for a 20 minute set up, wish it could be done the morning of, I realize this not reality.
 - xix. No effort, helping people with new technology and showing them where to get information is a positive thing.
 - xx. Good marketing opportunity for Extension. It is a big time and travel commitment.
 - xxi. Good visibility but not my constituents, mostly kids.
 - xxii. Lot of interaction with kids. Need more guidelines for displays. Some displays lacking professionally while others were dramatically over the top. There was a good mix in quality of displays.
 - xxiii. Believe traffic was lower but good opportunity to work with clientele.
 - xxiv. Good to formalize display and get information to stakeholders. More farmers while our target was urban clientele.
 - xxv. Definite positive experience but time is a concern.
 - xxvi. Great opportunity. Herding people in and out like a cattle drive and not knowing if they gained knowledge from IFAS people.
 - xxvii. Great marketing tool for IFAS
 - xxviii. It was interesting.
- f. Regarding traffic to specific displays, fifty eight percent said they were pleased while forty percent said the numbers were just okay. No one was disappointed but one said they had a bad location, one thought there was too many displays and two said their display was prepared for a different audience and two said there were other but unspecified problems.
- g. Participants were asked what was best about the IFAS exhibit.
- i. Good arrangement of exhibits.
 - ii. Wide variety of displays showing many aspects of IFAS
 - iii. Open, welcoming and well-lit
 - iv. Dynamic displays—the best were the one by Monica Brinkley and Schneider/Goodrich that engaged visitors and involved hands on activities. If we had 10-12 of these we would use up the space handling visitors.
 - v. Showcased many areas of research
 - vi. The weather
 - vii. People were not crowded next to each other, enthusiasm of participants.
 - viii. Theme—could be addressed by all program areas.
 - ix. Two energy displays next to each to provide a series
 - x. Attractive, the rocking chairs were homey and inviting and provide a place for resting.
 - xi. We are UF so what could be better, but our personnel were engaged
 - xii. The front porch exhibits were good but needed signage

- xiii. Our exhibits were more active than the other universities.
 - xiv. Good to see teaching, research and extension represented together.
 - xv. The Gator Fans given out by greeters, great hit.
 - xvi. The tie between indoor and outdoor exhibits
 - xvii. Good location, good facility.
 - xviii. Gator logo is great identity. Landscaping was very good.
 - xix. The banners around the top inside were a great improvement.
 - xx. The number of people participating.
 - xxi. The interaction
 - xxii. United theme and workers engaging visitors—not the case with other university exhibits.
 - xxiii. It was, live, colorful and better than other university exhibits.
 - xxiv. Well designed and good location.
 - xxv. Organized and landscaped well.
 - xxvi. Bright well developed displays that engaged the public
 - xxvii. Time effort for quality displays that were well staffed.
- h. Participants were also asked what needs to be improved about the UF/IFAS exhibit
- a. Need to know if there is a sign-up option since that slows the process and creates blockage.
 - b. Static displays and items to sell
 - c. One or two fewer displays; consistent signage; fence around grass area especially in back.
 - d. Need more displays showing exciting developments not just on-going activities.
 - e. Interactive, interactive, interactive—no passive displays
 - f. More activities involving children; attractive display at entrance.
 - g. Financial support for handouts and promotional material.
 - h. Not a thing
 - i. As welcome as our guests were, we did not have enough interactive displays. Nothing to cause folks to have an "ah-ha" moment or think outside the box. Some of our displays were downright dull. No music nothing visibly stimulating.
 - j. We had comments that we have no merchandise to sell like UGa. Is it possible for the IFAS bookstore to have both to sell clothing/caps and for sell books?
 - k. Displays should be more consumer friendly, with a clear take-home message; The Saving Energy Saving Money display showed people what they could actually do as did the Managing in Tough Times showed phantom energy losses.
 - l. Need to give away something, which is what people expect.
 - m. More interactive displays; Play the fight song occasionally. Have things for sale. Have Albert and Alberta there for a photo op.
 - n. Engaging activities like knowledge games with prizes.
 - o. Need fewer displays that have a lot to read.
 - p. Exhibit staffers need to be friendly an engaging.
 - q. A gator on the front of the building

- r. Make the exhibits fit the layman
 - s. Each exhibit needs adequate signage.
 - t. I would organize the flow path differently
 - u. Invitation to visitors outside the building
 - v. More hands-on activities to get visitors involved.
 - w. Some displays detracted—poorly staffed, too small for the scale and crowd size, not interactive.
- i. When participants were asked if they are willing to participate next year 31 out of 33 respondents said yes.
- j. When asked if they participated again what would they change, these are the answers.
- i. Better interactive exhibits.
 - ii. Expand exposure to research programs, have standing rotating publication rack.
 - iii. Would sell stuff to generate revenue.
 - iv. Better signs
 - v. Make sure the solar array is in the sunlight and have signage that describes the technology being showcased and not the department.
 - vi. Have hands on stuff like a game with prizes.
 - vii. Prepare more promotional items.
 - viii. Depends on the theme
 - ix. No changes.
 - x. Request more space
 - xi. Better hooks for the audience—signs, something to give away.
 - xii. Make it simpler, more hands on, bring more information on applications to give away
 - xiii. Make it more interactive to more engaging.
 - xiv. Need more space, looked crowded.
 - xv. Include consistent signs.
 - xvi. Something likes the FCS booth, but larger to demo points and with larger backdrop.
 - xvii. Make it more kid based.
 - xviii. Make more professional, more information, action shots of working faculty, location name, more handouts, flip decks were more popular for clientele to pick up.
 - xix. Make more compact, weather station too much work for too little return.
 - xx. Gear more to farmers, more of an agricultural theme.
 - xxi. Not a thing.
- k. Participants were asked to suggest themes for next year. Those are:
- i. People, Plants and Animals
 - ii. Sustainability. Climate Change
 - iii. Agriculture: Florida’s Everyday Environmentalists.
 - iv. Invasive species: Identification, Impact, Control and Eradication
 - v. Production and Utilization efficiency
 - vi. Agriculture as an energy consumer and producer.
 - vii. Organic agriculture and organic foods.

- viii. Retain the favored displays over the years and build a theme around them.
 - ix. More energy and money saving exhibits
 - x. Small farms stuff: fall and winter crops
 - xi. Continue Sustainability—three others said the same
 - xii. Something that involves touching, feeling, and smelling their way through.
 - xiii. Solar energy applications to farms and homes.
 - xiv. Technology theme maybe water Use and Quality
 - xv. Food Safety
 - xvi. Invasive Species
 - xvii. Biofuel crops
 - xviii. Practical Uses for home and business.
 - xix. Challenges to Agriculture: economics, water, climate change
 - xx. BMP's
 - xxi. Precision Agriculture
 - xxii. What IFAS/Extension can do for you?
- I. Finally participants were asked to provide comments that would not be captured in the earlier questions. These responses are below.
- i. Good committee, worked well
 - ii. We need a Dean in the milking contest so we can be No. 1 and not No. 2.
 - iii. Those who organized did a great job.
 - iv. Albert and Alberta for photo ops
 - v. What about projecting a large sized marketing video on the wall or a screen.
 - vi. All went well, I was well informed.
 - vii. Can we get the Gator emblem on the roof? I note U GA appeared on the roof across the street this year.
 - viii. Provide funds for travel, publications and other exhibit materials to reduce the burden on county offices.
 - ix. Encourage participation by agents from all program areas.
 - x. More and better communication.
 - xi. Need a common look. Provide a shirt for all to wear.
 - xii. We can improve but all the arrangements were excellent considering the remote location of Moultrie and the Expo.
 - xiii. Involve Extension because we are in the frontline.
 - xiv. Better organization up front. There were web accessible forms but I could not find them. Perhaps organizers should meet with exhibitors beforehand. This would reduce confusion and let organizers know what they had in mind.
 - xv. Criticizing volunteers for their shirt color and for talking to visitors was not a good thing.
 - xvi. Great organization.
 - xvii. Everything on the business and coordination end was excellent.
 - xviii. Good event for UF faculty to be involved in.

- xix. First exhibitors need to understand the scale of the show. Some comment to me that they were unprepared for the number of visitors and how large the area was. Maybe they should ask for a schematic of what an exhibitor plans so they could help them.
- xx. Obtain email addresses for all on the work schedule so that some of the communication problems can be solved. I do not know how to solve the problem associated with sending all faculty and administrators the notice with the IFAS Sun Belt website and advising that all useful information is there but they do not look it and then complain about not knowing.

9. Recommended Timeline for Next Year

- a. March. Appoint Chair and Steering Committee
- b. April . Committee meets , determines theme and identifies additional members for Implementation.
- c. April (late). Committee meets revises Exhibitor Application Form and gets it out— first to Department Chairs, Center Directors and District Directors.
- d. May. Send notice to Faculty All Distribution List with URL for Application Form.
- e. May-June. Visit with administrators and faculty to recruit key exhibits relative to theme.
- f. July. Review exhibitor applications.
- g. August. Meet with exhibitors as possible to learn details of their planned display and assist where possible.
- h. September. Do exhibit layout
- i. October. Sept up and participate
- j. November. Follow-up thank you's and prepare Final Report.

10. General Recommendations for 2010.

- a. Schedule the IFAS photographer to be present on opening day before Expo gates open to get pictures before visitors arrive and then action pictures later that morning
- b. Prepare press release two months before EXPO for county faculty to use in their newsletters
- c. Arrive at titles for each exhibit consistent with theme and then prepare common signs for each display .
- d. Put a GATOR HEAD on top of building, both sides.
- e. Plant a Satsuma tree in PP or grass on west (back) side of the building
- f. Install low plastic chain fence around grassed areas especially in the back to control traffic.
- g. Place a chain barrier across the entrance to porch to discourage traffic on the porch during the unused season(tire marks hard to get off concrete.
- h. Make IFAS Sun Belt web page more user friendly i.e, intuitive.
- i. Arrange for the IFAS Book Store to be present to sell UF/IFAS apparel and high demand books.

- j. Link the IFAS book store web site and the “suggested dress request” for Expo participants on the IFAS Sun Belt web site.
- k. Power clean floor next year prior to show time.
- l. Post a list of exhibits at front and rear door.
- m. Obtain email addresses of all who sign up to work to improve communications and to include in the evaluative survey.
- n. Try to visit with each exhibitor prior to set-up day to understand the nature of the planned displays and the expected accommodations for the display.

APPENDIX A-1. CONTENT SUGGESTED FOR BANNERS FOR SUNBELT EXPO BUILDING--Six 19' x 42" and Four 13' x 42'

1. Sustainable Living II; Energy Efficient Appliances, Renewable Energy, Neighborhoods, Water use efficiency
2. Animal Agriculture; Beef, Dairy, Poultry, Goats, etc. 4-H member showing an Animal
3. Agronomic Agriculture; Peanuts, Soybeans, Corn, Pasture
4. Sustainable Living I; Home Vegetable Gardening, Florida Friendly Plants, Flowers
5. Sustainable Living I; Home Vegetable Gardening, Florida Friendly Plants, Flowers
6. Family and Consumer Sciences; Food Shopping, Family at Dinner, Shopping, 4-H
7. Horticulture I; Sod, Lawns and Golf Courses, Shrubs, Flowers and Landscaped Yards
8. Careers; Academic, Professional Education
9. Horticulture II; Fruits (citrus etc.), Berries (blue and straw), Watermelons, Tomatoes
10. Terrestrial Ecosystems; Forests, Land Use, Soil Profile 4-H Land Judging or Forest Ecology Contest, Wildlife in a Landscape
11. Aquatic Ecosystems; Lakes, Rivers. Mangroves, Estuaries, Marine Recreation, 4-H Fishing for Success or in Marine Science

APPENDIX A-2. ACTUAL BANNERS AS PREPARED AND DISPLAYED ON WALLS IN IFAS SUNBELT BUILDING





APPENDIX B. SUNBELT 2009 BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

Budget.*

Building and Site Improvements and Development of Exhibition**

1. Banner redo for 2009 Theme.....	\$45
2. Banners(permanent) six(19 'x42"), four(13x42"),total 10.....	\$2052
3. Installation of irrigation system-equipment and travel.....	\$2200
4. Purchase plant material for landscaping exterior of building.....	\$1605
5. Miscellaneous supplies—table covering, skirting, plant saucers, etc.....	\$1000
6. Travel—state and county faculty to install and staff displays.....	\$4000
Sub-Total.....	\$10897

** Items 1, 5, are for this year installation, items 2, 3 and 4 are permanent investments.

Continuing maintenance of the landscape plants (an annual cost)--Travel and supplies for NFREC staff to do periodic maintenance.....\$1232

TOTAL.....\$12,130

*Not including WHS Contract; Cost of picket fence and Plumbing and Electrical adjustments to facilitate installation of irrigation system—all done by IFAS Facilities Operations (Steve Perry).

While all expenditures are not finalized as of now, it appears that we were in budget.