



UF/IFAS Building

1.) **Building:**

The Building was updated this year to include the following improvements:

- Back door signage. Permanent signs were added one each side of the door, one carried the same information as on the front while the sign on the other side identified the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (instead of the banner as on the front). In addition a “gator-head” was added to the back upper wall. See. http://sunbelt.ifas.ufl.edu/images/rear_07.jpg
- Flag pole. A Florida gator flag was flown with a new pole installed at the building front.
- Awning. A retractable awning was installed over the back door for shade and rain protection.
- Floor. The floor was painted with subtle blue color
- IT. Internal mounts for cameras were upgraded
- Computer tables. Stand up gator head tables were procured to accommodate the computers.
- We were prepared to use coolers if the weather warranted but it was not needed.

Keys for the building are with Pete Vergot; Charlotte Emerson; Henry Grant; Clay Olson; John Baldwin, Wayne Smith, Steve Perry and Kevin Heinicker.

2.) **Coordination Team:** The team, appointed by the Deans, represented the Extension, Teaching and Research functions of IFAS. They selected other faculty to form the **Planning Committee:** The IFAS Sunbelt planning committee with Extension Agent’s county and the function of others noted (see below) met via video conference.

- Wayne Smith: Chairperson, IFAS Coordinator. Chair
- Charlotte Emerson: CALS Coordinator. Gator golf shirts; tote bags
- Clay Olson: Co-Chair. Taylor County. Plants
- John Baldwin: Extension Coordinator. Ask me buttons
- Berry Treat: Research Coordinator. Banner stands.
- Henry Grant: Passes/Name Tags. Gadsden County
- Kevin Campbell: Madison County
- Monica Brinkley: Liberty County
- David Dinkins: St Johns County
- Louise Ryan: Information Technology Support Ext. District 1
- Ben Beach: Information Technology Support. Ext. District 2
- Corstiana Heykoop: Colombia County
- David Clark: PCMB Liaison
- Peter Hansen: ACMB Liaison
- Jay Scott: Plant Breeders Group Liaison
- Les Harrison: Leon County. Scheduling greeters, photography
- Allen Tyree: Hamilton County
- Doug Mayo: Jackson County
- Ryan Atwood. Multi-county

- 3.) **Faculty Activities:** County faculty were recruited from Districts 1, 2 and 3 to be greeters and to assist with the general Extension displays at the UF IFAS Sunbelt building. Using a spreadsheet, a work schedule was developed for these faculty to work two, two-hour shifts. All three days of Expo, County faculty assisted at the front and back entrance of building greeting and answering questions from visitors. Many assisted in set-up and take down of displays, plants, etc. State faculty, their technical assistants and graduate students assisting with displays. In addition the exhibition was supported by two on-site regional IT exerts. Adding together all those who participated, 116 faculty were involved with the Expo. On average 16 agents served daily as greeters and resource persons for those seeking answers to specific questions. On average the exhibits were staffed each day with 36 faculty, staff or graduate students. The same faculty did not always comprise the resource people each day.
- 4.) **Displays and Theme:** The planning committee developed an Applicant Information Sheet and solicited displays on the theme: Solutions for your life through Genetics through emails to Department Chairs, Center Directors and District Directors and on the IFAS Sun Belt website. Special assistance was obtained from leaders of the Plant and the Animal Cellular and Molecular Biology programs (PCMB and ACMB) and the Plant Breeders group to obtain 16 displays. The displays titles, sources and the lead faculty member responsible for their development are noted on the next page.

The displays were arranged in a serpentine design in the building. Plants were obtained from Monrovia Nursery (Quincy, Fl and Cairo, GA) who donated the use of plant material (trees and shrubs) for decorating the building. Of trees the magnolia worked really well for our purposes so future years should try to on this species, with eight being adequate. We picked-up and returned the plants which were done satisfactorily without noticeable damage. We also used banner stands to help define paths and hide “uglies” along with the plants. We encountered one problem with the banner stands since there is no banner control system locating them proved to be difficult so we did not have all that we needed.

We made an excellent decision last year by reducing the number to about 15 displays and requiring that they be interactive with a minimum of at least one live and knowledgeable person present at all times. Both criteria were met and the displays proved very effective.

One recommendation made last year was not followed so we will make it again for next year. The best recruiting tool for displays is to go directly to the faculty. We were late in finally choosing displays to include because faculty learned about the Expo by word of mouth or direct recruitment late in the planning process. We were surprised that a number of faculty inquired after it was too late saying they had not heard of the EXPO and that they had displays they would like to include. Just notifying chairs and directors (even meeting personally with them) is an inadequate method of seeking displays.

UF/ IFAS DISPLAYS --SUN BELT EXPO 2007

1	Grass Biotechnology	Fredy Altpeter	altpeter@ufl.edu
2	UF Flower Breeding & Genetics	David Clark	geranium@ufl.edu
3	Energy crisis solutions: Genetic engineering of bacteria	Karen Ehlers	kehlers@ufl.edu
4	Genetic manipulations to change plant growth and development	Karen Ehlers	kehlers@ufl.edu
5	The Blueprint for Life	Karen Ehlers	kehlers@ufl.edu
6	Sunbelt Forages	Ann Blount	paspalum@ufl.edu
7	Using Genetics to Improve Hydroponics' Unique Challenges	Bob Hochmuth	bobhoch@ufl.edu
8	Better Peanuts through Genetics and Plant Breeding	Barry Tillman	btillman@ufl.edu
9	Improved Forest through Genetics	Greg Powell	glpowell@ufl.edu
10	Solutions for your Career - CALS	Charlotte Emerson	cemer@ufl.edu
11	New Plants for Florida	Berry Treat	btreat@ufl.edu
12	Genetic Issues in Hard Clam Aquaculture	Leslie Sturmer	LNST@ufl.edu
13	UF/IFAS caladium varieties	Zhanao Deng	zdeng@ufl.edu
14	Turfgrass Breeding at the University of Florida	Dr. Russell T. Nagata	nagata@ifas.ufl.edu
15	Solutions for Your Life Extension	John Baldwin	baldwinj@ufl.edu
16	Tasti-Lee a high lycopene tomato for the premium market	John (Jay) Scott	jwsc@ufl.edu

- 5.) **IT and Sunbelt Web Site:** The “Solutions for Your Life” template for Sunbelt Ag Expo web site developed in 2006 was updated for this year (<http://sunbelt.ifas.ufl.edu/>) to gather and store information. Louise Ryan, NW District IT Assistant, developed and continues to maintain the site. Ethernet cabling and ports in the building and a closet to house the connections to the router were installed. Also installed were a router and wireless router which were borrowed. We had two live inside webcams (also borrowed) where faculty & staff who could not visit or take part in the Expo could see what was happening during the Expo in the UF IFAS building. The building also had one month service of a DSL line, and wired and wireless connection for computer access. Next year more attention needs to be given to making the web page more informative and user friendly.

6.) **Number of Visitors:** An attempt was made to estimate the visitors each day. While not a scientific count we estimate that about 24,000 visitors passed through during the EXPO. This is fairly close to the effective capacity of the building.

7.) **Promotional Items.** This year we took the emphasis off of distributing promotional items and placed it on providing information. This was attempted by providing each faculty member a button to wear that said, "Got a Question, Ask Me". Further this was facilitated by providing each faculty participant a blue University of Florida logo shirt to make cooperating faculty cooperating easily identifiable with the blue shirt/khaki pant attire. We purchased 121 logo shirts for IFAS faculty with a few being left over. The cost was a bit higher than anticipated because we had difficulty getting a good head count for the order. A "last minute" supplemental order cost more per shirt.

In addition the Gator Head stand-up tables were placed at each end of the building rather than just at the entrance. These were all good decisions. We chose this year to give away the left over "water wiggles" key chains, and refrigerator magnets and the gator head fans. We purchased larger tote bags. In addition we encouraged the exhibitors to have give-away items where appropriate and several did. Some gator head fans remain but more will be needed next year. Tote bags left over are adequate for next year.

8.) **Operations Budget Report:** The administration was supportive and provided the budget needs estimated from the experience gained in 2006--\$10,000. In addition to the inventory noted below we added 4 Gator-top Stand Up Tables, Tally Counter and a Stick Broom to the inventory in the IFAS Building.

- a. Chairs--49
- b. Tables--25
- c. Multi-purpose ladder (large)
- d. Tool box containing, Box cutter, C-Clamps, Hammer, Screw driver, Duct tape, Packaging tape, Gator clamps and stick pins, Scissors and various small tools, arrow roll,
- e. Hose (150 feet), Y adapter and spray nozzle,
- f. Various pot saucers
- g. Interior banners (3) and one roll of floor arrows
- h. Easels--8
- i. Burlap--one bolt
- j. Push Broom and dust pan
- k. Mop and bucket

The allocated operations budget was spent as follows:

1. Electrical panel	\$ 100
2. Gator head stand up computer tables (4).	1,191
3. Banner	95
4. Logo Tote Bags	1,322

5. Logo golf shirts	1,770
6. Landscape plants	137
7. Miscellaneous supplies	\$ 159
8. Extension agent travel	669
9. State faculty/coordinator travel	3,762
Total Expenses	\$9046

While these are not the official accounting numbers they do indicate that we slightly under spent the allocated budget.

9.) Sunbelt Expo Participating Faculty Survey: A Sunbelt Expo Survey was distributed to the 2007 UF/IFAS exhibitors and planning committee members. Key results were incorporated into this report. For the complete results see:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=cU1YVZC_2bkGDOYMG2ZezyteOC84RXSkM1bfNVfzhdQw_3d

- One third of the participants had never attended an Sun Belt Expo
- 63% of exhibitors rated the UF IFAS building superior relative to the other buildings and 37% rated it as good as the others.
- 57% of exhibitors were very pleased regarding traffic to their display. 28% said the numbers were okay and 14% said they were disappointed with the visitors at their display
- 100% of exhibitors said they would be interested in participating again next year.

10.) Website Traffic Generation

The promotional items distributed carried various UF/IFAS websites as noted above. Perhaps the webmasters for the CALS, Research, and Solutions for Your Life websites can generate data to determine if increased traffic occurred after the expo.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS BY PLANNING COMMITTEE

1.) Building issues to consider

- Add another row of ceiling fans if possible (additional ventilation is needed). There is concern that “large coolers” on the floor or in the doors would interfere with the display and traffic flow
- consider GATOR head on roof (both sides) or fly a big Albert balloon
- consider additional rocking chairs for the porch area
- include table skirts to go with the vinyl table clothes
- continue to have it well lighted and visitor friendly
- consider railing around the porch

- Cover pots with varying colors—suggested pine straw but it is not permissible inside building for fire reasons; but there is abundant burlap for wrapping pots.

2.) Display issues to consider

- Continue to limit displays to about 15—avoid overcrowding.
- Continue to specify action oriented displays staffed by a knowledgeable persons featuring a technological or scientific advancement for which a benefit to clientele now or in the near future can be clearly demonstrated
- Visitors like things they can see and touch.
- Add more banners hanging from the ceiling
- Abundant presence of students is an asset
- Allow visitors to come to us rather than rushing them at the door.
- Develop a more comprehensive web page Information for Participating faculty including name tag, shirts, parking, set-up, take down, nearby lodging including camping etc.
- Better label the “Ask the Expert” eye level computer tables
- Arrange for computers to be networked with printers.
- Be effective in reaching faculty, just soliciting via units leaders was not always effective as some of the most effective displays were volunteered by faculty who learned of the Expo and theme by word-of-mouth.
- Continue the integrated presence—e.g., good for research or extension being to refer someone directly to someone from CALS
- Exhibitors enjoyed the presence of diverse colleagues and the opportunity to network
- Encourage social science departments and departments with strong 4-H programs to consider developing displays since there was some unhappiness by their minimal identity
- Faculty recognized that this is a highly visible opportunity to showcase work to a population of concerned and interested citizens.
- Avoid 90 degree cornering of displays
- Provide as much lead time as possible for faculty to know they will be included to allow for more development time and for plants to be grown if they are needed.

3.) Possible Themes to Consider for 2007

While most survey respondents were pleased with the theme some were unhappy because their program interest was not present in the display. Using the theme approach in a few years will most certainly touch every program (although the general displays have content on all programs but not in detail). Secondly, displays were by faculty who volunteered to prepare displays. It is unfortunate that some programs for which excellent displays could have been presented were not volunteered for the Expo. Below are the themes recommended by the survey of 2007 Exhibitors and Planning Committee members.

RECOMMENDED THEMES FOR 2008

- ❖ Back to the future
- ❖ IFAS working for You
- ❖ Sustainable energy: biomass crops, fuel production, conservation practices, etc.
- ❖ Florida has a unique and diverse agricultural industry. This means we need/have diversified research and extension programs. Show how we respond to the diversified needs. No other states/universities could compete with this theme.
- ❖ Animal breeding/research
- ❖ "October Harvest Festival" Theme - (decorations of cornstalks/ pumpkins / grain shocks / ethanol still, etc.)
- ❖ Production Agronomy Irrigation Soils Ag Eng Energy Weather Great Pumpkin out front - guess the weight of it?
- ❖ Bioenergy
- ❖ Energy/ alternative crops
- ❖ The use of both high-tech and low-tech methods of solving production and marketing problems of agriculture.
- ❖ Solutions for Your Land. Use the same categories on the web site only provide it for them to take home in their goody bags. People are looking for ideas and suggestions more than seeing what research is being done, in my opinion. I feel like this should be more like a walk through the Extension Office than a tour of research. but that is only my opinion.
- ❖ Sustainability; "Green" Living. Include sustainability from the standpoints of agriculture, families and consumers, 4-H youth, natural resources, etc.
- ❖ Plant, animal, human, and public health.
- ❖ Nutrition--plant, animal and human
- ❖ Energy Conservation--Home, community and production enterprises; and in addition, conserving fossil fuels by use of alternatives.
- ❖ Sustainability; "Green" Living. Include sustainability from the standpoints of agriculture, families and consumers, 4-H youth, natural resources, etc.

4.) Operation considerations to consider

- Strive to improve visitor count.
- Continue to have the common look—logo shirt/ khaki pants. Get date on Hinton's calendar so he might have "for sell books and bulletins" table on site
- Have EDIS publications available at the Extension exhibit that fit the theme.
- Specific persons scheduled to "open up" and "close up" each day
- Getting name tags/passes distributed in advance is a plus.
- Understand that our purpose is to interact on points of interest with visitors; not to just give away items. Let the visitors come to us make give-a-ways a reward to visitors who show an interest
- GATOR fans should be the principal give away item. Some think all displays should be giving away the same items. We may want to consider a low cost item like the gator refrigerator magnet at each display.
- Ambassador presence positive
- Need job description for greeters/resource persons posted on web site.
- Limiting purchasing to Coordination team was helpful for budget control

5.) Signage

- Consistent signage on building and URL on give-always is urged

6.) Timeline for next Year

- Start planning for next year by establishing Coordination Team and theme selection as early as possible and no later than April and communicate this information and the updated web site with general details and expo dates to the faculty as early as possible
- Post display Applicant Information sheet on IFAS Sunbelt web page as early as possible and not later than June 15
- Make final selection of displays by August 15 and notice those accepted immediately.
- Obtain all names for exhibitors and Expo passes by September 15 and distribute at least one week before the expo.
- Order electrical service and DSL line from Windstream by September 15

Overall Summary: The Coordinators and Planning Committee are very pleased with the UF/IFAS presentation at the Sun Belt Agricultural Exposition in 2007.