Wishing you and your family love, cheer and blessings this holiday season!

Merry Christmas

and

Happy New Year!

--FAMU Cooperative Extension
Greetings,

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for all the support and feedback I received over the past three years since the inception of this newsletter. As a 1890 land-grant institution, Florida A&M University (FAMU) Cooperative Extension has a major responsibility to make sure we continually assist the underserved community. This newsletter is a great way for vital information to be disbursed to the SDA farmers/ranchers we serve.

In the upcoming year of 2015, FAMU, along with 20 other 1890 land grant institutions, will celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the 2nd Morrill Act. Its is our duty and pleasure to make sure each and everyone of you that receive the newsletters are kept abreast of various news, events and activities surrounding this milestone, as well as basic agriculture news that will have an impact on your farming/gardening activities.

I hope this year was a great one for you and from my family to yours, we wish you all a blessed holiday season and Happy New Year.

Amelia Davis
Research confirms that community gardens can play a significant role in enhancing the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being necessary to build healthy and socially sustainable communities.

For anyone who has ever wondered about the impact of community gardens, look closely at your community garden. A local farmer at the FAMU Community Garden (see insert) planted two rows of sweet potatoes in late spring/early summer and here she is late fall harvesting over two bushels of tubers just in time for her Thanksgiving dinner. To put things in perspective the garden plots are 40x40 feet and her rows were planted 4 feet apart. The production area for this crop of sweet potato was approximately 240 square feet; a bushel of sweet potato weighs 50 pounds.

Let’s imagine the entire 71 plots at the garden planted in sweet potato; that would yield just over 23 tons. This would be enough to feed a family reunion of 47,000 relatives and it would take 2 standard dump trucks to haul it away from the garden. Now, if these gardens were to be planted with collard greens in the fall and then with white potato on Valentine’s Day, it is conceivable that the annual production for the garden could reach upwards of 50 tons. So, how important are community gardens? I would say very important.

I must confess that I find it mind boggling that 1 in 7 families in the US is food insecure. The United States changed the name of its definitions in 2006 that eliminated references to hunger, keeping various categories of food insecurity, however, this did not represent a change in what was measured. Very low food insecurity (described as food insecurity with hunger prior to 2006) means that, at times during the year, the food intake of household members was reduced and their normal eating patterns were disrupted because the household lacked money and other resources for food. This means that people were hungry "the uneasy or painful sensation caused by want of food" as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary.

I know that we have the capability to end hunger and it does not require a lot. What we have to do is start growing one row at a time and grow enough to share with those who can not.

Trevor Hylton is the a FAMU Extension Agent II for Leon/Wakulla County and can be reached at trevor.hylton@famu.edu
FAMU FIRST FERAL SWINE WORKSHOP: A SUCCESS!

Contributor: Carmen Lyttle-N’Guessan

The feral swine workshop held during the Annual Farm Fest event, November 15, 2014 was attended by over 30 persons of different affiliations (e.g. farmers, homeowners, organizations). The workshop was coordinated by Florida A&M University (FAMU) College of Agriculture and Food Sciences Cooperative Extension Programs and the USDA/APHIS (US Department of Agriculture/Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service). The attendees expressed their overwhelming appreciation of the workshop, and indicated that they would attend other such workshop at FAMU.

Photos courtesy of Linda Sapp/FAMU Cooperative Extension
A Holiday Recipe for Success

The end of the growing season for Scotch Bonnet peppers in north Florida does not necessarily mean the end to profit making for Scotch Bonnet growers. In most cases, adding value to your produce can bring you more income than produce sold at a fresh produce market. There are several ways to add value to your Scotch Bonnet crop. One method that has been growing in popularity is the processing of spicy jelly (hot pepper jelly). Individuals who have tried Scotch Bonnet jelly rank it higher than most other pepper jellies on a qualitative scale. The reason behind this may lie in the fact that the Scotch Bonnet jelly retains its aromatic identity before, during and after processing. Furthermore, the blend with sugars and other natural ingredients enhances the taste to surreal proportions. It is no wonder therefore that the median price for a half pint jar of Scotch Bonnet jelly is around $5.00; below is a short recipe:

**Scotch Bonnet Pepper Jelly**

**Ingredients**
1 lb red or orange Scotch Bonnet peppers (40 – 50 fruits) de-seeded and cut into pieces (about 4 to 5 cups).
2 teaspoons dried hot red-pepper flakes (if using orange Scotch Bonnet peppers). Use ½ cup green or yellow bell peppers for red Scotch Bonnet peppers
3 tablespoons Sure-Jell less- or no-sugar-needed pectin
4 - 5 cups white sugar
1 - 1 ½ cups white or apple cider vinegar
½ teaspoon salt (optional)
½ teaspoon butter or margarine (optional)
5 - 6 (1/2-pint) canning jars

**Directions**
Sterilize jars, including lids in hot water, rinse well then allow to dry completely. Make sure there are no remaining seeds in the cut peppers. Using a blender or food processor, pulse peppers (including bell pepper mix) to a fine mix. Mix the pectin and 1/4 cup sugar in a small bowl. Stir all ingredients together with the remaining 2 ¾ cups sugar in a 6 quart pot or saucepan and bring to a vigorous rolling boil over high heat. Continue to boil vigorously, stirring occasionally for 5 minutes. Test the jelly after 6 to 7 minutes of elapsed time to see if it has thickened slightly. Do not allow the mixture to become too thick or the final product will become too tough to serve. Submerge empty jars in about 2 to 3 inches of hot water in a large pot or saucepan, large enough to hold all jars. Keep the jars submerged in hot water until ready to use.

Ladle the hot jelly into the jars, leaving approximately 1/4 inch of space at the top. Leave the filled jars in hot water for about 5 more minutes. Screw on lids and screw bands tightly. Remove jars from hot water and allow to cool. Repeat the entire process if more jelly is needed. The entire jelly making process (preparation to cooking) should last approximately 45 minutes. Do not panic if you finish 15 minutes sooner or later than the suggested time. Do not be afraid to take chances. If the jelly fails to come out as expected, give it another try being more cautious the second time around.
Herb of the Month

Yarrow

(Achillea millefolium)

Grow yarrow plants in full sun and in well-drained soil. It is drought-tolerant once established. Yarrow plants spread by rhizomes, they may be considered somewhat invasive so it is best to plant them in a contained area.

The University of Maryland Medical Center reports that yarrow has historically had three primary medical uses: as a topical application for wounds and to stop minor bleeding; to alleviate digestive inflammation; as an aid for insomnia and anxiety. The center also states that modern herbalists use yarrow for a wide range of medical problems such as heartburn, loss of appetite, muscle spasms and fever. Yarrow contains chemicals called flavonoids that might explain its medicinal efficacy. However, the scientific studies done on the plant as of March 2011 have not proved conclusive.

Yarrow Tea is said to be a good remedy for severe colds, being most useful at the onset of a fever, and in cases of obstructed perspiration. Yarrow has relatively high tannin levels as and is been looked at as a possible dewormer for our goats if we can get them to eat the plant. May also be useful in deer control.

*Article courtesy of [www.ehow.com](http://www.ehow.com)*
USDA Announces $9.7 Million in Dedicated Outreach and Technical Assistance to Diversify American Agriculture

Additional Funds Support Broadband and Infrastructure Development in Indian Country

WASHINGTON, Dec. 3, 2014 – Today, US Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced $9.7 million in grants to 62 community-based and non-profit organizations, and educational institutions to conduct training, outreach and technical assistance for socially disadvantaged (including tribal) and veteran farmers and ranchers. These awards are distributed through the Outreach and Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program, also known as the "2501 Program". "Our nation's farmers and ranchers are diverse in experience, background and knowledge, giving us the tools we need to build a resilient agricultural system," said Secretary Vilsack. "Today's announcement is part of our ongoing commitment to identify, recruit and train a vibrant next generation of farmers and ranchers who can carry American agriculture into the future. It is also part of our pledge to assist military veterans find economic opportunity as they return to civilian life."

Secretary Vilsack made today's announcement at the 2014 White House Tribal Nations Conference, a gathering of leaders from the country's 566 federally recognized Tribes. The 2501 Program primarily partners with Historically Black Land Grant Universities (1890 Land Grant Institutions), Native American Land Grant Tribal Colleges and Universities (1994 Land Grant Institutions), Hispanic-Serving Institutions of higher education, and community-based and non-profit organizations that work with minority and veteran farmers and ranchers.

The 2501 Program has distributed more than $66 million to 250 partners since 2010. The 2014 Farm Bill reauthorized the program and expanded assistance to include military veterans. The program is administered by the USDA's Office of Advocacy and Outreach. Of today's announced grants, 31 (50 percent) will support efforts in states participating in USDA's StrikeForce for Rural Growth and Opportunity Initiative, an effort to direct USDA support and services to underserved rural areas experiencing chronic poverty. Twenty-five (39 percent) of the grants will go to partnerships directly targeting veterans interested in farming and are part of USDA's enhanced commitment to expanding services to veterans in agriculture. Twelve grants (20 percent) will directly benefit tribal and native communities.

This year's awards will be distributed in 34 states, Puerto Rico and the Federated States of Micronesia and are part of USDA's efforts to support new and beginning farmers. During his remarks at the Tribal Nations Conference, the Secretary announced additional support to Native communities including:

- A $5.4 million loan to upgrade broadband service for residents of New Mexico's Mescalero Apache Reservation. This is the first telecommunications loan USDA has made under the Substantially Underserved Trust Area (SUTA) provision of the 2008 Farm Bill. Congress implemented SUTA to help USDA's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) improve Tribal infrastructure including offering Tribal borrowers lower interest rates and extended payment terms for RUS loans. It also waives some requirements that applicants provide matching funds for approved projects.

- 28 loans and grants totaling $4.1 million to 1994 Land Grant Tribal Colleges through USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities program. This program provides loans and grants to construct, enlarge or improve community facilities for health care, public safety and public services.

- Partnerships between USDA and three Tribal Colleges (Oglala Lakota College, Kyle, S.D.; Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, N.M.; United Tribes Technical College, Bismarck, N.D.) to provide grant writing assistance and other services to help traditionally underserved communities access federal resources as appropriate.

USDA has made significant investments in economic development, housing and infrastructure projects benefiting American Indians and Alaska Natives. More information is available at www.usda.gov/tribalrelations.

Today's 2501 announcement was made possible by the 2014 Farm Bill. The 2014 Farm Bill builds on historic economic gains in rural America over the past five years, while achieving meaningful reform and billions of dollars in savings for taxpayers. Since enactment, USDA has made significant progress to implement each provision of this critical legislation, including providing disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; strengthening risk management tools; expanding access to rural credit; funding critical research; establishing innovative public-private conservation partnerships; developing new markets for rural-made products; and investing in infrastructure, housing and community facilities to help improve quality of life.
Recipes for the Holidays

Chuckie Pooh’s Sweet Potato Pie

Ingredients
- 1 lb sweet potatoes
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 1 sprinkle of fresh lemon juice
- 1 unbaked pie crust

Directions
Boil potato in skin until tender, let cool and remove skin. Mash potato in a large bowl and mix in ingredients. Pour filling into pie crust and bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour. Garnish with whipped cream and enjoy!

Mrs. Brown’s Creamy Mac and Cheese

Ingredients
- 3 cans of cheddar cheese soup (prefer Campbell’s)
- 1 box Elbow Macaroni
- 1 tbsp. of margarine or butter
- 2 cups of shredded cheddar cheese
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Boil your noodles according to directions on macaroni box, add salt to taste. Strain noodles, add a margarine/butter so the noodles don't stick. Add your soup and stir well. (You can add more cheese soup, depending on how creamy you want it)

Add to the casserole dish, sprinkle top with shredded cheddar cheese and bake at 350 degrees for 10-15 minutes or until cheese has melted. Don't bake until it dries out. Enjoy.
Amelia’s Sautéed Broccoli and Cauliflower

Ingredients
1 lb. broccoli
1 small head cauliflower (about 1-1/4 pounds)
4 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil; more as needed
1 Tbs. McCormick Montreal Steak Seasoning (or as much as needed, to taste)
1/2 small red onion, thinly sliced
3 medium cloves garlic, finely chopped

Directions
In a large pot, add 2 cups of lightly salted water and bring to boil. Add cut florets of broccoli and cauliflower, cover and cook for about 5-7 minutes or until thoroughly steam. Drain and set aside. Set a 12-inch skillet over high heat. Pour in 3 Tbs. of the olive oil and sauté the garlic and red onions until lightly brown. Add the broccoli florets and cauliflower. Lightly season with McCormick's Montreal Steak seasoning. Cook on low heat and check regularly and stir. If needed, add more olive oil, so the veggies will not burn. Cook for another 5 minutes or until veggies are tender. DO NOT OVERCOOK.

Transfer to a platter and enjoy!

A special thanks to all contributors for both Thanksgiving and Christmas recipes, which I hope everyone uses and enjoy.

Amelia Davis, Editor of Extension SDA Newsletter
Florida A&M University
Celebrates the 125th Anniversary of the Signing of the 2nd Morrill Act
1890-2015

Shortly after its founding, FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL UNIVERSITY (FAMU) became the beneficiary of educational provisions for African Americans made possible through the passage of the Second Morrill Act of 1890. Through this important federal legislation, FAMU, formerly known as the “State Normal College for Colored Students,” was designated to receive a land grant “to the endowment and support of branches of learning as related to agriculture and mechanic arts, including military tactics.”
The Growers’ Market (at Lake Ella)
Every Wednesday, 3:00pm – dusk. Rain or Shine.
229 Lake Ella Drive
(Behind Black Dog Café) Tallahassee, FL 32303

Tallahassee’s only organic market is located at beautiful Lake Ella in mid-town Tallahassee. This November, we celebrated 12 years of organic growing, providing delicious organically grown produce and great organic conversations with our Tallahassee and surrounding communities. Come out and join us at the Growers’ Market at Lake Ella as we celebrate our dedicated organic farmers and gardeners, their delicious produce and these years of organic success!

For Additional Information about this and other sustainable development efforts please contact Dr. Jennifer Taylor, Coordinator Small Farm Programs at famu.register@gmail.com
or telephone 850-879-6895.

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