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QUARTERLY

# LEVY BULLETIN



UF/IFAS LEVY COUNTY EXTENSION

625 NORTH HATHAWAY AVE
BRONSON, FL 32621
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From the Agent's Desk

# Pamela Hughes, FCS

## What has Family and Community Sciences been working on?

My first summer with UF/IFAS Extension was fun filled. I had the pleasure of hosting my first 4-H Summer Camp "Cooking with Confidence". The weeklong camp was filled with crafts, games, cooking, and everyone's favorite part, tasting! The kids practiced varied preparations and tested a wide range of recipes. We finished the week with boiled peanuts and ice-cold watermelon. I am already planning and looking forward to next year's camp.





Housing agents worked during the summer months to improve curriculum in the areas of Financial Basics and housing education. These improvements will help agents to improve the delivery of the First Time Home Buyer Course and will strengthen launch of the self-paced Financial Basics Course.

In the upcoming fall months Family and Consumer agents will focus on First Time Home Buyers classes and the launch of a new program on Foreclosure prevention. This course will offer valuable information for those who may be facing foreclosure.

Pamela

# Pasture & Livestock Notebook

by Micah Gallagher

## Completed:

The 2026 4-H agriculture summer camp was a success. The students were able to learn about sectors of the industry including timber, beef cattle, corn, watermelons, and forestry. Most students who love animals believe being a vet is the only job that allows people to work with animals on a daily basis. We decided to counteract that mindset by inviting different guest speakers to highlight their jobs and how they work with animals every day. Site visits are still ongoing and the seasonal shift to planting cool season forages is approaching quickly. The early season drought caused production issues for hay producers and the daily afternoon rain showers are causing timing issues with cutting the hay fields. We expect to see a shortage of hay availability and higher prices this fall due to the weather challenges in 2026.

## In the Works:

Mark Warren and I are currently testing multiple herbicide treatments for sedge control in both Bermuda grass and Bahiagrass fields. I am also planning fall livestock programs and a Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certification workshop in partnership with the Levy County Cattlemen's Association. Livestock programs coming up include topics on winter supplementation for beef cattle, nutritional requirements of ruminants in different life stages, equine nutrition, and a continued fall pasture series focusing on cool season forage options for North Florida. In addition to local programming, the North Florida Livestock Agents Group (NFLAG) is creating an online Canvas course for management of small ruminants which will be available for producers to access at any time.

## Looking Forward to:

I am very excited to begin providing youth ethics and Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) classes. I plan to hold an ethics class this winter and a youth BQA class next spring. I am working with local Ag teachers to recruit youth for both programs. The Adopt A Cowboy program is starting up again with six teachers already registered. Within the next six months there are several great programs and events planned, check out the back page for upcoming dates.

Livestock, Forage, & Pasture Management Events Happening in Levy County

Stay Updated

**Add your contact information to receive emails about our programs and additional resources**

Scan the QR Code

# Levy County 4-H Agri-Genius Camp

**by Micah Gallagher**

Mark Warren and I organized a 4-H summer camp that highlighted different sectors of production agriculture, technology, workforce readiness, and nature within our environment. During the four day camp we traveled to the UF/IFAS North FL Research & Education Center, Usher Land and Timber, The Levy County Forestry Station, and Lane Farms. The four days were filled with activities that covered water filtration for growing crops to handlers showing off their working animals that have unique jobs.




Students who attended were from various backgrounds and learned about farming practices for watermelons, corn, paper timber, and the importance of soil health. The group met with multiple working animals including a horse, two dogs, and an otter learning about different animal related careers. The students experienced a fun microscope activity and took their own soil samples like extension agents. Smokey Bear made a special appearance and showed the students around one of the local forestry stations. The producers and presenters enjoyed telling the students about what they do. Everyone was glad to engage with the next generation, in hopes they made a lasting impact. We plan to host an agriculture related summer camp annually so more students are introduced to the importance of the world around them.

# From the Agent's Desk

The 2026- 2027 4-H Year has officially kicked off! We are excited to see how our members will grow and all they accomplish this 4-H Year.

We held our annual 4-H open house on August 18th. Community 4-H Clubs shared information and resources as they welcomed potential new members.












Since enrollments opened at the beginning of August, we have been happy to welcome a total of **30** new and returning volunteers! We could not provide all of our programming without these amazing individuals!

**National 4-H Week returns October 4 - October 10!**

National 4-H Week brings together 6 million youth, 3,300+ Extension educators, 500,000 volunteers, and 35 million alumni to celebrate the incredible impact of 4-H and preparing young people to be Beyond Ready for life and career!

**DAY 1**

**GO GREEN**

**Monday, Oct. 5**

On Monday of National 4-H Week, Go GREEN and show your 4-H State spirit! A simple, cohesive way for youth, professionals, volunteers, alumni & supporters across the country to celebrate their 4-H programs being Beyond Ready. Let's paint the nation GREEN, on Monday, October 5!

**DAY 2**

**THANKFUL THURSDAY**

**Thursday, Oct. 8**

On Thursday of National 4-H Week, help us shine a light on all the mentors, educators, and volunteers who are making positive impact on you people's lives in 4-H. Share who you're thankful for and celebrate how they are making a difference on Thursday, October 8!

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CERTIFIED ARBORIST ISA

A human tossed a handful of words into Bing's creative compost pile... and voilà—this AI sprout popped up.

From the ROOTS Up

CELEBRATING 250 YEARS LEVY COUNTY FLORIDA OF AMERICA

by Barbara L. Edmonds, extension program assistant, master gardener coordinator and ISA arborist

# PETALS & PATHWAYS: Growing connection, confidence & well-being through therapeutic horticulture

University of Florida research-based recommendations help strengthen local communities by connecting residents with practical education, resources, and solutions that improve quality of life. This July, a core group of Nature Coast Master Gardeners (NCMG) received therapeutic horticulture (TH) training. The training equipped NCMGs to assist residents during the four-week Petals & Pathways (P&P) program, whose goal is to:

CONNECT - Create meaningful social interaction and reduce feelings of isolation;

ENGAGE - Stimulate long-term recollection and cognition through purposeful, hands-on nature and plant-based activities;

and, EMPOWER - Build self-efficacy, confidence, creativity, and a sense of accomplishment.



## WHO BENEFITS?

> Adults experiencing social isolation
> People diagnosed with dementia
> People living with dementia-like symptoms
> Caregivers
> TH assistants helping improve individual and family well-being and quality of life

Hands-on activities create opportunities for people with a wide range of physical and intellectual abilities to participate, connect, and feel they make a contribution.

## WHAT PARTICIPANTS SHARED

"I enjoyed being with others [and] sharing."
"I really needed the peaceful vibe of the program."
I enjoyed the engagement opportunity, "utilizatin of senses, smell, touch, sight."

One caregiver appreciated having the opportunity to do an activity with her brother, rather than simply care for him, and valued the "motivation and support" provided by the program.

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## THE IMPACT GOES BEYOND ONE PROGRAM

Anita Howard, Haven Foundation Dementia Care Program Manager, shared, "Petals & Pathways brought joy to many in our community." She continued "we plan to use the tools provided and skills that we learned from Master Gardeners [TH assistants] to engage with our patients/caregivers in similar projects." TH is portable - meaning that activities may be easily carried or moved to patients/caregivers in their homes, assisted living facilities, skilled nursing facilities, and senior centers.



## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Haven Hospice staff, caregivers, and local nursing home staff participated alongside TH assistants. P&P expenses were supported by a generous community donation, fees from previous NCMG programs, and supplies donated by the Haven Foundation—stretching existing NCMG resources and strengthening community partnerships to meet this community need and improve resident's quality of life.

## GROWING WHAT EXTENSION DOES BEST

Research-based education + trained volunteers + community partnerships = practical solutions for Levy County.

Petals & Pathways demonstrates how UF/IFAS Levy County Extension can identify a community need, leverage existing resources, train volunteers, build partnerships, and create meaningful opportunities for residents—all while being good stewards of taxpayer and community resources.

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FAMU FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SCIENCES

FLORIDA PEANUT PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

FLORIDA PEANUT FEDERATION

# Peanut Butter *Challenge*

## SPREAD THE WORD... PEANUT BUTTER *Fights Hunger!*

**October 1 – November 20**

Donate unopened jars of peanut butter at the UF/IFAS Extension office in your county. All peanut butter donations go to local food pantries to help feed families in need.

We thank the Florida Peanut Producers Association and Florida Peanut Federation for their continued support and contributions.

During the months of October and November, support Florida's peanut producers and people in need in your community by generously donating to the Peanut Butter Challenge.



**Find the Peanut Butter Challenge drop-off location closest to you:**

**UF/IFAS Extension - Levy County**
625 N Hathaway Avenue
Bronson, Florida 32621

**Bronson Public Library**
600 Gilbert Street
Bronson, FL 32621

**Luther Calloway Public Library**
104 NE 3rd Street
Chiefland, FL 32626

**A.F. Knotts Public Library**
11 56th Street
Yankeetown, FL 34498

**Cedar Key Public Library**
460 Second Street
Cedar Key, FL 32625

**Williston Public Library**
10 SE 1st Street
Williston, FL 32696

**go.ufl.edu/PBC | #PBChallenge**

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# WHAT'S COMING UP

## 4-H

***October***

- ***National 4-H Week: Oct 5-9***
- ***Annual Hay Bale Contest***
- ***County Council: Oct 19***

***November***

- ***County Council: Nov 16***

**December**

- **County Council: Dec 14**
- **Annual Holiday Bake-off: Dec 14**

## *Master Gardener*

***October***

- ***Herbal Infused Luffa Soap:*** **Wednesdays, October 14 10:00 am.- 11:00 am. Levy County Extesion Office 625 N. Hathaway Ave., Bronson FL. 32621**
- **October 17 & 18 Cedar Key Seafood Festival**
- **November 7 Cedar Lakes, Woods & Garden Fall Festival**
- **November 21 & 22 Yankeetown Art, Craft & Seafood Festival**

## *Livestock*

- ***October 6th: Beef Cattle Winter Supplementio Program & Dinner***
- ***October 15th :*** **Levy County Cattlemen's Association Fall Membership Meeting**
- **October 20th: Fall Pasture Series**
- **October 22nd Levy County Farm Bureau Annual Dinner**
- **October 27th: Livestock and Forge Field Day**
- **November 14th: JFCA Youth BQA Dat at Usher**
- **December 11th: Levy County Cattlemen's Adult BQA**

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FLORIDA MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER

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