Established by an act of the Florida Legislature on June 14, 1921, the Everglades Research and Education Center (EREC) in Belle Glade, Florida is an agricultural and environmental research and education unit of the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS).

The Everglades Research and Education Center is distinctive in that it is the only academic agricultural research and extension education facility in the United States located on subtropical organic soils.

Economic Contribution of EREC Research

In October 2001, the Food and Resource Economics Department at UF/IFAS published the results of a study conducted by Edward A. Evans, Max R. Langham and Leo C. Polopolus titled Historic Analysis of the Economic Contribution of the Everglades Research and Education Center (EREC). These are some of its conclusions:

- On average, during the period 1956-1997, a one percent increase in the average amount spent on research of $1.0 million, caused the net agricultural revenue to increase by $155,000. That translates into a rate of return on payroll to agricultural research of around 16 percent.
- By its mere presence and the nature of its operations, the EREC generates certain short-term impacts in the local farming community. These were estimated at $9.7 million and 206 full-time jobs.
- In constant dollars, the research budget increased from $1.3 million in 1950 to $2.8 million in 1997, or an annual growth rate of less than two percent.

Inside this issue:

- Faculty Update
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Donations enhance Library

- The private collection of Mr. John Lopez Ona was donated to the EREC Library. The majority of the journals and books are related to sugarcane technology.
- Dr. Joseph Schaefer donated his collection of wildlife and ecology books.
- Dr. John Dunckelman, of the Florida Sugar Cane League, donated a collection of sugarcane related journals and books.
- Faculty members recommend, purchase and contribute most of the new book titles.

Most titles in the first two collections have been catalogued, and are included in the University of Florida Online Public Access Catalog, available at: http://web.uflib.ufl.edu.

The EREC Library is open to the public 5 days a week, during regular business hours.

Faculty in Focus . . . . . . . . . . Dr. Mabry McCray

New to the Everglades Research and Education Center is Dr. James Mabry McCray, Dr. McCray, who prefers “Mabry,” will be working on sugarcane nutrition at the Everglades Research and Education Center. He received his M.S. degree in soil science from the University of Florida, and both his B.S. in agronomy and Ph.D. in soils from the University of Georgia. After completing postdoctoral work with Texas A&M University, Mabry worked for U. S. Sugar for 13 years as a soil scientist in the Research Department. His work at U. S. Sugar included making fertilizer recommendations for sugarcane and citrus, as well as conducting research with soil amendments, soil test calibrations, expanded use of leaf analysis, and water quality.

Feel free to contact Mabry with questions or ideas regarding research needs at (561)993-1518 or email: jmmccray@ifas.ufl.edu
Faculty & Program Update

AGRONOMY
Dr. Rob Gilbert, Assistant Professor  Current research projects include: 1) Stage III of the CP breeding program, which has a field day in November; 2) Harvest recommendation for CP cultivars; and 3) Sugar cane rust modeling. Dr. Gilbert is the Sugarer of the Eggelle-Handbook, an online collection of all garden articles on sugar cane breeding, ecomony, insects, diseases, ecology and other topics: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/TOPIIC_BOOK_Sugar_Handbook email ragilbert@ifas.ufl.edu

Dr. Mabry McCray, Assis- tant Scientist...see cover

ENTOMOLOGY
Dr. Ron Chenery, Professor  Research interests are insect pests of sugarcane, rice, and turf. Recent significant research findings are as follows: 1) in general, sugarcane is a stable ecosystem for arthropod predators (i.e., insects, spiders) that control sugarcane pest such as burning and harvesting; 2) weeds in rice fields increase the rice yields and help in the burning process by al- lowing population build-up of the insects; 3) Two new varie- ties of St. Augustinegrass resist- ant to southern stem bugs were found with Dr. Nagata, email richie@facsy.ifas.ufl.edu

Research and extension activi- ties are conducted under three programs: 1) Crop management / production economic problems on sugarcane and rice; 2) Agronomy for crop production and environ- mental quality protection; 3) Cabbage root fly resistance to Florida Challenges and op- portunities. Contact him at 351-993-1528 or email jab@ifas.ufl.edu

HORTICULTURE
Dr. Greg Nussely, Associate Professor  Conducts research and extension on strategies for insect control on vege- tables and sugarcane. Current projects include: 1) an on-line green aphid blog to support house plant growers; 2) herbicide resistance in sugarcane; 3) Currently working on the genetics of multiple insect resistance in lettuce and turfgrasses. Currently working on the genetics of multiple insect resistance in lettuce and turfgrasses. Dr. Richard Raid, Professor  Current work involves developing management strategies with lettuce and celery growers to control foliar disease problems. Dr. Raid also is very in- volved promoting school garden programs to enhance education and understanding of agriculture. email nagata@ifas.ufl.edu

PLANT PATHOLOGY
Dr. Ken Pernezny, Professor  Currently working on diseases of sugarcane. Current research has shown that bacterial leaf spot of lettuce is a cool (70 F) and hot (90 F) disease. Dr. Raid also has also developed a nationally recognized program utilizing basil for sustainable ro- dent control. email rnm@ifas.ufl.edu

SOIL AND WATER SCI- ENCE
Dr. Sanara Daroub, Assistant Professor  Current work involves research and exten- sion activities related to Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce runoff of agrochemicals in the EAA. Research is con- ducted on three participating growers’ farms in addition to EREC. BMP training work- shops will be offered to grow- ers in 2004. Dr. Daroub also offers classes in soil science and soil fertility management in the Ft. Lauderdale BEC and on-line. For further information please contact her at 351-993-1593 or email smdaroub@ifas.ufl.edu

COUNTY EXTENSION

Dr. Joe Schaefer, Professor and South Florida District Extension Director  Seventy-five county extension faculty, dozens of program assistants trained 90,141 attendees in 2003 adopted new measures to reduce chemical use. Co-Director of Bro- ward County Agent, James Wade, helped 33,229 resi- dents with their gardening, landscaping, plant selection, and insect and disease problems last year. Martha Wel- lington, Assistant Agent in Palm Beach County, and her pro- gram assistants trained 90,141 Palm Beachers in 2003 on nutri- tion health and wellness. 65% of these report adopting 2 or more positive nutri- tional behaviors taught by this program. email jrw@ifas.ufl.edu

UP/IFAS LAKE OKEECHOBEE PRO- TION PROGRAM
Dr. Mitch Finchum, Professor  and Co-Director, UF/ IFAS Lake Okeechobee Pro- gram UP/IFAS is actively involved in research/ exten- sion activities in the Lake Okeechobee watershed. Eight projects, focusing on water quality issues, will demonstrate and verify Best Management Practices (BMPs) for reducing phosphorus inflow to the lake. These projects are funded with approximately $5.25 million from the following agencies: Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Florida Dept. of Environ- ment; South Florida Water Man- agement District; UF/IFAS Lake Okeechobee program.

Dr. Andy Bennett, Assistant Professor  Weed Science, will be leaving the end of March to take a position with USDA-NRCS back in his home state of Oklahoma.

Dr. Jose Alvarez, Professor  Students SOAR, a school-based garden resource to enhance education and understanding of agriculture. email nagata@ifas.ufl.edu

Food & Resource Economics
Dr. José Alvarez, Professor  Research and extension activities are conducted under three programs: 1) Crop management / production economic problems on sugarcane and rice; 2) Agronomy for crop production and environ- mental quality protection; 3) Cabbage root fly resistance to Florida Challenges and op- portunities. Contact him at 351-993-1528 or email jah@jabsifas.ufl.edu

Staff Notes
Stewart Swanson has joined E/R ED as a Research Coordinator. He spent the last 5 years as Director of R & D at Brooks Tropicals, Inc. in Homestead. Before that, Dr. Swanson was the agronomist for the island of Bermuda after spending time in the 80’s as a Techni- cal Director at South Bay Growers, Inc.

Rosie Moutte, formerly with Dr. Lawrence Damoff in the Plant Pathology Laboratory, and Gwen Williams, formerly a technician with Dr. George Snyder will now be assisting Dr. Maury McGary.

Rani Ramalakhan joined as our Everglades Soil Testing Labora- tory (ESTL) as a chemist. She formerly worked as a Re- search Assistant for the Chem- istry/Biochemistry Depart- ment of Florida Atlantic Uni- versity, where she graduated with both a B.S. and M.S. de- gree in chemistry. And, new to Dr. Pernezny’s Lab, Nikol Havravec is a Biological Scientist who came to us from the Univer- sity of Mary- land. She has a strong micro- biology background and provides excellent expertise in our research for the southern stem bug program.

Jairo Sanchez is now a Sr. Laboratory Technician in the same lab. He was “stolen” away from Ron Rice’s pro- gram, so he is not new to the staff. Currently on our staff from McDonald College (Faculty of Agriculture) at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec is Amanda Carroll. She brings high energy and good general agricultural science knowledge to our center.

Margaret Robins works at the front desk, and also has been a valuable library librarian. She has organized a re-labeling system and is coordinating our wonderful library center. Last but not least, the EREC business and administrative offices are pleased to announce that Miggazzie “Chay” Burn- nas is now a full time employee and works in both offices.

Publications and Presentations:


