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).

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:
- The study emphasized the relevance of the rice-sugarcane rotation introduced by the Center in the late 1970s, and its economic importance, for the EAA.
- The rotation can result in a 10 percent increase in sugarcane yields and reduce nutrient runoff and soil subsidence.
- Adding a soil nutrient silicon during rice production can increase rice yields by as much as 50 percent and significantly increase sugarcane yield.

The rotation was recognized by UF/IFAS Interdisciplinary Research Team Award.

A new study has been added to the long academic debate on the costs and benefits of the U.S. sweetener program.

“The cost of the U.S. sugar program revisited,” by John C. Boghin, Barbara L. Osta, Jay R. Cheek, and Samarendra Mohanty (Working Paper 01-WP 273, Center for Agricultural and Rural Development, Iowa State University), analyzes the welfare implications of removing that program:

- It uses a multimarket model of U.S. sweetener markets, which includes raw crops, sugar extraction and refining, high-fructose corn syrup, and sweetener users (food-processing industries and final consumers).
- It addresses the industrial organization of food industries using sweeteners and treats the United States as a large importer.
- The economic impacts (all in 1999 prices) from the removal of the program would include: cane growers, sugar beet growers, and beet processors would lose $307 million, $460 million, and $89 million, respectively. Sweetener users would gain $1.9 billion. The deadweight loss of the current sugar program is estimated at $532 million. World prices would increase by 13.2 percent.

Did you know?
- The Florida Agricultural Experiment Station administers and supports research programs in UF/IFAS. The research programs were created by federal legislation known as the Hatch Act, a follow-up to the Morrill Act that established US land-grant universities. The research programs support approximately 350 full-time equivalent faculty members in two schools, 16 academic departments at UF’s Gainesville campus and at UF research and education centers around the state.

From the Director’s Desk:

Cooperative efforts between local area schools and the faculty at the EREC continued for a second summer as local area High School students participated in a paid internship program. The students were recommended by their teachers, principals, and guidance counselors, and then interviewed by faculty at the EREC.

The program provides students with work experiences in the science field and also an opportunity to explore professional employment in the area. The interns worked in greenhouses, laboratories, and fields; many compiled and entered data into computers and also did some research work in the library; all good preparation for college-bound students.

For Homecoming, and November 11, for Veterans Day.

From left: Renetta Burden, Shaquasha Upshur, Miguel Baltazar, Keisha Hodges, Jeffrey Dent, Alice Pernezny, John Mendoza and Slande St. Clair.
The First Friday Seminar Series began its 2005-06 season with a presentation on September 9, by Dr. Graham King.

Seminars are open to the public and begin at 10:45 at the EREC Conference Center. A schedule of the seminars is available on our website at: http://erec.ifas.ufl.edu

Leafy vegetable growers are reminded that the Lettuce Advisory Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, October 5 at the EREC Conference Center. Open to all vegetable growers, this meeting is a good opportunity for learning about current vegetable research and for discussing current and future needs.

There will be a general BMP training session on October 13, beginning at 8 a.m. and lasting until noon. The meeting will be held at the EREC Conference Center. If you plan on attending you must register before September 30, by contacting Dr. Tim Lang at 561-993-1547, email tlang@ifas.ufl.edu, or Dr. Samira Daroub at 561-993-1593, email sddaroub@ifas.ufl.edu

Dr. Ken Pernezny was in cooperation with Dr. Lawrence Datonoff, UF/IFAS Gainesville, and Dr. Robert Schub, University of Guam, received a grant for $241,815.00. The grant will be used to support a graduate student and other research to target spot of tomatoes.

On August 26, a new faculty member began working here at the EREC. Dr. Alan Wright has been hired into a 60% research, 40% extension position in soil and water science. He will concentrate on water quality and environmental issues relative to agriculture and other interests in the Glades.

Dr. Richard Raids has been selected as the winner of the Commissioner's 2005 Agricultural Environmental Leadership Award for his work with the University of Florida's Barn Owl Project. Awarded by the Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Raid's nomination was selected by a review committee representing government, the agricultural industry, and environmental organizations. He will receive the award at the Farm Bureau's Annual Meeting in Orlando on October 14.

Professional Development

Dr. Samira Daroub was invited to speak at the Soil and Crop Science Society of Florida annual meeting held in Boca Raton, May 18-20, 2005. Dr. Daroub's presentation was titled; “Phosphorus origin, transport, management, and BMPs in the Everglades Agricultural Area.” Dr. Daroub was also an invited speaker at the Florida State Horticultural Society annual meeting held in Tampa, June 5-7, 2005, her topic was “Best management practices in the Everglades Agricultural Area: A success story.”

In June, Dr. Richard Raid attended the 13th International Sclerotinia Workshop hosted by the University of California's Cooperative Extension Service in Monterey County. At the workshop, he presented a poster entitled “Management of Sclerotinia sclerotiorum on vegetables grown in the Everglades Agricultural Area of south Florida: Past, present, and future perspectives”. The workshop presented a wonderful opportunity for learning about some of the advancements being made in controlling this potentially devastating fungus by utilizing biological control or with host-plant resistance. While in California, Raid also took the opportunity to tour some of the state's agricultural areas by bicycle with his stepson.


Dr. Ken Pernezny, accompanied by his wife Lynn, attended the American Phytopathological Society annual meetings in Austin, Texas, July 30-August 3. One session of particular interest concerned protocols for phytosanitary permits, especially as they relate to importation of pathogenic cultures from foreign countries.

Dr. Jose Alvarez attended the 15th Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy, August 4-6, in Miami. He presented the paper “Cuba’s Costs of Sugar Production: Past, Present and Future” co-authored with G.B. Hagberg. He also announced the winners of the student best paper competition at the luncheon and chaired the panel where the best graduate and undergraduate papers were presented.