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From the Center Director

Outside my office window this morning the dark sky portends of rain, again. Harvest this fall has been plagued with excessive rain, and as of this writing (10 December) we still have unpicked cotton and soybeans in the field. We have peanuts rendered un-harvestable because they have been rained on so many times since digging. Hopes are that we can finish harvesting cotton and soybeans before Christmas.



Dr. Wes Wood
Professor & Center Director

Our harvest problems, however, seem small when compared to the devastation folks to the east of us experienced from Hurricane Michael. Hundreds of thousands of acres of crops and timber were destroyed in that storm along with homes and other infrastructure. I wish all individuals impacted by the hurricane the very best as they recover from the wreckage caused by Michael.

We held our premier community event this fall on the Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week – our two-day Farm to City harvest and distribution. On that Monday at the Jay Research Facility, we exposed high school students to agriculture while getting their help in harvesting and packaging farm products (collards, grits, cornmeal and sweet potatoes). On that Tuesday, we distributed these products in conjunction with Feeding the Gulf Coast (their food bank provided hams, turkeys, canned goods and bakery items) to 800 needy families in Santa Rosa and Escambia Counties. I'm very proud of this event that has become a Thanksgiving tradition at the WFREC.

I'm happy that Dr. Pratap Devkota joined the WFREC on 13 November as an Assistant Professor of Weed Science (60% research, 40% extension). Pratap came to us from the University of California where he was working as a Weed Science Advisor. His program will focus on weed management in agronomic crops in the state of Florida. i.e., he will have state-wide responsibilities in this focus area that go beyond the Panhandle. Welcome Pratap!

The overall state of the WFREC at the end of 2018 is good. With the arrival of Dr. Devkota, we now have a full stable of excellent faculty and staff to move our mission and vision forward. WFREC Mission: To serve and promote the public good through research, teaching and outreach. WFREC Vision: To be a center of excellence at the forefront of agricultural and natural resources science and technology. We have infrastructure needs and will continue to work with upper administration in Gainesville to build that infrastructure as we grow our research, teaching and extension programs. However, we will not let our current infrastructure needs hold us back from meeting our mission and vision goals.

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WFREC

From the Center Director—*continued from page 1*

In that regard, the WFREC will hold a faculty retreat in summer 2019 to map strategy for actions to continue to meet our mission and vision over the next five years.

I wish everyone a great holiday season. I further wish our producers, WFREC faculty and staff, and our students a productive and fulfilling 2019.

Go Gators!



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UF/IFAS Milton Community & Teaching Gardens

A huge thank you goes to the Pace and Gulf Breeze Lowe's stores for providing volunteers and supplies for the UF/IFAS Community and Teaching Gardens clean-up on October 30th and 31st.



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Center Visitors

The fall is always a busy time here at the WFREC, and this year has been no exception. Our harvests of cotton and peanuts, collecting research data, and hurricane clean-up assistance at the UF/IFAS North Florida Research and Education Center in Marianna, was interspersed with visitors out here in Jay, Florida. We welcome visitors to our Milton and Jay Research Facilities. This allows our faculty, staff and graduate students to showcase the research projects that they are conducting.

Elementary and High School Field Trips

We were very excited to welcome Jim Allen Elementary School from the Escambia County School District to tour the WFREC Research Facility on October 3, 2018. One hundred and twenty-seven students, parents and teachers had the opportunity to learn about the Entomology, Turfgrass and Specialty Crop programs conducted at the WFREC Research Facility, as well as the importance of bees and pollination to ensure a successful crop.



Gators



The Bagdad Elementary School visited the WFREC Jay Research Facility on October 24. The University of Florida, WFREC faculty and staff did a great job showcasing our programs to the group of seventy-two 3rd graders and teachers. The majority of the students had never been on a farm, so they were very excited to be able to see and touch cotton for the first time. For more information about our programs or to schedule a field trip contact Robin Vickers at rvickers@ufl.edu.



The South Baldwin Center for Technology students had the opportunity to tour the WFREC on November 14. Despite the cold and windy weather the students had a great time. Dr. Bryan Unruh, Statewide Turfgrass Specialist, gave them an up close look at the new technology in the turfgrass industry and Graduate student, Jessica Baldwin took the time to display her collection of insects and allowed the students to view the insects under microscopes. The students also learned about cotton and peanuts and the importance of bees and pollination to agriculture.

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Welcome Dr. Pratap Devkota

Assistant Professor, Weed Science

This November we welcomed Dr. Pratap Devkota to the UF/IFAS West Florida Research and Education Center. Dr. Devkota joins the faculty as an Assistant Professor of Weed Science. He will be doing research and extension in weed management in the row crops common to Florida.

Dr. Devkota, originally from Nepal, received his Ph.D. from Purdue University in 2016. He comes to the WFREC from the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources in Holtville, California, where he was, among other things, conducting needs assessments of priority issues relevant to California cropping systems in the low desert.

We are pleased to have Dr. Devkota join us at UF in Jay, Florida, and look forward to working with him.

Welcome Dr. Devkota!



WFREC CHRISTMAS PARTY

for Faculty & Staff



The WFREC hosted its annual Christmas luncheon and gift game exchange on December 7, 2018. It is truly the most wonderful time of the year. Faculty and Staff enjoyed a delicious meal and had a great time of fellowship. The food was amazing and as always we had way too many desserts! Have a safe and happy holiday!

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FARM TO CITY

This year we celebrated National Farm to City Week November 16th through 22nd. The University of Florida, West Florida Research and Education Center and Feeding the Gulf Coast came together once again to celebrate and promote agriculture in Santa Rosa and Escambia County.

To promote agriculture and the importance of agriculture to consumers and the general public, and to increase awareness about food insecurity in the Florida panhandle, we distributed food (some locally grown) to 400 pre-qualified families in Santa Rosa County and 400 pre-qualified families in Escambia County on November 20th. The food provided a healthy Thanksgiving meal to hundreds of struggling families.

Check out the Farm to City video! <https://vimeo.com/256267209>



A huge thank you to our generous sponsors!

Platinum sponsors:

Hill Kelly Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram, Poarch Band of Creek Indians, Santa Rosa County Florida Farm Bureau Insurance

Gold sponsors:

City of Milton, Walmart –Pace, St. Rose of Lima Church, Baptist Health Care, United Bank, Climate Control of Pensacola, and Faith Chapel Funeral Home

Silver sponsors: Farm Credit of Northwest Florida, Escambia River Electric Cooperative, Santa Rosa Medical Center

Community Partners:

Feeding the Gulf Coast, Waterfront Rescue Mission, Wendt Farm & Nursery, Leonard & Susan Kichler Farm, Coastal Machinery, Smith Tractor Company, Santa Rosa Department of Corrections, UF/IFAS Extension, Guy Thompson Community Center, Century Department of Corrections

If you would like to support this much needed community outreach project that benefits over 800 families, and 3,200 individuals in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties please contact Robin Vickers at rvickers@ufl.edu.

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New Grants & Publications

Dr. Mike Mulvaney
Assistant Professor, Agronomy

Peer reviewed publications (underline = lead author; bold = self):

1. A.D. Jani, **M.J. Mulvaney**, H.A. Enloe, J.E. Erickson, R.G. Leon, C.W. Wood, R.L. Rowland. 2018. [Peanut residue distribution gradients and tillage practices determine patterns of N mineralization](#). Nutrient Cycling in Agroecosystems. Published online Nov. 27, 2018.
2. D. Perondi, C.W. Fraisse, W. Pavan, V.A. Cerbaro, D.D. Berreto, C.G. Staub, **M.J. Mulvaney**, P. Troy, D.N.L. Pequeno. *In press*. Smart Crop Season Planning tool: Evaluating the probability of extreme weather events during crop development. Computers and Electronics in Agriculture. Accepted Nov. 9, 2018.
3. **M.J. Mulvaney**, R.G. Leon, R. Seepaul, D.L. Wright, T.L. Hoffman. *In press*. *Brassica carinata* seeding rate and row spacing effects on morphology, yield, and oil. Agronomy Journal. Accepted Oct. 25, 2018.
4. A.D. Jani, **M.J. Mulvaney**, R.G. Leon, D.L. Rowland, J.E. Erickson, C.W. Wood. 2018. [Conventional harvest index methods may overestimate biomass and nutrient removal from abscising crop species](#). Communications in Soil Science and Plant Analysis, 11.
5. N. Bellaloui, H.K. Abbas, M.W. Ebelhar, A. Mengistu, **M.J. Mulvaney**, C. Accinelli, W.T. Shier. 2018. [Effect of increased nitrogen application rates and environment on protein, oil, fatty acids, and minerals in sesame \(*Sesamum indicum*\) seed grown under Mississippi Delta conditions](#). Food and Nutrition Sciences 9, 1115.



Grants:

- \$9821. Florida Peanut Producers. Directed application for white mold control in peanut. 2018-19.

Professional presentations:

1. M.J. Mulvaney, K.S. Balkcom. 2018. Brassica carinata tillage and seeding rate for the Southeast US. ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meetings, Baltimore, MD. Nov. 6, 2018.
2. M.J. Mulvaney, A.D. Jani, K.S. Balkcom, D. Jordan. 2018. Nitrogen credits from peanut (*Arachis hypogaea*) residues to subsequent crops. ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meetings, Baltimore, MD. Nov. 7, 2018.
3. A.D. Jani, M.J. Mulvaney, R.G. Leon, R. Seepaul, D.L. Wright, T.L. Hoffman. 2018. Brassica carinata growth and yield characteristics are determined more by row spacing than seeding rate in the Southeastern USA. ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meetings, Baltimore, MD, Nov. 7, 2018.
4. R. Seepaul, B.C. Colvin, I. Small, S. George, M.J. Mulvaney, D.L. Wright. 2018. Agronomic Performance of Brassica Carinata across North Florida. ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meetings, Baltimore, MD, Nov. 5, 2018.
5. A.D. Jani, M.J. Mulvaney, R.G. Leon, R. Seepaul, D.L. Wright. 2018. Nitrogen (N) Release Patterns from Environmentally Smart N (ESN) during Winter Crop Production in the Southeastern USA. ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meetings, Baltimore, MD, Nov. 5, 2018.

Dr. Silvana Paula-Moraes Assistant Professor, Crop Pest Management

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Publications:

Montesano, D.G., Specht, A., Sosa-Gomez, D.G., Roque-Specht, V., Sousa-Silva, J.C., Paula-Moraes, S.V., Peterson, J.A., Hunt, T.E. 2018. Host plants of *Spodoptera frugiperda* (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae) in the Americas, *African Entomology* 26, 286-300.

Luz, P.C., Specht, A., Paula-Moraes, S.V., Malaquias, J.V., Ferreira, L.F.M., Otanasio, P.N., Diniz, I.R. 2018. Owlet moths (Lepidoptera: Noctuoidea) associated with Bt and non-Bt soybean in the Brazilian savanna. *Braz j Biol.*, Jul 10. pii: S1519-69842018005017103. doi: 10.1590/1519-6984.179759.

Otanasio, P.N., Vieira, L.C.G., Roque-Specht, V.F., Paula-Moraes, S.V., Luz, P.C., Specht, A. 2018. Comparison of two artificial diets to rear *Elapharia agrotina*. *Ciencia Rural*, 48, DOI10.1590/0103-8478cr20170375.

Dr. Paula-Moraes was invited and participated in the 2018 Scientific Advisory Panel/EPA in Washington, DC “Resistance in lepidopteran pests to *Bacillus thuringiensis* (BT) plant incorporated protectants (PIPs) in the United States.” The recommendations from the panel were published with the EPA’s analysis of scientific uncertainties related to resistance management and options to enhance the current Insect Resistance management (IRM). The panel was held in July and the document was published in November.

She was also invited to give the presentation: Bt technology worldwide: use and management of insect resistance in the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA), CSS 2018 & Seed Expo, the America’s largest seed industry convention in Chicago on December 6th.



Dr. Silvana Paula-Moraes

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Santa Rosa Leadership Class 32 Agribusiness Day



The Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce Leadership Class 32 visited the WFREC Research facility this fall. Participants learned about the challenges local farmers face here in the North end of Santa Rosa County and heard from several producers who provided a glimpse into how they stay ahead of the game. We also learned that Time management is important in any business, but it's crucial in farming, where outside factors such as weather have a huge impact. A producer can't afford to waste time, so technology is a necessity.



Thank you to our breakfast sponsor, Farm Credit of NWF and our lunch sponsor, United Bank.

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Student Scholarships & Awards



Congratulations to Traci Goodhart on winning the Ben Skulnick Fellowship (\$1,000) from the Soil and Water Sciences Department. Traci is a graduate student for Dr. Deitch.

For the second year in a row, Mark Kann was awarded the Col. Frank Ward Memorial Scholarship for \$1,500. He is currently enrolled in the University of Florida working toward his master's degree. Kann is currently conducting research vital to the golf and turfgrass industries under the supervision of Dr. J. Bryan Unruh.



Pablo Agustin Boeri was awarded the Ralph White Scholarship for \$1,000. He is working toward his master's degree at the University of Florida, which he will complete during the summer of 2019. Currently, he is working as a graduate research assistant in Turf Science under the supervision of Dr. J. Bryan Unruh. After earning his master's degree, Boeri is planning to pursue a Ph.D.



Congratulations go to Arun Jani who won 1st place in graduate student poster competition for the Bioengineering Systems section.

- A.D. Jani, M.J. Mulvaney, R.G. Leon, R. Seepaul, D.L. Wright, T.L. Hoffman. 2018. *Brassica carinata* growth and yield characteristics are determined more by row spacing than seeding rate in the Southeastern USA. ASA-CSSA International Annual Meetings, Baltimore, MD, Nov. 7, 2018.



Arun also won 3rd place in graduate student oral competition for the Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition section.

- A.D. Jani, M.J. Mulvaney, R.G. Leon, R. Seepaul, D.L. Wright. 2018. Nitrogen (N) Release Patterns from Environmentally Smart N (ESN) during Winter Crop Production in the Southeastern USA. ASA-CSSA Annual Meetings. Baltimore, MD, Nov. 5, 2018.

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Spring Festival of Flowers

The University of Florida, IFAS and the Pensacola State College Milton Campus invites you to join them for one of the largest festivals of the season. This is a popular event that draws plant enthusiasts from near and far. This festival features numerous plant vendors, UF student club plant sale, arts & crafts, Santa Rosa Master Gardeners, great food and horticultural talks & demonstrations.

The goal of the event is to raise money for University of Florida, IFAS & Pensacola State College scholarships, student field trips, and other student needs.

Who: University of Florida, Milton in conjunction with the Pensacola State College Milton Campus

Where: Pensacola State College & UF at Milton (Avalon Blvd at Hwy 90, Milton)

Date: April 5, 6 & 7, 2019

Times: **FRIDAY 9-5PM • SATURDAY & SUNDAY 9AM-4PM**

This is a free event and wheelchair accessible.

Want to be a vendor? Contact Robin Vickers at rvickers@ufl.edu or by calling 850-983-7134.



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2019 Upcoming Events

FFA District Contest	January 18, 2019
Spring Festival of Flowers	April 5, 6 & 7, 2019
Gulf Coast Turfgrass Expo & Field Day	June 19, 2019

UF/WFREC Holidays & Academic Program Calendar

Christmas Day (Closed) - December 25th
UF Closed December 26th through January 1st
Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday (Closed) - January 21st
Spring Break (No Classes) - March 2nd through March 9th
Memorial Day (Closed) - May 27th
Independence Day (Closed) - July 4th



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