

**CENTER FOR  
PUBLIC ISSUES EDUCATION**  
IN AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

# TOGETHER

**2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT**

**UF | IFAS**  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



Center for  
Public Issues Education

The **UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education** conducts and disseminates objective interdisciplinary research and educational programs to increase public understanding of and engagement in agricultural and natural resources issues.



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When the UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (PIE Center) began hearing in February of the potential ramifications the pandemic may have in the United States, we began developing a strategy to conduct research on COVID-19's societal and economic impacts on the general population and for agriculture and natural resources leaders. What you will read in this year's annual report will highlight not only the PIE Center's research and outreach on COVID-19's impacts, but also the center's contributions supporting the state's agriculture and natural resources sector.

Because of the pandemic, the PIE Center, as well as the entire University of Florida, worked from home for the spring and summer months. We collaborated electronically to continue our work, meeting regularly through Zoom video conferencing. Since March, we have conducted three national surveys of the general

public and one national survey targeting agriculture leaders on COVID-19-related topics. Immediately after each survey, we turned the research findings into informational materials: fact sheets, social media posts, webinars and videos. In addition to our own COVID-19 research, the PIE Center, as part of the Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (SCCAHS), has created numerous informational materials that Florida's agriculture industry can use to help protect farm workers from COVID-19. Please visit <http://www.sccaahs.org/index.php/covid-19/> to see the PIE Center's contributions to SCCAHS's COVID-19 outreach and education efforts.

In addition to our research and outreach on COVID-19, the PIE Center has been busy with many other projects. PIE Center staff have just completed developing communication materials to inform people about harmful algal blooms, as part of a Florida Sea Grant program. We are continuing our year-long research project with Martie Gillen in UF's Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences to enhance and promote the state's Guardianship Assistance Program, part of the State of Florida's Department of Children and Families. We collaborated on two SEED-IT grants, a program through the UF/IFAS Research office that provides start-up funds for new research programs. We're also part of a \$1 million grant that focuses on ecological and economic impacts of land use and climate change on Florida's Gulf Coast. IFAS Extension asked the PIE Center to research what the state's policymakers know about local food production (LFP), sometimes called "urban agriculture"; research findings from this project are being used to better equip Extension faculty to help local officials navigate the LFP waters. Extension has also requested the PIE Center's assistance to conduct listening sessions and focus groups for the next Extension Roadmap.

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Several of the PIE Center's research and outreach efforts in 2019 – including providing resources during Hurricane Dorian and the Prevent & Protect mosquito control messaging program – received awards at the 2020 Association of Communication Excellence (ACE) conference. The overall Prevent & Protect campaign received the top award in the issue communication category. Research involving PIE Center-affiliated faculty or staff received the following awards at the ACE conference: Runner-up, outstanding research paper; outstanding research poster; and outstanding innovative poster.

As mentioned, the PIE Center is an integral component of the SCCAHS's efforts, providing leadership in that center's State of Science meeting, community stakeholder advisory board meeting, and overall outreach. The PIE Center develops and delivers a monthly webinar series for SCCAHS. We also coordinated the Insight Summit in February in Minnesota. The Center for Rural Enterprise Engagement, a new partner program for the PIE Center and co-directed by Lauri Baker, conducts the Insight Summit, which brings people together to learn how to use cutting-edge new media marketing strategies. In 2021, the Insight Summit will take place in Florida; we will provide more information later this fall about the summit's plans. The PIE Center also plays a major role in Florida's Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN), under Angie Lindsey's direction.

Looking ahead, we wanted to let you know that the PIE Center has moved. Since its inception, the PIE Center was in Bryant Space Science Center in the center of UF's main campus. In April, the PIE Center moved a little further out from the middle of campus. We are in Building 60; if you're familiar with Fifield Hall, we're near there. (If you don't know where Fifield Hall is, we're about three blocks from where the new UF Gator baseball field is being built.) We're very excited about our new office space. What's more, we also received space to create the Social Science Research Lab, which is being equipped with top-notch statistical software, perception analyzers, a large-screen television and video cameras. The space can be arranged in many ways to conduct focus groups, presentations and workshops.

After reading this annual report, I hope you see how integral the PIE Center's research and outreach efforts are to the future of Florida's agricultural and natural resources sectors.

Sincerely,

**Ricky Telg**  
*Director and Professor*



## LETTER FROM UF/IFAS VICE PRESIDENT

As your new vice president for agriculture and natural resources, I arrive in Gainesville already acquainted with the PIE Center’s solid national reputation.

Science is a social enterprise. An understanding of public opinion and engagement with science helps us achieve a core function of our land-grant mission to disseminate innovation and discovery. The PIE Center increases the impact of our biological science by using a social science approach to identify perceptions of audiences in areas such as agronomy, marine sciences, entomology and nematology,

animal sciences, and horticultural science. Based on those findings, the PIE Center then devises outreach messages to convey research findings to target populations. The PIE Center as a result makes research better.

Indeed, while research is the foundation of science, if you can’t measure the impact and tell the story of the research in a way that the public understands and appreciates, then we need to question the need for the research in the first place. As director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture before I arrived at UF/IFAS, I supported the awarding of grants to advance research on public engagement through a special social sciences initiative. But for all publicly funded proposals it was essential for investigators to tell how their results would be shared.

I’m also impressed with the evolution of the PIE Center toward a more entrepreneurial model in recent years, which fits my philosophy that land-grant universities need to diversify their research funding. The PIE Center’s success in attracting industry support signals relevance – addressing real-world challenges.

I look forward to engaging with the PIE Center, its advisory council of stakeholders, and industry around the science of how people form and act on opinions regarding complex agricultural and natural resources issues.

Sincerely,

**Scott Angle**  
Vice President

# MEET THE TEAM

## FACULTY



**RICKY TELG**  
Director and Professor



**LAURI BAKER**  
Associate Professor



**ANGELA LINDSEY**  
Assistant Professor

## STAFF



**SANDRA ANDERSON**  
Research Coordinator



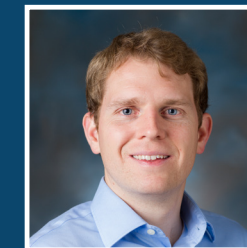
**ASHLEY MCLEOD-MORIN**  
Media Coordinator



**ALENA POULIN**  
Marketing Assistant



**SHELLI RAMPOLD**  
Research Coordinator



**PHILLIP STOKES**  
Education Coordinator

**SYDNEY HONEYCUTT**  
Media Assistant

**ANISSA ZAGONEL**  
Marketing and Research Associate

## PLANTING TOGETHER

The PIE Center sows relationships with diverse groups throughout Florida, including Extension professionals, public health experts and university administrators, to build collaborative research partnerships. These partnerships allow the PIE Center to be both proactive and responsive to a range of topics that require exploration to better understand how people make decisions related to food, agriculture, natural resources and their communities.



## RESEARCH BRIEF: GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In addition to providing valuable social science research on topics related to agriculture and natural resources, the PIE Center also conducts research to equip Florida communities and organizations to better understand the needs of their stakeholders.

Recently, the Florida Department of Children and Families implemented the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP), which provides support to caregivers of children that were removed from their primary caregiver due to abuse or neglect. The PIE Center has been working with Martie Gillen, associate professor of family, youth and community sciences, to determine how to best implement the new program.

“GAP is a relatively new program that is being implemented,” said Sandra Anderson, research coordinator for the PIE Center. “Martie was approached to offer guidance on the program’s implementation and we are partnering with Martie to offer research on how the program can be implemented effectively.”

The PIE Center recently completed a communication audit of materials used by local and state agencies to communicate about GAP and will soon host listening sessions to learn about participants’ perceptions of the GAP program.

“We knew it would be important to hear directly from people who were participating in the program to learn how the program was communicated to the participants and what communication opportunities might exist,” Anderson said.

# BY THE NUMBERS

**\$2.29 MILLION**

TOTAL VALUE OF RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

**\$246,460**

AWARDED TO PIE CENTER RESEARCH

**15**

FOCUS GROUPS

**5**

INTERVIEWS

**7**

SURVEYS

**10**

PARTNERSHIPS

**22**

ARTICLES

**8**

REPORTS & ELECTRONIC DATA  
INFORMATION SOURCE (EDIS) DOCUMENTS

# AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Faculty, staff and students working with the PIE Center published 30 articles, reports or Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS) documents and presented many papers and posters at academic and industry conferences. Below are just some of the most notable papers and presentations.

Rampold, S., Telg, R., Poulin, A., Anderson, S., Lindsey, A.B., McLeod-Morin, A., Stokes, P. (2020). *Understanding public perceptions of mosquito-related information sources and adapting research findings to the needs of industry professionals*. University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service Publication Series (AEC695). Gainesville, FL.

Rampold, S. D., Cater, M., & Telg, R. W. (2020). *Looking for information: An exploratory study to explain public information-seeking behaviors about mosquito control topics*. Paper presented at the National Agricultural Communications Symposium (NACS), Louisville, KY.

Parker, C., McLeod-Morin, A., Honeycutt, S. (2020). *Mosquito education that doesn't suck*. *American Entomologist, Signals*, 66(1), 20-23.

Lindsey, A., McLeod-Morin, A., Anderson, S., Poulin, A. (2020, March). *Fighting the bite: Assessing risk perceptions of mosquito borne illnesses using the Risk Perception Attitude (RPA) framework*. Paper presented at the International Crisis and Risk Communication Conference, Orlando, FL.

Baker, L. M., McLeod-Morin, A., Kent, K. W., & Lindsey, A. B. (2020). *No online information outbreak: A quantitative content analysis of the CDC and USDA websites for available information on zoonotic disease*. *Advancements in Agricultural Development*, 1(1), 25-37.

Mike, M., Rampold, S. D., Telg, R. W., & Lindsey, A. B. (2020) *Utilizing Extension as a resource in disaster response: Florida Extension's communication efforts during the 2017 hurricane season*. *Journal of Applied Communications*, 104(1).

# INFORMING EXTENSION TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR LOCAL LEADERS ABOUT URBAN AGRICULTURE

By Alena Poulin

To better understand the needs of local government stakeholders and provide support in creating policies that meet their communities' needs, the PIE Center partnered with UF/IFAS Extension to examine local government stakeholders' knowledge, perceptions and informational needs regarding urban agriculture in Florida cities and counties.

PIE Center research coordinators led the survey development, collected and analyzed data and developed a report on the findings. PIE Center media specialists used those research findings to develop informational guides.

"Florida is a rapidly urbanizing state with increasing interest in enabling Florida residents to produce food within urban and suburban areas where food production is not one of the traditional activities," said Shelli Rampold, PIE Center research coordinator.

Local food production or, urban agriculture, includes a wide variety of activities including for profit urban farms in industrial and warehouse districts, as well as not-for-profit food production such as community and home gardens.

In Florida, each county or municipality is responsible for its own urban agriculture policies and regulations. Local government stakeholders, such as mayors, city planners and county commissioners, play a key role in drafting and adopting such policies.

"This research was needed to help inform the development and delivery of information and training provided to local government stakeholders to help alleviate barriers to, and facilitate continued growth of, local food production activities in Florida cities and counties," Rampold said.

Results showed local government stakeholders hold positive attitudes about local food production in their communities and highly value a variety of potential benefits to having food production in their communities. These benefits include opportunities for youth development programs, educational opportunities for community members and increasing food access and security.



Photos courtesy of UF/IFAS Communications

In general, stakeholders did not perceive the barriers that had been identified through research from other areas of the United States to be barriers to food production in their own communities. They perceived themselves as moderately knowledgeable of local food production topics such as zoning ordinances and what activities are included in urban agriculture, but were less knowledgeable of the Florida Right to Farm Act and its impacts on their jurisdictional abilities to regulate local food.

"This research provided a window into local government stakeholders' attitudes towards local food production as well as their perceptions of the benefits and barriers to food production in their communities," said Catherine Campbell, assistant professor in UF's family, youth and community sciences department and primary investigator on the project.

Research findings also indicated a desire for information about local food production.

"Based on the findings about the information or training topics that the local governments identified as most important, Extension is developing materials related to local food production, including environmental best management practices, effective models that other communities have used, and evidence-based research on the impacts of its implementation," Campbell said.



Two one-page issue guides were developed and shared to highlight the key findings of this survey.

# CENTER TAKES QUICK ACTION TO EXPLORE PERCEPTIONS RELATED TO COVID-19

By Ashley McLeod-Morin

Even before masks and social distancing, the PIE Center recognized potential impacts of COVID-19 and decided to take action with a nationwide survey series that would explore the public's knowledge, response and concerns regarding the global pandemic.

“By late February, we began to see that COVID-19 was going to impact the U.S.,” said PIE Center director Ricky Telg. “We just didn’t know how much it would end up impacting our country. I called all of the PIE Center faculty and staff together to discuss what we could do, and from this initial three-hour meeting, we created a plan for a national survey and outreach effort.”

The PIE Center collected its first survey related to COVID-19 between March 12-16, which also proved to be a week of many milestones for the United States. During this week, public schools began closing

throughout the country, many universities announced the transition to an online teaching format, a national state of emergency was declared as cases were reported in all 50 states and COVID-19 was officially declared a global pandemic.

“It was important for us to collect data as this crisis emerged, so we could measure it from the beginning and document regularly to understand longitudinal impacts,” said Lauri Baker, an associate professor in UF’s department of agricultural education and communication.

Baker, also co-founder of the Center for Rural Enterprise Engagement, led the PIE Center’s efforts in developing and collecting the COVID-19 survey. Unsurprisingly, the survey revealed about two-thirds of Americans ranked COVID-19 as the No. 1 public health concern. A more unlikely finding was that participants were more concerned early in the pandemic about their loved ones contracting or dying from COVID-19 than they were concerned about their own health in regards to COVID-19.

“To me, one of the most striking findings is that people are not making decisions based only on themselves, but rather what effect this could have on others, especially their loved ones,” Telg said, after the initial survey was conducted.

The PIE Center also launched a second survey on April 23 to explore how the public’s perceptions might have shifted over the past month.

“Some of our questions evolved as we learned more about the impacts of COVID-19 and how health

officials were suggesting we protect ourselves,” Telg said. “For example, when we created our first survey in March, the term ‘social distancing’ wasn’t being used at all, so we didn’t know to include it in the first survey. By the time of our second survey, everyone knew what ‘social distancing’ meant, so it was definitely a term we included the second time.”

After the majority of Americans were under stay-at-home orders to help slow the virus’ spread, the White House issued guidelines for reopening states on April 16. As states reopened, the White House and top public health officials were strongly encouraging Americans to practice social distancing during the time that the second survey was being collected.

“When social distancing was first being discussed as a practice, it was a completely new concept to Americans. We wanted to understand how this behavioral change requested by scientists and public health officials was perceived by the public,” Baker said. “By understanding how willing and able people were to comply with this behavior change, we are one step closer to understanding how we can adapt messaging to effectively reach people about this and other behavior changes that are advantageous for public health and understanding of science.”

Findings from the second survey revealed that an overwhelming majority of American were willing and

able to comply with social distancing practices. Most Americans were avoiding travel, stopping participation in extracurricular activities and avoiding contact with strangers.

In addition to exploring new topics that emerged throughout the pandemic, the survey series included consistent questions related to the public’s understanding, trust in science and concerns for local and national preparedness that allow researchers to track how opinions related to COVID-19 may change over a period of time.

The PIE Center plans to conduct at least one more survey related to the public’s perceptions of COVID-19 and will monitor how the virus is impacting individuals and communities in order to design relevant research studies.

“The pandemic has impacted all people and businesses, including agriculture,” Telg said. “The PIE Center’s mission is to examine how people think about, form and act on opinions on complex agricultural and natural resources issues. I can think of no more important topic, right now, than investigating the impacts of COVID-19 on the general public and our agriculture and natural resources sector.”

To learn more about the survey series and findings from the studies, visit [piecenter.com/covid-19/](http://piecenter.com/covid-19/).

**WHAT DO AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES LEADERS THINK ABOUT COVID-19?**  
The first case of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in the United States was reported in late January and the first deaths occurred in March 2020. The PIE Center, in partnership with the UF IFAS Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (PIE Center), recently released findings from the agriculture and natural resources COVID-19 survey to explore the most knowledge, concerns and beliefs regarding COVID-19. This survey was conducted between March 12 and April 23, 2020.

**AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES LEADERS CONCERNED ABOUT INACCURATE INFORMATION RELATED TO COVID-19**  
According to a recent survey conducted by the UF IFAS PIE Center, agriculture and natural resources leaders were concerned about inaccurate information being shared related to COVID-19.

I AM CONCERNED BECAUSE THESE OUTLETS ARE SHARING INACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19	YES-76.7%	NO-23.3%
I AM CONCERNED AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES LEADERS ARE RECEIVING INACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19	YES-64.4%	NO-35.6%

Seventy-eight percent of agriculture and natural resources leaders were concerned that media and news outlets were sharing inaccurate information about COVID-19. Over two-thirds of participants indicated they were concerned agriculture and natural resources leaders were not receiving accurate information, and over half of respondents were concerned they were personally not receiving accurate information about COVID-19.

Over half (55%) of the survey participants indicated they were business owners and answered:

I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE EFFECT OF COVID-19 ON: MY BUSINESS' BOTTOM LINE	YES-90.4%
MY EMPLOYEES MISSING WORK	YES-62.2%
MY ABILITY TO PROVIDE A SAFE WORK PLACE FOR EMPLOYEES	YES-57.6%
MY ABILITY TO PROVIDE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR MY CUSTOMERS	YES-49.6%

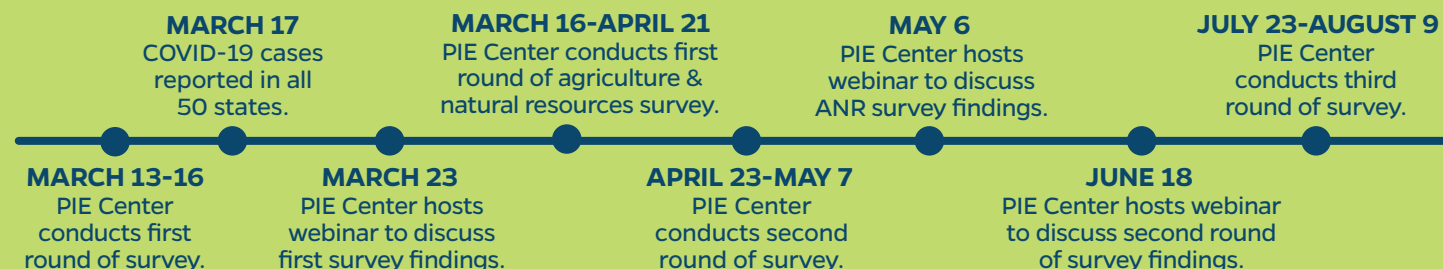
**IF A VACCINATION WERE AVAILABLE FOR COVID-19, WOULD YOU GET IT?**

**YES 80.3%**

www.piecenter.com UF IFAS Center for Public Issues Education

Outreach materials, including issue guides, social media graphics, and webinars, were developed using findings from each survey.

## RESEARCH TIMELINE





## GROWING TOGETHER

Outreach remains a priority now more than ever as the center seeks to connect scientists, agriculturalists, health experts and decision makers around topics that impact agriculture and natural resources. The center's outreach efforts were recently awarded top honors by the Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Human and Life Sciences, including an Outstanding Professional Skill award in crisis and issues management. Award-winning communication campaigns and products developed by the PIE Center allow partner program efforts to grow and flourish through expanding their reach and impact.



## OUTREACH BRIEF: HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS

Harmful algal blooms, including red tide and blue green algae, have become increasingly common along Florida's shores. As scientists continue to study harmful algal blooms and use innovative tools to track them, it is important to provide the latest information to the public.

The PIE Center recently partnered with Betty Staugler, an extension agent in Charlotte County, to provide outreach resources related to harmful algal blooms.

"We developed a communication toolkit that included an issue guide, rack card, social media content and PowerPoints that Extension agents can use in their own programs to educate communities about harmful algal blooms," said Ashley McLeod-Morin, media coordinator for the PIE Center.

In addition to providing resources to Extension, materials were also created to help hotels and other tourist locations provide information about harmful algal blooms to visitors.

"An exciting component of the project was a rack card that we developed with tourists in mind," McLeod-Morin said. "If someone visits Florida's coastal areas during a harmful algal bloom outbreak, we want to be able to provide useful information that helps visitors make informed decisions."

# BY THE NUMBERS

**2,057**

EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS

**18,026**

PIE CENTER WEB VIEWS

**5,195**

PREVENT & PROTECT WEB VIEWS

**2,669**

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

**1,546**

TWITTER FOLLOWERS

**533**

INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

# AWARDS & RECOGNITION

The PIE Center received the following outreach awards from the 2020 Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Life and Human Sciences (ACE) Conference:

## **OUTSTANDING**

### **PROFESSIONAL SKILL AWARD**

**PREVENT & PROTECT:** *Crisis and Issues Management*

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## **GOLD AWARD**

**PREVENT & PROTECT:** *Issues Management*

**PREVENT & PROTECT WEBSITE:** *Information Technology*

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## **SILVER AWARD**

**PRE-HURRICANE DORIAN SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN:**

*Organic Social Media Campaign*

**PREVENT & PROTECT BEHIND-THE-SCENES VIDEO SERIES:**

*Social Media Videos*

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## **BRONZE AWARD**

**PREVENT & PROTECT IMPACT REPORT:** *Promotional Publishing*

**HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS INFORMATIONAL VIDEO:** *Educational Video*

# PROVIDING RESOURCES IN THE MIDST OF HURRICANE DORIAN

By Alena Poulin

When Hurricane Dorian was expected to impact Florida over the 2019 Labor Day weekend, the PIE center partnered with the Florida Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) to communicate about how communities could best prepare for potential impacts and quickly provided communication resources to local Extension professionals.

Dorian became a hurricane on Aug. 28, 2019, and by Sept. 1, it was a Category 5 storm projected to impact Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia. Mandatory evacuations were ordered for many coastal counties throughout the Southeast.

Angela Lindsey, an assistant professor in the UF family, youth and community sciences department, also serves as the Florida point of contact for EDEN, a national collaboration network of Extension services across the country with the goal of providing resources to reduce disaster impact.

Through this role, she is instrumental in coordinating UF/IFAS's preparation, mitigation, response and recovery.

The resources for Lindsey's Florida EDEN extension program are housed on the PIE Center's website and include fact sheets, short informational videos, social media graphics and communication templates developed for EDEN by PIE Center media specialists.

"During a disaster situation such as Dorian, effective communication and sharing of resources is vital for building resilience," Lindsey said. "EDEN and the PIE Center provide resources to Extension offices that can



then be utilized to empower their local communities towards disaster preparation and recovery."

Working together, the PIE Center and EDEN quickly developed a multi-pronged approach for a social media campaign designed to drive web traffic to the EDEN resources page.

In particular, a set of six new, social-media friendly graphics were created using an already popular Disaster Preparation & Recovery binder ring set that had been developed by the PIE Center in conjunction with UF/IFAS 4-H. These graphics along with the overall campaign strategy received the silver award in the organic social media campaign category at the 2020 Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Life and Human Sciences conference.

A news story was also written on the PIE Center website highlighting preparation efforts by EDEN, the



Photo courtesy of CBS News.

PIE Center, and UF/IFAS Extension, and strategic unit-wide email campaigns from Lindsey were sent to IFAS administration and Extension faculty and staff updating personnel about Extension's role during hurricane preparation and making them aware of the resources available.

"A few days before Hurricane Dorian was projected to hit the United States, the Disaster Resources page on our website quickly became the most viewed page on our site," said Ashley McLeod-Morin, PIE Center media coordinator. "An average of 300 people a day were coming to our site to view and download hurricane-related resources."

Based on its success, the PIE Center has since refined this outreach plan for use in future disaster situations. The listserv email format has been utilized for internal communications during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and evolved into a regular newsletter, which is also archived on the PIE center site.

To view all of the hurricane preparation resources developed, visit [piecenter.com/resources/natural-disaster-resources](http://piecenter.com/resources/natural-disaster-resources).

## HURRICANE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

- Battery-operated radio
- Hand sanitizer
- Batteries
- At least a two-week supply of medication
- Extra clothing, including shoes
- First aid kit
- Blankets and pillows
- Small notebook
- Water bottle with water filter
- Whistle
- Dust mask
- Duct tape
- Garbage bags
- Manual can opener
- Hygiene supplies
- Portable battery charger for cell phone
- Books and toys
- Important papers in waterproof/fireproof container
- Supply of water, non-perishable food, and snacks
- Flashlight

[www.piecenter.com/training/EDEN](http://www.piecenter.com/training/EDEN)

Social media graphics, like the one above, were created as a resource to inform people on how to prepare for a hurricane.

# CURATING COVID-19 RESOURCES FOR PRODUCERS AND FARMWORKERS

By Michaela Kandzer

The PIE Center collaborated with the Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (SCCAHS) to curate a multitude of resources for farmworkers, employers, communicators and extension professionals in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The PIE Center provided leadership in creating and coordinating COVID-19 resource materials, including PowerPoint slides, videos, downloadable print materials and the COVID-19 web page,” said PIE Center director Ricky Telg.

The PIE Center and the SCCAHS conducted survey research to identify the needs of the agricultural sector, extension faculty and concerns of the general public. The SCCAHS Outreach Core then gathered and developed several resources, including a series of videos in English

and Spanish, to address the needs and concerns identified in the research. The outreach core also developed a webpage (<http://www.sccaahs.org/index.php/covid-19/>) to house all of these resources.

Educational resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the SCCAHS, departments of health, departments of agriculture and other groups related to agricultural health and safety and COVID-19 were housed on this webpage.

“We have been able to help agriculture producers and farmworkers by producing these materials that are being used in Extension, and by agricultural organizations and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to provide important information that protects agriculture workers,” Telg said. “We are at the table with major agriculture companies and FDACS as a partner in providing information to keep our agriculture workers as safe as possible during the pandemic.”

The resources have been categorized for specific audiences or resource types. These resources include recommendations for farmworkers and employers, risk prevention, communication resources, and extension resources. Resources are targeted to agricultural producers, farm workers and extension faculty and agents located in the Southeast region of the United States. Resources

include PowerPoint slide sets, fact sheets, social media content, posters, videos and radio PSAs. Many of these materials are provided in English and Spanish.

Angie Lindsey, assistant professor of family, youth and community sciences at the University of Florida, was also instrumental in connecting the center with Extension and providing resources to meet their needs. Lindsey is also the Florida point of contact for the national Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN).

“I get a lot of information and a lot of resources,” Lindsey said. “I collect all this information and, once a week, I go through all the information I receive and determine if it is something that may be helpful to our UF/IFAS family and our communities and if the information is from a reputable, reliable source.”

These efforts have also been consistently communicated via email campaigns and social media posts to stakeholders, the center’s Community Stakeholder Advisory Board and the general public.

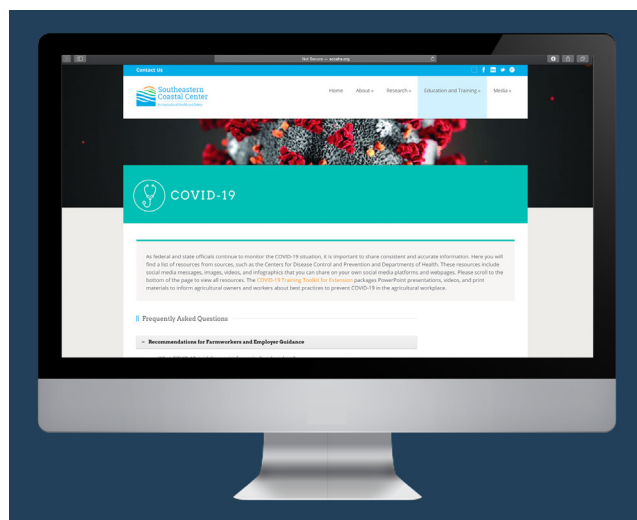
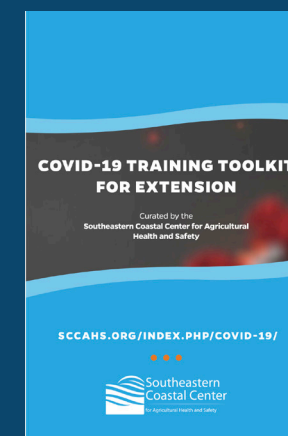
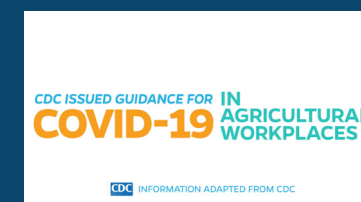
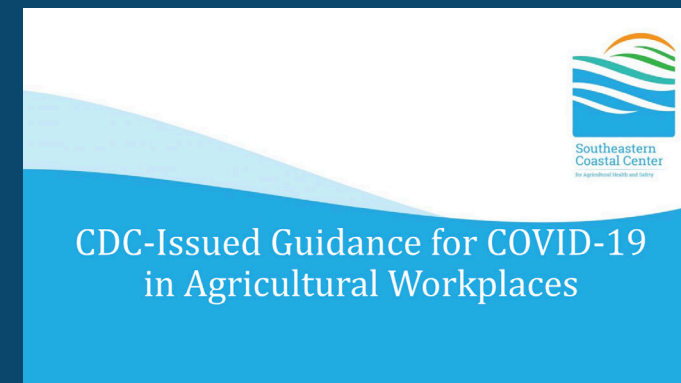
“We have received great feedback from these efforts and it allows us to share resources from other programs and states,” Lindsey said.

SCCAHS explores and addresses the occupational safety and health needs of people working in agriculture, fishing and forestry in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. The PIE Center plays an essential role in serving the communication and outreach needs of this group of people.

## COVID-19 TOOLKIT FOR EXTENSION

The PIE Center partnered with the Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety and UF/IFAS Extension to develop a COVID-19 toolkit for Extension. Extension professionals can use resources provided in the toolkit to communicate with clientele, such as producers and farmworker managers, about COVID-19.

Resources included PowerPoints of the latest CDC guidelines that were tailored for the southeast region and were provided in English and Spanish. PowerPoint scripts were also provided in English and Spanish to help presenters that might be delivering the presentation. Short, informational videos were also created that can be used on social media to provide information on COVID-19 related topics, such as social distancing and face coverings.



## HARVESTING TOGETHER

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The PIE Center aims to provide a valuable harvest as the center puts research into action by applying research findings to educational efforts, such as workshops and webinars. The center utilizes both traditional and innovative methods, including lesson plans and educational short-form videos, to reach diverse audiences. Educational efforts also go beyond sharing research, as faculty and staff mentor undergraduate and graduate students in the areas of research and outreach. Additionally, the PIE Center has hired several student workers to provide young professionals with hands-on experience.



## EDUCATION BRIEF: WEBINAR SERIES

The PIE Center has been hosting regular webinars for many years now. The webinar series often includes a researcher that discusses research conducted by the PIE Center and offers practical implications of the research.

More recently, the webinar series has provided a platform for researchers from various institutions and projects to connect with diverse audiences on a variety of topics.

“We are now hosting webinars for the Southeastern Coastal Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (SCCAHS) and the Society of Agricultural Communication Scholars (SACS) in addition to our regular PIE Center webinars,” said Phillip Stokes, education coordinator for the PIE Center. “This allows us to reach a variety of audiences through each webinar.”

The PIE Center has hosted 14 webinars over the past year as part of the SCCAHS and PIE Center webinar series. The 14 webinars garnered nearly 800 live attendees and almost 300 views of the recorded webinars.

“We have many attendees that return month after month but we also reach new attendees through each webinar since each topic is so different,” Stokes said.

Webinar topics this year ranged from heat-related illness and mental health to animal-sourced foods and COVID-19.

For more information about PIE Center webinars, visit: <https://piecenter.com/resources/webinars/>.

# BY THE NUMBERS

**14**

WEBINARS

**792**

LIVE WEBINAR VIEWS

**13,250**

VIDEO VIEWS

**7**

PART-TIME STUDENT JOBS CREATED

**20**

VIDEOS PRODUCED

**573**

HOURS OF WATCH TIME

**19**

WORKSHOPS/ GUEST LECTURES

# INSIGHT SUMMIT

By Alena Poulin

## PROVIDES ONLINE EXPERIENCE

The PIE Center collaborated with the Center for Rural Enterprise Engagement (CREE) to facilitate CREE's fourth annual Insight Summit in St. Paul, Minnesota, in February 2020. The conference brought together industry members and agricultural extension staff for training on the use of new and social media marketing to promote small, agricultural and horticulture-based businesses and extension programs.

Lauri Baker, an associate professor in the UF department of agricultural education and communication, founded CREE along with Hikaru Peterson and Cheryl Boyer while they were all faculty members at Kansas State University.

Since its inception, CREE has flourished into a transdisciplinary, multi-institutional center with presences at the University of Minnesota, Kansas State University and the University of Florida.

"CREE emerged out of a need to help small, rural, and agricultural businesses use new and social media better to market their businesses and survive in times of changing economies," said Baker. "We conduct and interpret research on the use of new technology with a focus on improving small businesses use of these tools."

Insight Summit was designed by CREE as an immersive experience to teach participants new skills in a practical, research-based manner and allow them to come away with an actionable social media marketing plan for their own business or organization.

Over the course of two days, participants at the 2020 Insight Summit learned about storytelling across

platforms, basic and advanced analytics, social-media strategy, visual content, e-newsletters and selling online.

The PIE Center played a critical role in marketing and facilitating the Insight Summit, particularly when it came to curating an online experience for the Insight Summit's first ever virtual ticket option to allow attendees to participate fully in the activities without traveling to attend in-person.

"It was important to us that we offered a meaningful and inclusive experience for our virtual participants," said Phillip Stokes, PIE Center education coordinator. "We put a lot of thought into this preparation, including determining the instructional methods as well as what technology we needed to bring with us to St. Paul."

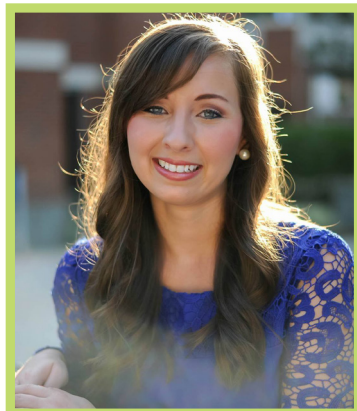
By utilizing the interactive features of Zoom to livestream presentations, have breakout group discussions and enable participants to present to the whole group during in-person activities, the PIE Center and CREE were able to ensure that virtual participants were able to enjoy the same full experience that was had by participants in-person.

"The collaboration with PIE this year allowed us to take the event to the next level. Both the in-person and virtual experience were enhanced by the staff at PIE. Plus, the virtual ticket allowed us to extend our reach and make sure all participants walked away with new skills and strategies they could implement immediately," Baker said. "This also prepared us for the unexpected as we are now being asked to coordinate and facilitate a multitude of virtual experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic."



# STUDENT WORKER SPOTLIGHT

In recent years, the PIE Center has provided part-time employment to student workers on campus. These positions have given students the opportunity to gain practical experience in research, education and outreach. Many PIE Center student workers have gone on to work in impressive positions that focus on communication and education, utilizing the skills they developed at the PIE Center. We recently caught up with two past student workers, Morgan Wilson and Savannah Woodall, to learn about the impacts they are now making in their own careers.



## MORGAN WILSON

### WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

I currently teach agriscience at South Sumter High School in Bushnell, Florida. I am responsible for a majority of the Agriscience Foundations courses, but I also enjoy teaching Principles of Agribusiness and Leadership Management. I also serve as an FFA Advisor which is my favorite part of the job!

### HOW DID WORKING AT THE PIE CENTER PREPARE YOU FOR WHERE YOU ARE NOW?

Working at the PIE Center introduced me to areas of the Florida Agriculture Industry I was unfamiliar with. Through the center's various research projects, I learned about consumers' thoughts on water, environmental resources, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and genetically modified organisms. My job was to assist with social media, developing content for the website, and designing infographics. This proved extremely beneficial when I moved to Tallahassee and began working as a Communications Specialist in the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Division of Marketing and Development, and later as the Food Safety Modernization Act Outreach Coordinator in the Division of Fruits and Vegetables. Now, because of my PIE Center experience, I am able to share with the next generation how multi-faceted Florida's Agriculture Industry truly is.

### WHAT SPECIFIC SKILLS DID YOU DEVELOP AT THE PIE CENTER THAT YOU STILL USE TODAY?

While working at the PIE Center, I further developed my communication skills and learned how to translate information that is confusing into information that is easily understood by the general public. In my opinion, this is an extremely important skill as a teacher because of the dwindling attention span of today's youth. I also improved my interviewing skills and my emotional intelligence, or the ability to "read the room."



## SAVANNAH WOODALL

### WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

I currently work for Auburn University as an academic advisor in the Honors College.

### HOW DID WORKING AT THE PIE CENTER PREPARE YOU FOR WHERE YOU ARE NOW?

Working at the PIE center was certainly a highlight of my undergraduate experience. While working there, I was exposed to collegiate level research for the first time and learned how to use strategic messaging to reach a target audience. When I went to graduate school, I felt confident in my research and assessment ability because of my experience at the center. This confidence has carried over to my work in advising students. In my current role, I get to be an advocate for on-campus research opportunities and help students discover their potential.

### WHAT SPECIFIC SKILLS DID YOU DEVELOP AT THE PIE CENTER THAT YOU STILL USE TODAY?

While my current role is not directly connected to the PIE center, the skills I learned there I use every day. I spent a large portion of my time learning Adobe programs, managing social media, and networking across the university. While much of my job centers around relationship building, I've also been able to bring my communication skills to the table by designing flyers, copy-editing website content, and planning events for my department.

## 2019-2020 STUDENT WORKERS

**MICHAELA KANDZER**, GRADUATE ASSISTANT

**OLIVIA DOYLE**, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

**KARISSA PALMER**, MEDIA ASSISTANT

**VALENTINA CASTANO**, MEDIA ASSISTANT

**COLEY HINGSON**, MEDIA ASSISTANT

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**CHAD CARR**

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**ROB FLETCHER**

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