

Living Extension IPM Field Laboratory

The goal of this project is to establish a unique, whole-farm agro-ecological system to use as a demonstration environment for specialty crop farmers. We are creating a field laboratory by transforming an existing 300 acre research farm into a living, hands-on IPM teaching laboratory. This laboratory will be used to instruct clientele in whole-farm approaches to adopting IPM systems through various workshops to be held in conjunction with the UF/IFAS Small Farms Academy.

The Small Farms Academy is a new outreach program targeting small farmers which focuses on business planning, marketing, crop selection and culture, irrigation and nutrient management and other related topics.

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IPM Integrated Pest Management
Florida

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Fruit Focus Team



The overall objective of the Fruit Focus Team is to reduce the need for chemical treatments of stink bugs by planting an assortment of trap crops, including Sunflowers, Triticale, and Buckwheat, around the stone fruit, blueberry, blackberry and grape areas. Various trapping methods are being used for monitoring insect thresholds.

Protected Agriculture Focus Team



The Protected Agriculture Focus Team's overall purpose is to teach greenhouse operators IPM practices that will help reduce the need to control pest insects with chemical sprays. This is done with the use of a hand lens to scout for pests, monitoring sticky traps, releasing beneficial insects and the using banker plants to naturally produce beneficials.

Farmscaping Focus Team



Farmscaping is a whole-farm, ecological approach used to manage and enhance biodiversity with the goal of increasing the presence of beneficial organisms such as insects, bats and birds of prey. The plan of action the Farmscaping Team is using is to manage pests and increase ecosystem services farm-wide. Some of the elements used are planting a hedgerow to create connectivity of non-crop habitat, naturalization of fence lines, augmenting a habitat for pollinators and beneficial insects, creating habitats for cavity nesters, suppressing invasive plants and softening hard edges between forest and field.

Vegetable Focus Team



The Vegetable Focus Team is developing an IPM strategy for one of the 5-acre mixed vegetable fields at the research center. This includes inter-planting strips of sunflowers, buckwheat and bee blends among the cash crop, using cover crops, pollinator and beneficial insect attracting plants. Crop pest scouting and monitoring with sticky traps are other strategies being used to locate the thresholds before implementing any chemical spraying.

Agronomic Crops Focus Team



Implementation of IPM strategies by this Team includes the installation of good bug and trap crop blends adjacent to row crop production areas, the use of conservation tillage with cover crops and creating softer borders with perennial species along the timber edge. The crops are also managed using crop scouting techniques to reduce the amount of harsh chemicals.

