



Duval County Extension Office

1010 N. McDuff Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32254

Hours of Operation 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Office: 904-255-7450 | Email: duval@ifas.ufl.edu

OCTOBER 2025



In this edition, we're celebrating Florida Native Plant Month and fighting hunger through the Peanut Butter Challenge! Discover the beauty and benefits of going native in your landscapes. Plus, don't miss the Urban Demonstration Garden Open House, learn practical tips for managing goats and sheep on small farms, catching rain water for landscapes, and more!
Be safe ghosts and goblins this Halloween season! 🎃

Quick View of Program Areas

- [Lawns, Gardens and Trees](#)
- [Horticulture and Pest Services](#)
- [Agriculture and Agribusiness Management](#)
- [4-H Youth Development, Duval County 4-H Foundation](#)
- [Family and Consumer Sciences and Canning Center](#)

Come see what crops we are growing and harvesting in October at the UF/IFAS Extension Duval County Fall **Urban Demonstration Garden Open House**, Saturday, October 18, 9am - NOON located at 1032 Superior St., 32254.

Learn how to start seeds. Paint a garden rock.
Take home your rock and some seeds.

Cost: Adults \$5 plus fee; kids free with Adult

Register in advance:

[Click here to register](#)



Join the **Urban Demonstration Garden Program** to learn different methods of growing, as well as how to plant and care for strawberries, learn insect and disease problems that can occur, and how to address them, Friday, October 24, 10 - 11:30am in the Extension Auditorium.

The class fee includes 10 bare-root strawberry plants to take home.

Cost: \$15 plus fee

[Click here to register](#)



UF IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

FIRST TIME HOME BUYER WORKSHOP

2 SESSIONS
Certificate of Completion available.
Must attend both sessions to receive the certificate.

Learn the steps to home ownership and how to obtain an affordable mortgage.

This is an online via Zoom event. Registration Required to receive the Zoom Link.

October 16th & 23rd, 5pm - 9pm
November 6th & 13th, 5pm - 9pm
December 5th & 12th, 9am - 1pm

 **SELECT THE LINK TO REGISTER.**

<https://FTHBDuval25.eventbrite.com>

For more information email :
nparks@ufl.edu

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First Time Home Buyer Workshop



Thinking about buying your first home? Join the **Family and Consumer Sciences Program** virtually to learn steps to homeownership. In this workshop you will obtain knowledge on obtaining an affordable mortgage.

This is a two session workshop. Once complete, you will receive a certificate of completion.

Available Workshop:

Thursdays, October 16 and 23 | 5pm - 9pm

Thursdays, November 6 and 13 | 5pm - 9pm

Fridays, December 5 and 12 | 9am - 1pm

Cost: \$28.52 incl fee

[Click here to register](#)

UF IFAS Extension
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FOOD SAFETY

Florida requires all food service employees in a licensed Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) establishment to be trained on correct food handling and hygiene practices. Only DBPR division approved training programs are accepted as meeting the training requirement.

SIGN UP FOR OUR FOOD SAFETY MANAGER TRAINING

Classes available upon request

  **SAFE STAFF®**

Multiple and one day sessions available

For more information contact:
Natasha Parks @
904-255-7450 or nparks@ufl.edu

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Ensure your staff is up to code!

Food Safety Manager Training is offered by the **Family and Consumer Sciences Program**.

Florida requires all food service employees in a licensed Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) establishment to be trained on correct food handling and hygiene practices.

Classes are available upon request.

Need a single-day course or a multi-day course option, we have you covered. Our training is flexible to fit your schedule.

To register and for more information contact:
Natasha Parks, Family and Consumer Science Agent III via email nparks@ufl.edu or call the office.

Join the **Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Program** for the monthly *Backyard Hen Seminar* at the Extension Office, Monday, October 27 from 2-3:30pm. You too can raise chickens once you receive your permit.

This course is a pre-requisite to receive a Backyard Hen Permit from Duval County. A steady stream of people continues to sign up, showing interest in raising chickens at home.

Cost: \$10 plus fee

[Click here to register](#)



The **Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Program** is offering an informative session on goats and sheep for small farms. Join us for an informative session on goats and sheep for small farms. There will be discussions on management strategies and solutions to compliment your farm, Thursday, October 30, 4-6pm in-person at the Extension Office or virtually.

Topics will include:

- Rotational Grazing
- Integrated Pest Management
- Dairy
- Small Ruminant Nutrition and Wellness

Cost: \$7.18 incl fee

[Click here to register](#)



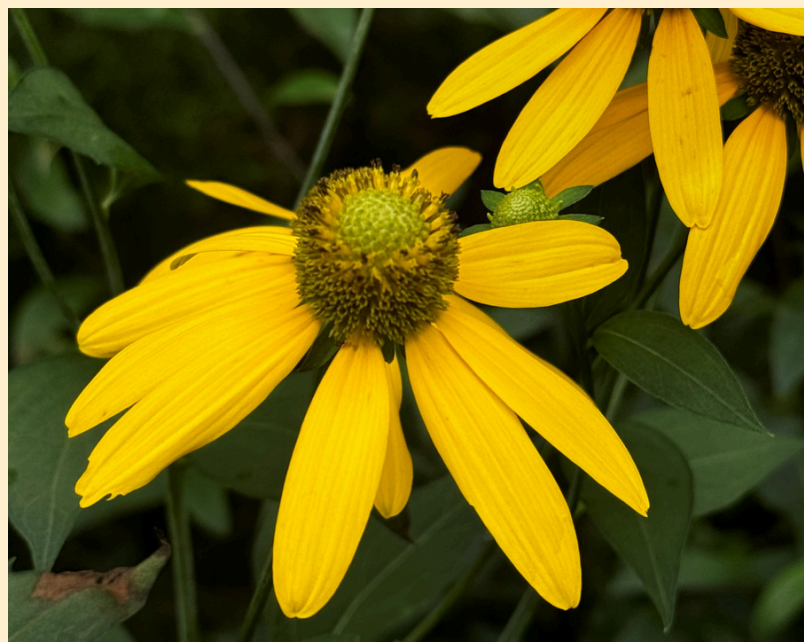
The **Florida-Friendly Program** is offering a *Gardening with Native Plants, So Far from Boring* lecture.

Native plants are a hot topic right now, and since October is Florida Native Plant Month, let's dive in! During this engaging lunch and learn, discover what it means to be a "native plant", what their ecological roles and benefits are, how to incorporate them into your landscape, and resources to find and grow native plants locally. This class is offered in-person at the Extension Office or virtually, Monday, October 6 from 12 - 1:15pm.

If you select the in-person option feel free to bring a lunch to snack on during class. Space in the lecture room is limited to 20 attendees.

Cost: Free

[Click here to register](#)



Florida-Friendly Landscaping (FFL) Program is the state of Florida's premier Extension program that promotes sustainable alternatives to "conventional" landscaping. In this *Transitioning to a Florida-Friendly Landscape* program, learn how to use the 9 Principles to transition a traditional high maintenance landscape to a diverse and aesthetically pleasing one that requires less maintenance and costs less to manage.

This class will be held Monday, October 13, 1:15 - 2:15pm at the SE Regional Library, 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd., 32256.

Cost: Free

[Click here to register](#)



Join the **Florida-Friendly Landscaping (FFL) Program** to celebrate Florida Native Plant Month (October) and learn about the connection between native plants and pollinators. There are a lot more pollinators than honeybees and Monarch butterflies. The discussion will be on host plants, nectar plants, moths, butterflies, bees, and other beneficial insects.

This class is offered in-person at the Extension Office or virtually, Monday, October 20 from 12 - 1:00pm.

If you select the in person option feel free to bring a lunch to snack on during class. Space in the lecture room is limited to 20 attendees.

Cost: Free

[Click here to register:](#)



The **Florida-Friendly Landscaping (FFL) Program** wants to properly train you on capturing rain water in this evening Rain Barrel workshop, Friday, November 21, 5:45 - 6:45pm at the Extension Office.

By collecting and storing rainwater, you can save money, improve the health of your plants, and protect the environment. Rain barrels provide the Florida homeowner with over 50 gallons of free water for their landscape each time it fills up. You can connect additional rain barrels or install an underground cistern to store even more. In addition to saving homeowners money on irrigation, rain barrels also help reduce storm water runoff that can contribute to flooding and erosion.

Cost: \$75 includes rain barrel; Listen & Learn \$5 plus fee

[Click here to register](#)



Picture Credit: Sheila Rowan



4-H Enrollment for the 2025/2026 Year

4-H Online is open for enrollment.

The membership fee for the year is \$30.

If your family would like to apply for a membership fee scholarship email duval4h@ufl.edu.

Encourage your friends to enroll in Duval 4-H



2025 Peanut Butter Challenge

Duval County, please help fight hunger by donating unopened, unexpired jars of peanut butter, October 1 - 31.



Peanut Butter Challenge

SPREAD THE WORD... PEANUT BUTTER Fights Hunger!

Donate unopened jars of peanut butter at the UF/IFAS Extension office in your county. All peanut butter donations go to local food pantries to help feed families in need.

We thank the Florida Peanut Producers Association and Florida Peanut Federation for their continued support and contributions.

During the month of October, support Florida's peanut producers and people in need in your community by generously donating to the 2025 Peanut Butter Challenge.

DROP OFF LOCATIONS ARE BELOW:

For more information contact

Tracy Akers Williams takerswilliams@ufl.edu 904-255-7450	Niccole Burton nburton@coj.net 904-255-6082
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City Hall | 117 West Duval St. | Employee Services Mezzanine FL

Main Library | 303 N. Laura St. | Nicolle Burton

Ed Ball Building | 214 N. Hogan St | Rose Nettles Public Works, 10th FL

Duval County Extension | 1010 N. McDuff Ave. | Front Desk

go.ufl.edu/PBC | #PBChallenge

An Equal Opportunity Institution.

Together, we can make a difference. Collect peanut butter and help feed neighbors in need - especially now, when it's going to be needed the most.

We need your help, Duval County! Hunger touches lives right here at home. Your contribution, no matter the size, brings hope to the table.

Here are some ideas for support:

- Check grocers for BOGO opportunities
- If you belong to an organization, association or club and you have a meeting in October, request everyone to bring a jar of peanut butter
- If you know of a business that would like to support the cause we can provide signage and possibly a bin
- Collected peanut butter can be dropped off at the Extension Office, City Hall, any local library, and the Ed Ball Building by October 31st
- Call 904-255-7450 or 904-255-6082 with questions

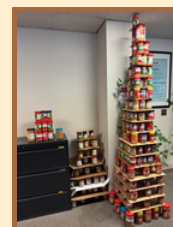
Duval County PBC Facts

- In 2024, 2,031 pounds and 1,577 jars were collected
- In 2023, 1,541 pounds and 1,081 jars were collected
- In 2022, 749 pounds and 571 jars were collected
- In 2024, peanut butter was dropped off to 11 local food pantries, up 2 from prior year
- In the statewide challenge, Duval County was 2nd in the NE District and 5th in the state out of 50 participating counties



Goals

- Increase pounds collected by 25% to 2.5k pounds
- Increase number of food pantries by 10% to 12
- Increase participation of groups, organizations, clubs



New Agent at Duval Extension



Steve is new to the Extension family as the **4-H** Youth Development Agent II, Duval County. He is a whole month in starting his journey in August of this year. Previously, Steve was a College & Career Readiness Coach and Program Lead for the College and Career Dreams (CCD) Program, where he helped high school students plan their futures through mentoring, career exposure, and post-secondary guidance.

Steve enjoys fitness and wellness, motivational speaking to youth, mentoring, journaling, and diving into personal growth books and podcasts. He also enjoys going to the movies and family time. He is currently reading Entrepreneurial Leadership by Joel Peterson.

Steve is the first in his family to earn a college degree. His work ethic earned him a full-ride scholarship to University of Florida. He has also earned a master's degree in Elementary Education from the University of North Florida.

Steve is the proud founder of 'SJ Speaks', a youth motivational platform focused on leadership, resilience, and purpose. Other proud moments are coordinating field trips, school tours, and corporate partnerships to expose students to real-world career opportunities.

Steve is married to Deja, and they are newlyweds - celebrating 2 years of marital bliss.

Welcome Steve!

Duval County Extension 2024 Annual Report

UF/IFAS EXTENSION DUVAL COUNTY
2024 YEAR IN REVIEW



Click Here!

Duval County Video
The Duval County I Know



Helpful Resources

Buy direct from a produce grower near you -
<https://www.fdacs.gov/Food-Nutrition/Buy-Fresh-From-Florida>
The City of Jacksonville's 2024 - 2025 Preparedness Guide:
<https://www.jaxready.com>
Look up your Evacuation Zone - <https://maps.coj.net/evsearch/>

Check Us Out Online and on Facebook!

 
<http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/duval/>
<https://www.facebook.com/DuvalCountyAgriculture>
<https://www.facebook.com/DuvalCounty4H/>
<http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/duvalco/>

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The University of Florida is committed to providing universal access to all of our events. For disability accommodations such as sign language interpreters, listening devices, and alternate formats of written material, please contact the Duval County Extension Office at 904-255-7450 at least 2 weeks in advance. Advance notice is necessary to arrange for some accessibility needs.

<http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/duval/>

