



Quarterly FSHS Newsletter

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Abstract Submission for the 2026 Annual Meeting

The 139th FSHS annual meeting will receive abstract submissions, from February 16th to March 31st. New this year, there is no title submission period—only abstracts—and there will be NO EXTENSIONS to the abstract submission dates past March 31st.

Consider submitting an abstract for an oral or poster presentation to showcase your research or extension accomplishments in one or more sections:

- Agritourism
- Agroecology & Natural Resources
- Citrus
- Handling & Processing
- Krome Memorial Institute
- Ornamental, Garden & Landscape
- Vegetables



This year the annual meeting will take place at the Hyatt Regency Riverfront Hotel in downtown Jacksonville! Enjoy walkable downtown access and panoramic views of the St. Johns River [Hyatt Regency | Jacksonville Riverfront](#)

We hope to see you there!



The FSHS Board is pleased to welcome our new treasurer Tara Wade to the team!

Advancing Citrus Science: Meet the New FSHS Citrus Section Leaders

**By: Flavia Zambon, Ph.D.
& Caroline Tardivo, Ph.D.**



Dr. Zambon and the Horticultural Production Lab at the 2025 IRREC Open House



Dr. Tardivo with the Plant Physiology Lab

Flavia Zambon, Vice President – Citrus Section

My journey in citrus began during my freshman year of college, when I joined the Biotechnology Lab at the University of São Paulo - 'Luiz de Queiroz' College of Agriculture (ESALQ/USP). Those early years immersed me in foundational research on the physical localization of *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* within citrus plants, work that shaped my scientific curiosity and introduced me to the urgency of protecting this vital crop.

This enthusiasm brought me to the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center for my Ph.D. studies with Dr. Jude Grosser. There, I developed a comprehensive understanding of Florida's citrus industry and its challenges by examining how nutritional programs influence hormonal profiles in newly developed, potentially HLB-tolerant varieties. I also expanded my professional network through conferences like FSHS. My experience at CREC strengthened both my technical skills and my connection to the community of citrus researchers dedicated to developing innovative solutions.

In 2020, I transitioned into postdoctoral research at the UF/IFAS Indian River Research and Education Center, where I led large-scale variety trials in collaboration with grapefruit growers across the state. This work broadened my experience in extension, strengthened my relationships with growers, and reinforced the importance of research that directly supports the people who rely on citrus for their livelihoods.

Since 2023, I have had the honor of serving as an Assistant Professor in the same laboratory where I completed my postdoctoral training. My program continues to advance statewide variety trials potentially

tolerant to HLB with the Millennium Block and the large grapefruit trial, while also investigating how newly developed rootstocks respond to abiotic stresses, an increasingly critical area as environmental pressures intensify. Through the Horticulture Production Lab, I collaborate with colleagues at the University of Florida, USDA, and the University of Central Florida to improve field performance, enhance pest and pathogen management, and explore new technologies that reduce costs and mitigate chemical resistance.



Dr. Zambon holding a UF-developed pummelo hybrid with HLB-tolerance, named UF-914

It is a privilege to now serve as the 2026 Vice President of the FSHS Citrus Section. In this role, I witness firsthand the creativity, innovation, and resilience driving our field forward. Being part of this new generation of citrus researchers, committed to sustainable solutions and the future of one of Florida's most iconic crops, is both an honor and a responsibility I carry with pride.

(Continued on page 3)

Advancing Citrus Science...continued from page 2

Caroline Tardivo, Vice President-Elect — Citrus Section



It is a great privilege to be elected as the Vice President-Elect for the Citrus Section of the Florida State Horticultural Society.

Originally from Brazil, I am an Agronomic Engineer graduated from the University of São Paulo State (UNESP) at the College of Agricultural and Veterinary Sciences. My academic journey in Florida began at

the University of Florida, where I earned both my Master's and Ph.D. in Horticultural Sciences under the mentorship of Dr. Ute Albrecht. This graduate research allowed me to delve into the complexities of citrus rootstock development and the physiological challenges posed by Huanglongbing (HLB) as trees transition from the nursery to the field.

Currently, I serve as a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center in Immokalee. My work in the Plant Physiology Laboratory focuses on developing practical horticultural solutions to enhance tree performance and sustainability under environmental and pathogenic pressures. A portion of my current research involves investigating the physiological responses of novel citrus rootstock hybrids to salinity stress.

In addition to my work with rootstocks, I am actively evaluating HLB mitigation strategies, such as systemic delivery of oxytetracycline (OTC) via trunk injections and the implementation of integrated management practices, such as compost application. Beyond the lab and field, I am dedicated to mentoring students and collaborating with multidisciplinary teams to ensure our research outcomes translate into sustainable systems for the citrus industry. I look forward to working alongside Vice President Dr. Flavia Tabay Zambon to serve our members and continue the FSHS tradition of horticultural excellence.



Drs. Albrecht and Tardivo
at the Plant Physiology Lab

Farm Labor Supervisor Certification Course – Discount for FSHS Members

Florida growers and agricultural employers face an increasingly complex labor and regulatory environment. To support supervisors, managers, and farm owners, **UF/IFAS Extension** offers the **Farm Labor Supervisor (FLS) Certification Course**, a comprehensive online training designed to build practical knowledge of farm labor compliance and worker management.

The course covers key federal and Florida requirements related to farm labor contractors, H-2A employment, wages and recordkeeping, transportation safety, worker housing and field sanitation, pesticide safety, heat illness prevention, human resources compliance, and effective farm management communication. Content is delivered through short, self-paced modules developed by UF/IFAS Extension specialists and industry experts, with a focus on real-world scenarios and compliance best practices.



FSHS Member Discount

Starting **today** through **March 31, 2026**, FSHS members and their teams may register at **50% off** using the discount code **FLSP50**.

Register here: [UF/IFAS Farm Labor Supervisor Program](https://ifas.ufl.edu/extension/flsp/)
Discount code: **FLSP50**

Whether you are supervising crews directly, working with farm labor contractors, or preparing for increased regulatory oversight, this course provides timely, practical training to help reduce risk and strengthen your operation. If you have any questions, please contact FLSP@ifas.ufl.edu

Editorial Updates & Website Progress

By: Ed Etxeberria & Jan Narcisco,
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After experiencing an unexpected delay in hiring a webmaster, the "Proceedings of the 138th Meeting of the Florida State Horticultural Society" is now being actively developed. If you have not already noticed, papers are currently being uploaded online at a rapid pace. The new Editors have implemented changes that enable us to post papers online almost as soon as they are received, following the necessary editing and formatting changes. As we continue to upload the papers that have already been submitted, we encourage everyone who has not yet submitted their material to do so as soon as possible. For the next Proceedings, we will be posting your papers right after the meeting is over!

As in the past several years, you may submit your presentation in one of many different formats. These include Abstract, Scientific Note, and Full scientific paper. Detailed instructions are found in the following link: <https://www.fshs.org/instructions-for-authors>, but to help you decide which format best fits with your presentation, here are few general tips.

Abstract. An abstract is a very condensed account of your presentation. If you report on a scientific project, the abstract should contain briefs statements on the matter being discussed, the objectives, methods, results and conclusions. Alternatively, if your presentation does not follow the scientific method, you summarize your presentation in a descriptive paragraph. **Note:** this abstract is to be included in the Proceedings and should be longer than

that originally sent for the meeting program.

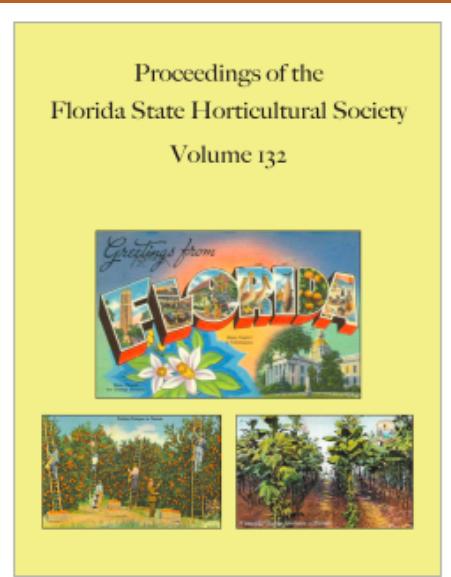
Scientific Note. This document serves as a concise summary of a comprehensive paper. It should include one or two paragraphs presenting an introduction and a brief overview of the methodology employed. Subsequently, the "Findings" (or results) section may incorporate figures and tables to illustrate key outcomes. The report concludes with a short section on "Suggestions for Future Direction."

Full Length Paper. A traditional scientific paper including a detailed introduction, Experimental section, Results (Tables and Figures) and Discussion, plus adequate Literature Cited.

Posters. We encourage submission of posters as PDF files. If you prepare your poster using PowerPoint, you can save it as a PDF and submit it as is. Otherwise, your poster will be published as an abstract. Please check some posters already online.

If your presentation doesn't fit into any of these categories, you may choose to write your talk as a free-flowing narrative (e.g., <https://journals.flvc.org/fshs/article/view/105947/101603>). Many presentations are actually better suited to this style.

All these new changes will be discussed at the Business Meeting during the next FSHS Conference in Jacksonville. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate in contacting us at editors@FSHS.org.





Florida Arbor Day TreeQuest: Celebrating Florida's Trees and Greenspaces

By: **Marguerite Beckford, EdD**

Horticulture Agent, UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County

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National Institutes of Health (NIH) research continues to spotlight a powerful truth: **community greenspaces are essential to healthier, happier lives**. From reducing obesity rates to boosting mental wellness, these natural areas deliver measurable public health benefits. Environmental psychologists echo this message, showing how time spent in nature enhances mindfulness, lowers stress, and supports overall emotional balance. Attention Restoration Theory further reinforces that nature acts as a natural reset button—restoring focus, sparking creativity, and elevating productivity.

Additionally, the value of greenspaces extends far beyond individual wellbeing. They strengthen communities by encouraging social connection, reducing isolation, and creating inviting spaces for exercise, relaxation, and mental rejuvenation. In fact, the collective benefits greenspaces bring to a community are often **far more valuable than the land itself**. Inspired by recommendations from the NIH and the World Health Organization (WHO), many healthcare professionals are now exploring “prescriptions” for nature—structured doses of greenspace time shown to improve mood, confidence, and overall mental health.

To bring these benefits directly to Citrus County residents, the UF/IFAS *Treejuvenation*TM Florida urban forestry Extension program hosts an annual **Florida Arbor Day TreeQuest**—a fun, interactive scavenger hunt that transforms local greenspaces into outdoor classrooms. Starting on Florida Arbor Day (the third Friday in January), participants have two weeks to search for tagged native trees in local parks, solve clues about the environmental benefits each tree provides (like annual carbon sequestration), and snap selfies with their favorite finds.

Since launching in Sarasota County in 2018, TreeQuest has expanded to Manatee, Hillsborough, and Alachua counties, making remarkable impacts:

97% of participants (n=251) reported learning more about the value of urban trees, and 68% said they planned to plant a tree of their own.

TreeQuest is just one of the engaging, community-building initiatives offered through the *Treejuvenation*TM Florida urban forestry Extension program. Additional events include:

- **Adopt-a-Tree** – National Arbor Day tree-planting demonstrations that inspire residents to grow greener neighborhoods.
- **Talking Trees** – Hands-on summer youth workshops that spark curiosity and environmental stewardship.
- **Tree Trail Tours** – Guided nature walks in Fall that showcase the beauty and benefits of local trees.

Together, these programs empower residents to connect with nature, strengthen community wellbeing, and celebrate the incredible value of Florida's urban forests.





Incentive Program for Members

It's never too early to approach a new sponsor for our annual meeting!

FSHS Annual Sponsorship Categories & Member Incentive

Bronze:	\$250	-	\$25 credit toward registration or member dues
Silver:	\$500	-	\$50 credit toward registration or member dues
Gold:	\$1000	-	\$100 credit toward registration or member dues
Platinum:	\$2000	-	\$200 credit toward registration or member dues
Diamond:	\$5000	-	\$500 credit toward registration or member dues



For more information, contact: Gene McAvoy, Sponsorship Chair gmcavoy@ufl.edu

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