



FSHS Newsletter

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FSHS President Carlene Chase: Caribbean Roots and the Path to Gainesville

I am from Iëre, the indigenous name for the Caribbean island of Trinidad, not to be confused with “irie” a Jamaican patois word that means good or fine. As a child, I enjoyed vegetable gardening with my mother, but agriculture and university were not on my radar until I was in high school when a friend of the family shared his experiences as an undergraduate student in the Faculty of Agriculture at The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine campus, in Trinidad and Tobago. His mentoring was pivotal since, at that time, no one in my family had ever attended university. He inspired me to follow in his footsteps, and I graduated with a BSc degree in General Agriculture with an emphasis in crop protection. I was fortunate to be mentored for my final year project by Professor Richard Brathwaite. That project on evaluating local sweet corn crosses for adaptability to Trinidad’s conditions stimulated my interest in agricultural research.



After my undergraduate program my former entomology professor, Dr. Gene Pollard, recommended me for a research assistant position on a joint project between UWI and the CAB International Institute of Biological Control. During that year, I conducted research on the biological control of the sugarcane frog hopper (*Aeneolamia varia saccharina*) and co-authored my first refereed journal article.

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President...continued from page 1

Professor Brathwaite's also provided helpful advice on appropriate institutions when I decided to attend graduate school. Moving from a tropical island to the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada for my MSc Horticultural Science degree, I measured my time there in winters. My advisor was the late Vincent Souza Machado and my research focused on using triadimefon, a fungicide with growth-regulating properties, to influence mini-tuber size distribution of potato plants grown from virus-free in vitro plantlets and microtubers. After two winters, I migrated south to the warmer climes of the University of Florida (UF) in Gainesville, where I completed my PhD in Horticultural Science with Thomas Bewick as my advisor. Returning to crop protection, my doctoral project was focused on elucidating the mechanism of paraquat resistance in American black nightshade (*Solanum americanum*).

My postdoctoral training in Gainesville included projects on optimizing soil solarization for use as an alternative to methyl bromide for plasticulture production of vegetables and strawberries with Thomas Sinclair of the USDA Agricultural Research Service, and with James Gilreath on vegetable crop injury responses to sublethal rates of synthetic auxin herbicides and glyphosate. The stars aligned for me to stay in Gainesville to establish my career in a tenure-track position in the Horticultural Sciences Department at UF since my spouse had been hired his dream job involving research, mentoring graduate students, and conservation of wildlife. My weed science research focus areas are biology and ecology of weedy plants and ecological weed management. Particular areas of interest are the utilization of cover crops and living mulches for the suppression of weeds and plant-parasitic nematodes and the promotion of soil health. Another key area of emphasis is enhancing the environmental and economic sustainability of strawberry production by reducing water use. Hired prior to the advent of mentoring committees at UF, the unofficial mentoring and assistance that

I received from former Horticultural Sciences faculty of emeritus faculty Bill Stall and Sal Locascio were instrumental to successfully navigating my early years as an assistant professor.

I still have strong family ties to the Caribbean and have built professional connections during a sabbatical leave at UWI in Trinidad – teaching and evaluating cowpea lines as cover crops and developing a cooperative agreement. A more recent memorandum of understanding continues to facilitate collaboration between UF and UWI. Through my co-leadership of the Caribbean Regional Working Group of the Global Food Systems Institute and funded grants, my UF/IFAS colleagues, graduate students, and I are contributing to improving food security in Caribbean.

I have been a member of Florida State Horticultural Society (FSHS) since 1997 and I value the Society as an important forum for professional development, networking among peers, and for graduate student training. I served for several years as the student competitions coordinator and have judged manuscripts for the best paper competitions. In recent years, the FSHS Board has made a concerted effort to broaden our membership within industry, nonprofit organizations, and academic institutions with Florida with horticulture, agroecology, and agritourism programs. We would love to have the membership's help with recruiting friends, colleagues, and clientele who would benefit from being part of FSHS. Additionally, this society was started by growers; and my goal this year is to strengthen grower involvement at the annual meeting. For instance, extension faculty within Martin, St. Lucie, and neighboring counties who have conducted on-farm studies or other participatory research will be encouraged to co-present a poster or oral presentation with a grower. I encourage the membership this year to think about what FSHS can do for you and what you can do for FSHS because both if pursued will be to your benefit.

From the Editors:

2026 Proceedings Now Available!

Dear FSHS members:

We are pleased to announce that Volume 139 of the Proceedings of the Florida State Horticultural Society, corresponding to the 2026 Annual Meeting, is already online and papers are being uploaded. At the moment of writing this column, only a very small number of papers have been uploaded reflecting the low levels of submission. We encourage all presenters to submit their papers as soon as possible. Please remember that a successful “Proceedings” depends on the quantity and quality of its published papers.

If you are still writing your manuscript, please consider and select the most appropriate type of manuscript. Here is a short description of these. Please check the instructions for authors on our website for more details and examples.

Choose the manuscript format that best fits your presentation.

1. **Full length scientific paper.** This type of manuscript is ideal for complete scientific research projects with a solid conclusion(s). It contains all the basic elements of any journal paper including the Proceedings of the FSHS.
2. **Scientific Note.** The idea of a scientific note is that the author(s) found something of interest and will publish a longer refereed paper on this topic at a later date. In the case of an Extension author, this could be for a program that may be of interest to a wider audience. Authors are expected to provide a concise introduction, summarize their methodology, and present results along with relevant figures or tables. Please include relevant references.
3. **Abstract.** This is a concise accounts of a scientific project, a survey, or a narrative descriptive presentation. This is not the abstract already submitted for the Book of Abstracts. This abstract should be more a detailed account of your presentation. If the presentation has already been published, a link to the published paper, extension document or trade journal will be added. One or two figures and/or tables are acceptable. Always provide enough detail to ensure your information is helpful and not so vague that it lacks substance.
4. **Posters.** Posters should be submitted as PowerPoint or PDF files. A PDF file of a poster offers more information and color than a simple abstract. (See the previous Proceedings online for examples).

Any questions please direct them to either Dr Ed Etxeberria (eetxeber@ufl.edu) or Dr. Jan Narciso (chipncody@gmail.com)

Please submit your paper(s) to editors@fshs.org by December 1st to help our society remain relevant.

139th Annual Meeting of FSHS

2026 Award Winners



Presidential Gold Medal Award

John L. Griffis, Jr.

**Professor, Bernese B. and Sidney R. Davis Chair
for Horticultural Education and Research**

**Department of Ecology and Environmental Studies
Florida Gulf Coast University**

FSHS President 2021-2022

Honorary Members:



Craig Campbell

Retired as a Senior
Research Scientist,
Valent BioScience
Horticulturist



Mary Lamberts

Retired Extension Agent,
UF / IFAS Miami-Dade
County Extension,
1983-2013
Retired FSHS editor



George Fitzpatrick

Professor UF/IFAS
Fort Lauderdale
Research and Education
Center until 2011
FSHS president in 2023



Mark A. Ritenour

Indian River Research
and Education Center,
UF / IFAS
FSHS president 2017-
2018

139th Annual Meeting of FSHS

2026 Best Paper Award Winners



Florida Tomato Research Award



Joao Cardoso de Souza Junior^{1*}, Shinsuke Agehara¹, Sanjay Shukla², Vijay Santikari³, Mehran Homayounfar⁴, Justin Schabow⁵, Nikolay Bliznyuk⁶, Craig Frey⁷, Lisa Hickey⁸, and Anna Mészáros⁹



Agroecology and Natural Resources Section



Cyrus J. Januarie¹, Lakesh Sharma², Joao Vendramini³ and Davie M. Kadyampakeni¹



Handling and Processing Section



Rachel Noma¹, Mark A. Ritenour¹, and Anne Plotto²



Heather Buss¹, Dharti Thakula¹, and Paul R. Fisher^{1*}, and Jeffrey Rollins²



Vegetable Section

Phosphorus Fertilizer Threshold for Snap Bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris* L.) in Tropical Spodosols
M.J.I. Shohag, Elena Máximo Salgado, Marina Curtis Gluck, and Guodong (David) Liu^{*}

Horticultural Sciences Department,
University of Florida, IFAS



Citrus Section



Jonas Pereira de Souza Júnior and Davie M. Kadyampakeni



Jonathan Crane^{*} and Ray Melcon

139th Annual Meeting of FSHS



2026 Student Oral Competition and Poster Award Winners

President Manjul Dutt presents awards for the student oral competition to Rashmi Kumari, Lauren Fessler Mathews, and Monika Peddapuli (pictured above) and student poster award winners Abdul Khaliq, You's Kertye Myrtil, and Duane Hardy (pictured right).



2026 Student Travel Award Winners



Looking Ahead... 140th Annual Meeting of FSHS



TIPS To Improve Your FSHS Presentation

Key Words. (for Full Papers and Short Notes).

1. Key Words should channel a search to your paper.
2. Should comprise of 3–6 precise words or phrases, distinct from the title, that represent the main topics, methods, and findings.
3. No general words or phrases (e.g., fruit, flower, decay, soil, etc.). These do not narrow down a search to your paper.
4. Tip: Select words or phrases that you would use if you were searching for your own paper.

Figures

1. Use high contrast colors compared to the background. Pale colors against a white background will not show.
2. Do not overcrowd.
3. BOLD everything!
4. Submit in separate files.

References

1. Not required for abstracts, but recommended.
2. Follow examples on Instructions for Authors on the FSHS website.

Miscellaneous

1. If your manuscript has already been published, or will be published soon, in another journal, please provide an abstract and a link to the article. If no link is available, send the PDF file and we will create one.
2. Identify your submission with the section name and number of presentation. This information is right next to the title in the meeting program.

Any questions please direct them to either Dr. Ed Etxeberria (eetxeber@ufl.edu) or Dr. Jan Narciso (chipncody@gmail.com) Editors.



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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