

## **AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES AWARENESS MINI-GRANT FINAL REPORT**

**PROJECT TITLE:** Training the Trainer: A Standardized Statewide Greening and Canker Training

Program for Master Gardeners

**PROJECT LEADERS:**

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**COLLABORATORS:**

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**ABSTRACT:**

Citrus greening disease and citrus canker are bacterial diseases that pose a serious threat to the Florida citrus industry. Greening has eliminated entire citrus industries in other parts of the world where it is established and canker severely limits the available markets for Florida citrus. The Florida citrus industry is taking significant steps to combat these diseases on a number of fronts. However, there are millions of citrus trees and related species in yards throughout Florida that may potentially harbor these diseases. A successful fight against greening and canker in Florida, will actively engage homeowners.

Homeowner awareness of the economic importance of the Florida citrus industry and how it affects the lives of all Florida residents is essential for their full participation. Accurate information about disease identification and action plans are needed to aid homeowners in helping Florida's citrus industry overcome these diseases and allow homeowners to continue to grow dooryard citrus. This project developed a standardized statewide Master Gardener

greening and canker training program that will be distributed and used by all Florida County Extension personnel to ensure that all Master Gardeners receive the same accurate and up to date information regardless of the training personnel.

**PROJECT GOALS:**

1. Develop a standardized statewide Master Gardener greening and canker training curriculum.
2. Assemble existing IFAS research and publications and condense them into a Master Gardener Greening/Canker Handbook for distribution to Master Gardeners.
3. Convert the notebook to a series of EDIS documents for easy access by homeowners and Master Gardeners.

**PROJECT ACTIVITIES:**

1. Created “Greening and Canker Training for Master Gardeners,” a power point presentation for use IFAS personnel for master gardener, general public or extension agent trainings.
2. Wrote “2007 Citrus Canker and Greening Handling Protocols for Master Gardener Plant Clinics,” a brochure.
3. Assembled “Master Gardener Canker and Greening Notebook,” a compilation of the most up-to-date IFAS citrus greening and canker information.
4. Wrote a series of EDIS documents for homeowners and Master Gardeners
  - a. Dooryard Citrus Production: The value of the Florida citrus industry to Florida residents
  - b. Dooryard Citrus Production: Citrus canker disease
  - c. Dooryard Citrus Production: Citrus greening disease
  - d. Dooryard Citrus Production: Citrus diseases exotic to Florida

**RECIPIENTS/BENEFACTORS OF THE AWARENESS PROGRAM:**

The statewide Master Gardener program now has standardized canker and greening training materials which benefits:

1. Extension agents conducting Master Gardener training.
2. Master Gardeners who need knowledge and instruction for disease identification and official IFAS recommendations to help homeowners.
3. The Florida citrus industry which needs cooperation from homeowners to help in the identification and management of these devastating diseases.

**OUTCOMES AND DELIVERABLES:**

County Extension Faculty now have a standardized program to present to Master Gardeners during their regularly scheduled continuing education classes. The program provides Master Gardeners with an understanding of the importance of the Florida citrus industry to Florida's economy, agricultural community and natural environment. This standardized program enables Master Gardeners to properly diagnose greening and canker diseases, give IFAS recommendations to homeowners with infected trees, and be able to explain the importance of following those recommendations. Master Gardeners are able to share their knowledge with homeowners and help them understand the importance of following IFAS recommendations.

**DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTIVENESS AND/OR IMPACT:**

To date, one Master Gardener training (Marion County) using the new power point presentation has been held. The feedback received from program evaluations was positive and indicated that the information was timely and useful. This feedback resulted in additional information being included in the materials. Distribution of training materials statewide is in progress and the program will be officially unveiled at the Master Gardener Statewide Annual Conference, October 22, 2007.