



FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

# VIRTUAL FARM BUREAU DAY BRIEFING PACKET

## Priority Issues

Right to Farm/Farming Operations  
Funding for UF/IFAS Fertilizer Rate Research  
Private Property Rights

## Additional FFBF Supported Bills

## Watch List

# Right to Farm/Farming Operations

SB 88: Sen. Jason Brodeur/HB 1601: Rep. Jaye Williamson

## Background

The Florida Right to Farm Act was established in 1979 and has played a key role in protecting the viability of Florida agriculture. Protecting and strengthening this law has been a priority for Florida Farm Bureau since its inception.

The law currently protects farms from nuisance lawsuits in urbanizing areas. Essentially, if a farm has been in business for more than a year and conforms to generally accepted agricultural practices it cannot be sued for nuisance by surrounding neighbors. This helps ensure that farms can remain in business without worrying about lawsuits arising from the sights, sounds, smells, etc. that are commonplace in production agriculture.

Because of recent judicial rulings in other states, and issues raised in a lawsuit dealing with pre-harvest sugarcane burning, several areas in Florida's Right to Farm Law have been identified that could be strengthened. Florida Farm Bureau is working with other agricultural partners to make several changes to modernize the Right to Farm Law and make it even stronger. These changes are critical as agricultural practices continue to change and as the state continues to urbanize.

## Effect of Legislation

The Right to Farm bill has three main goals: to minimize the amount of lawsuits that will be brought, to place limits on damages and to modernize the law by expanding protection beyond just nuisance claims.

- **Minimize lawsuits**-The number of lawsuits able to be filed by stating that only properties within ½ mile of the farm can bring lawsuits. The bill also discourages frivolous lawsuits by forcing those who lose a claim against a farm to be responsible for the prevailing party's attorney's fees.
- **Limit damages**-The bill would limit compensatory damages to only the lost value of the property that was harmed. It would also allow punitive damages only in limited situations.
- **Modernize the law**-The bill includes agritourism activities into the Right to Farm law. It also expands nuisance protections to include other types of lawsuits like personal injury and trespass.

Opponents of the bill wrongly claim that this would give full immunity for any action on a farm. It's important to note that the Right to Farm Law, and this effort to modernize it, will only provide protections for actions that conform with generally accepted agricultural practices, state and federal regulations or BMPs.

## CONTACT US:

FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

310 W. College Ave. • Tallahassee, FL 32301 • 850.222.2557 • [floridafarmbureau.org](http://floridafarmbureau.org)  
[adam.basford@ffbf.org](mailto:adam.basford@ffbf.org) C: 352-538-4299 • [landon.hoffman@ffbf.org](mailto:landon.hoffman@ffbf.org) C: 352-538-9321

# Funding for UF/IFAS Fertilizer Rate Research

## Background

As Florida Farm Bureau and other industry partners continue to support measures that add credibility to the Best Management Practices program, it is essential that critical research continues to be funded to keep the program and the practices within it to be based on up to date research.

It has become increasingly clear that there is a great need for updated fertilizer application recommendations and production practices.

## Effect of Legislation

This year, UF/IFAS is requesting an additional \$3.6m in workload funding that will be used to specifically address that need.

UF/IFAS will be conducting research to assess, update and validate recommended fertilizer application rates and practices for the Florida agriculture industry. This research will provide modernized, science-based fertilizer application rates ensuring farmers can protect the environment while growing food for the nation.

Further details can be found on an attached sheet.

## Farm Bureau Policy

### **Best Management Practices**

We support scientific, economically feasible and technology-based Best Management Practices (BMPs) for all commodities with manuals adopted by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). We support the University of Florida/ Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) research efforts with industry input to develop solutions to potential ground water and surface water quality and quantity issues while maintaining or even enhancing agricultural production.

## CONTACT US:

FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

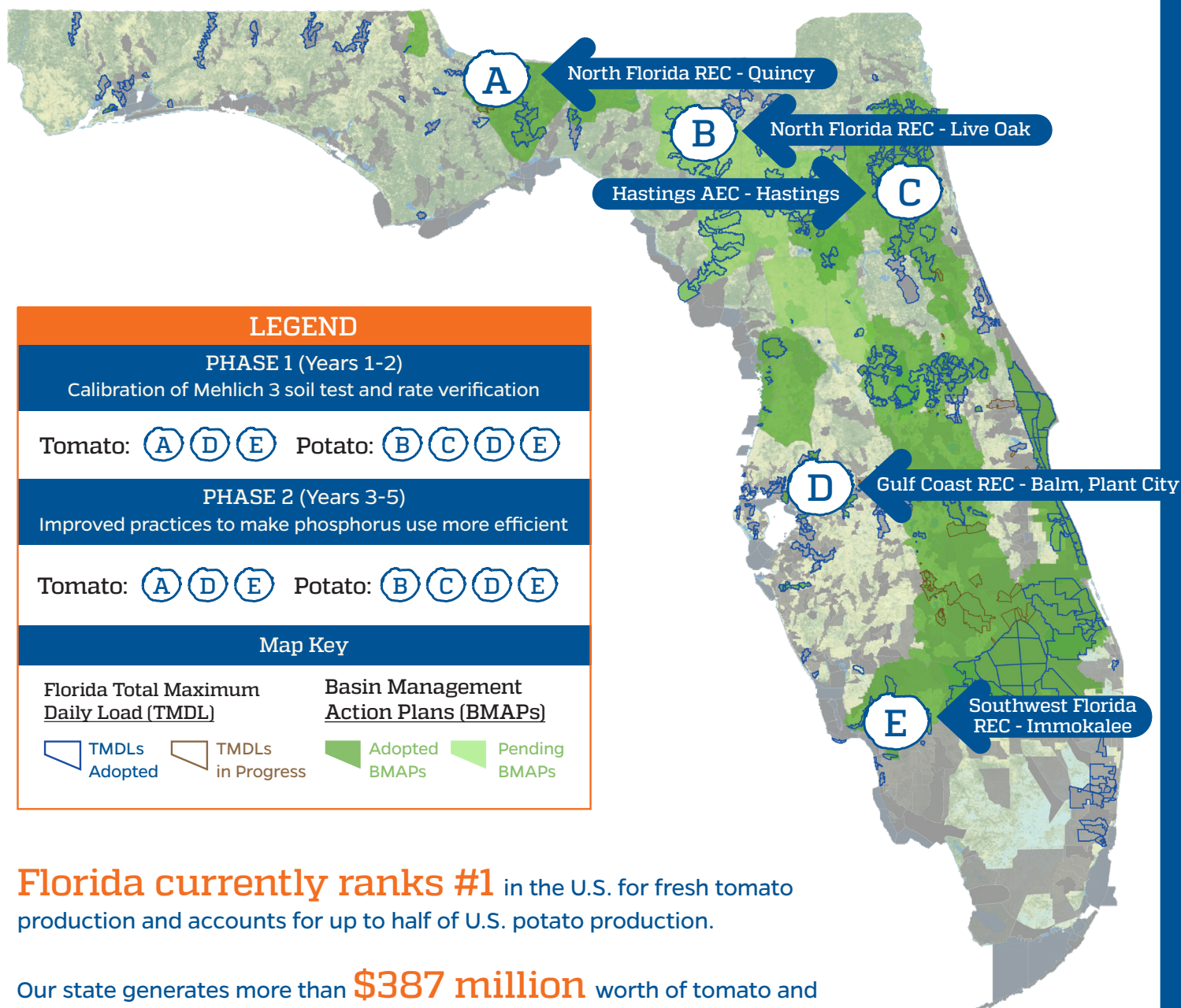
310 W. College Ave. • Tallahassee, FL 32301 • 850.222.2557 • [floridafarmbureau.org](http://floridafarmbureau.org)  
[adam.basford@ffb.org](mailto:adam.basford@ffb.org) C: 352-538-4299 • [london.hoffman@ffb.org](mailto:london.hoffman@ffb.org) C: 352-538-9321



# Fertilizer Rates Research

## for Crop Growth and Environmental Protection

UF/IFAS will be conducting research to assess, update and validate recommended fertilizer application rates and practices for the Florida agriculture industry. **The map below illustrates the initial crops, type of research, and areas where the studies will be located.** This research will provide modernized, science-based fertilizer application rates **ensuring farmers can protect the environment while growing food for the nation.**



# Fertilizer Rates Research

## for Crop Growth and Environmental Protection

**Florida agriculture needs updated fertilizer application recommendations and production practices** to promote environmental sustainability and productive agriculture.

Crops need nutrients to grow. Too little fertilizer reduces the plants ability to produce food. Too much fertilizer can result in unused nutrients lost to soil, water and air. **UF/IFAS scientists have a long record of teaming up with Florida farmers and environmental agencies to find solutions.** In the 1970s and 80s, UF/IFAS established recommended fertilizer application rates that are still used today.

Since then, farming techniques, improved varieties, advanced technology and nutrient management practices have adapted, evolved and become more efficient over the years. Research has continued over the past 20 years, but the recommendations need improvement to keep up with Florida's evolving agriculture and increasing environmental concerns.

**Recognizing the state's need, UF/IFAS has developed a research plan to assess, update, and validate current nutrient application recommendations through field trials.** The research will be conducted by teams of professionals in key geographic regions of the state **including UF/IFAS Experiment Stations and local farms.** The recommendations will recognize the regional diversity of the state's environment, soil conditions and uses of production practices starting with tomatoes and potatoes.

UF/IFAS has invested  
**\$147,000**  
to kickstart the project

**Simultaneously, UF/IFAS will develop an artificial intelligence (AI) database on nutrient recommendations.**

AI is capable of merging diverse data streams that can be utilized to analyze huge amounts of data on plant growth, yield, amount of fertilizer in the soil, water quality and more. The AI database will equip researchers with computational abilities to update recommendations for current and future crops.

**To form the AI database, teams of students in agricultural and engineering disciplines will work with local farmers** to establish experiments on 10 farms. They will gain hands-on experience working with AI tools as they collect necessary crop nutrient data, explore ways to improve data flow, and interact across different data sources.

## 4 teams

Each Regional Research team includes: 1 faculty, 2 staff and 2 students

**UF/IFAS is requesting a base increase of \$3,670,694 through the Workload funding request** to provide solutions to problems and challenges faced by the agriculture community and our natural resources. A portion of Workload funds will be utilized to support these research activities.

Contact: UF/IFAS Governmental Affairs, Director, Mary Ann Hooks, 850-270-4013. mahooks@ufl.edu

# Private Property Rights

SB 1876: Sen. Ben Albritton/HB 421: Rep. Kaylee Tuck

## Background

Protecting private property rights is a fundamental priority for the Florida Farm Bureau. In 1995, the Florida legislature passed the **Bert J. Harris, Jr., Private Property Rights Protection Act**. It provides a specific process for landowners to seek relief when their property is unfairly affected by government action.

For the past few years, there have been efforts to update and strengthen the Bert Harris Act. This bill will help streamline the process for property owners and will allow a prevailing property owner to recoup attorney fees.

## Effect of Legislation

This bill has several components that would benefit private property owners.

- **Attorney's Fees**-The bill amends the law to provide that a judge concludes that the government inordinately burdened a property, then the property owner is entitled to attorney fees.
- **Judge Grants Damages**-The bill allows the property owner to elect to forego a jury trial on damages and defer the entire case to a bench trial. This will help reduce time and save expense.
- **Promotes Dispute Resolution**-The bill also makes the alternative dispute resolution process more user friendly. This will help streamline the process and help avoid litigation.

## Farm Bureau Policy

### Private Property Rights

We strongly believe in and uphold the sanctity of private property rights upon which this country was founded. Short of constituting a public health hazard, property owners should be allowed and encouraged to use their property for their own benefit.

## CONTACT US:

FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

310 W. College Ave. • Tallahassee, FL 32301 • 850.222.2557 • [floridafarmbureau.org](http://floridafarmbureau.org)  
[adam.basford@ffbf.org](mailto:adam.basford@ffbf.org) C: 352-538-4299 • [london.hoffman@ffbf.org](mailto:london.hoffman@ffbf.org) C: 352-538-9321

# Additional FFBF Supported Bills

## COVID Liability Protection

SB 72-Sen. Jeff Brandes/HB 7-Rep. Lawrence McClure

The bill provides civil immunity from COVID-19 liability to businesses, educational institutions, religious institutions, governmental entities and other covered entities that acted in good faith during the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill protects reasonably acting entities and institutions so that they can predict their COVID-19-related litigation risks, remain viable, and continue to contribute to the state's well-being.

## Black Bass

SB 1018-Sen. Jim Boyd/HB 669-Rep. Dana Trabulsy

This legislation would allow the sale of *Micropterus salmoides* (Large-Mouth Bass) to be sold as a food fish by Florida aquaculture producers. This species of fish is currently grown in Florida by producers who may only sale to private individuals for re-stocking purposes. In addition, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) also produces this species for re-stocking public lakes and rivers in the state.

This legislative change will allow Florida producers to compete in a national market where demand for this species continues to grow. In addition, this change will allow Florida restaurants to add this product to their menus.

## Constitutional Amendment Reform

- Percentage of Votes Required to Approve an Amendment—SB 1238-Sen. Ana Maria Rodriguez/HB 0061-Rep. Rick Roth
- Abolishing the Constitution Revision Commission—SB 0204-Sen. Jeff Brandes/HB 1179-Rep. Mike Beltran

## FDACS Budget

- Fresh From Florida
- Rural and Family Lands
- Office of Ag Water Policy

## CONTACT US:

FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

310 W. College Ave. • Tallahassee, FL 32301 • 850.222.2557 • [floridafarmbureau.org](http://floridafarmbureau.org)  
[adam.basford@ffbf.org](mailto:adam.basford@ffbf.org) C: 352-538-4299 • [landon.hoffman@ffbf.org](mailto:landon.hoffman@ffbf.org) C: 352-538-9321



# Watch List

### **Right to Repair** - SB 374-Sen. Jennifer Bradley/HB 511-Rep. Joe Harding

This bill is designed to ensure that farmers and independent repair shops have the right to repair their own farm equipment. Florida Farm Bureau supports a farmer's right to repair and has been working with equipment manufacturers to determine what diagnostic and repair tools are already available. We will continue to work with the sponsors and the equipment manufacturers to ensure that farmers have the tools necessary to maintain and repair their equipment.

### **Urban Ag** - SB 628-Sen. Darryl Rouson/HB 1013-Rep. Michelle Rayner

Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Darryl Rouson from St. Petersburg is sponsoring a bill that seeks to promote agricultural production in urban areas. For the past several years, municipalities have claimed that Florida's Right to Farm Law could prevent them from being able to enforce local regulations on agricultural production in urban areas.

Florida Farm Bureau will be working with Sen. Rouson to help local government enact common sense regulations on urban agriculture and to properly define urban agriculture so these regulations do not infringe on established, more traditional agricultural production.

### **Cottage Food Operations** - SB 1294-Sen Jason Brodeur/HB 663 Rep.

Michelle Salzman

The bill would raise the amount of money that could be earned from sales of cottage food products from \$50,000 to \$250,000 without appropriate regulatory oversight for food safety.

### **Solar Energy**

- **Solar Electrical Generating Facilities**—SB 1008-Sen, Travis Hutson/HB 761 - Rep. Toby Overdorf
- **Renewable Energy**-SB 1960-Sen. Aaron Bean

### **Animal Welfare Bills**

- **Animal Cruelty**—SB 1122-Sen Jason Brodeur/HB 0731-Rep. Elizabeth Fetterhoff
- **Reporting Animal Cruelty**—SB 0216-Sen. Jason Pizzo/HB 0047-Rep. Dan Daley
- **Tethering Dogs and Cats**—SB 0650-Sen. Annette Taddeo/HB 0177-Rep. Emily Slosberg

## CONTACT US:

FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

310 W. College Ave. • Tallahassee, FL 32301 • 850.222.2557 • [floridafarmbureau.org](http://floridafarmbureau.org)  
[adam.basford@ffbf.org](mailto:adam.basford@ffbf.org) C: 352-538-4299 • [landon.hoffman@ffbf.org](mailto:landon.hoffman@ffbf.org) C: 352-538-9321