

2021 Panhandle Row Crops Update Series: Connecting Producers Virtually to Research from Three Land Grant Institutions

E. CARTER*, Regional Crop IPM Agent, Jackson County, Marianna, FL 32448; **L. JOHNSON***, Agriculture Agent, Escambia County, Cantonment, FL 32533; **J. BEARDEN**, Agriculture Agent, Okaloosa County, Crestview, FL 32539; **J. ATKINS**, Agriculture Agent, Santa Rosa County, Jay, FL 32565; **D. SPRAGUE**, Agriculture Agent, Jefferson County, Monticello FL, 32344.

Situation: The project aimed to move traditional, in class educational opportunities to a virtual world for producers due to Covid 19. By offering four winter educational row crop production programs through Zoom, UF/IFAS Extension agents wanted to continue to teach farmers in a safe way. The weekly February series covered the following topics: Cotton, Peanuts, Corn/Soybeans, and Precision Agriculture. Agents filmed videos with Florida, Auburn, and Georgia specialists in Fall/Winter, then edited them to show for the winter meetings.

Objectives: To educate 125-200 producers on row crop management practices and acquire skills related to integrated pest management and best management practices (at least 80% of participants will increase knowledge); at least 50% of participants will adopt behavior changes in one or more of these areas; 100-125 producers and industry personnel would receive training in utilizing restricted use pesticides (80% of participants would receive certification or recertification through FDACS or CCA).

Evaluation: An initial survey was developed before the series began to be used at the very end of each learning session to gather baseline data for the project. A follow up Qualtrics survey has been developed and will be distributed to growers who participated in mid-Summer.

Results: [Webpage](#) with 24 YouTube videos and presentations for farmers to review the series, 284 people from 17 Florida, 3, Georgia, and 4 Alabama Counties, 263 pesticide applicators for points, 15 CCA CEUs, 229/231 (99%) of respondents reported a knowledge gain, 168/232 (72%) of respondents reported an anticipated practice change, 11/43 (26%) of survey respondents expect cost reductions on farm from their anticipated change. **Conclusion:** Ag business representatives were pleased with the opportunity to address clientele through this innovative meeting approach. Farmers sent texts and emails relaying that it was good to see what new research had come out from 2020 work. The people who needed CCAs were particularly satisfied in the ease of the process. Extension agents were pleased with the number of participants who used Zoom for the first time to get the information. Protocol