

## Pasco FCS Success Stories



**Why Diets Don't Work** Looking for ways to slim down in the new year and taking on a health challenge, Pasco County Clerk of the Circuit Court employees asked FCS agent to present a program on Food Fitness: Myths and Facts. Participants learned about the downside of popular fad diets during a one-hour, "lunch and learn" program. Advice was given on eating a healthy low-fat diet with variety of colorful foods, in moderation. Tips were shared on how to avoid excess calories when eating out. Behavior modification techniques were reviewed and emphasis placed on going slowly and steadily in adopting new practices, not all at once. The next monthly class will cover the new USDA Web site at [mypyramid.gov](http://mypyramid.gov) and the importance of increasing activity levels as part of a healthy lifestyle. [Contact: Betsy Crisp]

**Pucker-Up! Experience the Burst of Flavor from Kumquats** The small community of Saint Joseph, Florida is known as the "kumquat capital of the nation." The 10<sup>th</sup> annual Kumquat Festival Recipe Contest was held on Friday, January 19, 2006, in nearby Dade City by FCS agent and Home and Community Education (HCE) volunteers. The purpose of the contest is to create awareness of the nutrition and versatility of this unique little fruit and at the same time educate consumers about food safety issues. There were 32 entries this year. Adults and youth from Pasco and Pinellas counties came to the fairgrounds with their finished product. (In the past, there have been entries from Daytona Beach and New York). Recipe categories included main dish, side dish, dessert, and miscellaneous. A panel of three nutrition professionals judged all entries. The Best of Show winner this year was a "kumquat bulgur salad." A "healthy kumquat cake" also received special recognition. Some of the past winning recipes have been published in local, state and national cookbooks! [Contact: Betsy Crisp]

**When Timing Is Right—Marketing Can Really Make a Difference!—*Simply Florida* Cookbooks** The timing could not have been better when a large shipment of 100 cookbooks arrived in Pasco county, just in time for the holidays. The *Simply Florida* cookbook was developed by FCS agents across the state to promote Florida agriculture. The holiday season was perfect to tie into the gift-giving spirit. FCS agent created interest with local media contacts to promote the cookbook in several newspapers (8 articles published over 6-week period, reaching 467,909). Master Gardener volunteers had already planned a Saturday Seminar on December 2, 2006, to promote Holiday Plants as Gifts. So agent teamed up to present a program on the cookbook and featured two recipes that were especially well-suited for the season. A total of 29 attended the workshop and 19 cookbooks were sold that day. An additional 58 books sold in the days that followed. That made a grand total of 77 cookbooks sold (\$23 each) which raised a total of \$1,771 for Florida Extension Association for Family and Consumer Sciences and the Mary Harrison Professorship! [Contact: Betsy Crisp]

**As They Say... "One Man's Trash Is Another Man's Treasure!"** And that is certainly the case in the FCS/4-H Trash-to-Treasure contest for preschool through eighth grades. Pasco youth are given the opportunity to make something out of practically nothing as they use their imagination to create "art" out of throwaways in this annual event. Some students search around the house to get ideas and "trash," others obtain materials from the school board's Creation Station reuse center where things are donated from local businesses. Even the teachers surprised us; one sent her students out to the playground on a scavenger hunt to search out objects for their project. This year, a record number of 65 entries appeared, involving a total of 80 youth (some were in teams). Judges were so impressed that

four special awards were offered in addition to first-, second-, third-place and top prize of Best of Show for the famous king of trash, "Oscar the Grouch!" [Contact: Betsy Crisp or Jean Hink]

**Color-Coded Cures? Just Eat More Fruits and Veggies!** Inquiring minds of Home and Community Education (HCE) volunteers wanted to know the truth about the various colors of produce that are claimed to be a "cure" for certain diseases. FCS agent played a game of "myth versus fact" and quizzed members on what they had heard on television or read in popular magazines versus what the latest research reported about the benefits of eating a colorful diet to improve health. Warnings were included to be on guard for the "red flags" to help spot "junk science." However, the bottom line remains the same: consumers do not eat enough fruits and vegetables (5 or more servings a day) and variety (not one specific color) is the key to good health! Following the lecture a taste-test was held which included various healthy recipes using many colorful fruits and vegetables with some served in unusual ways! [Contact: Betsy Crisp]

**Crash Course in Modern-Day Manners Requested to Relieve Prom-Night Nerves** Concerned 4-H leader and parents wanted to help their youth put their "best foot forward" for prom and relieve some of the tension that was building for that special event. They requested assistance from the FCS agent. Older members in upper grades came to their monthly meeting ready to ask questions. Starting with basic introductions and ice-breakers, much information was covered which included table settings and mastering utensils, down to some potentially embarrassing moments. Even the parents who were ease-dropping in the background commented that they, too, had learned something new and looked forward to seeing their young men and women practicing what they had learned! [Contact: Betsy Crisp]

**Battle of the Brands** – Local TV anchor, looking for a story, called FCS agent to inquire, "What is

the difference between generic/store/name brands?" This led to taping a segment in a local grocery store in Pasco county. Showing on screen a mock-up of the old generic labels of the late 70's ("no frills" white or yellow with black print) they discussed how times had change and the quality improved. By switching from name brands, consumers can save without sacrificing quality or nutrition and may even like the "store" brand (also called "private label") better! Research shows an increase in sales of these store brands when the economy changes. So, now that gas prices as well as milk and other things are increasing, if you aren't doing so already, now is the time to buy store brands and save an average of 15-20% and as much as 50% on some items. This segment ran four times in one day and was featured on their Web site for over a week, reaching an estimated total of 501,701 Tampa Bay viewers so far in July. [Contact: Betsy Crisp]

**Hurricane Season Is Upon Us— Now Is the Time to Prepare, Before It Gets Personal!** That is the message FCS agent delivered at the annual Hurricane Expo in Port Richey held the first Saturday in June. Approximately 9,000 residents escaped to the mall to get out of the rain provided by downgraded tropical storm Barry just off Pasco county's coast that day. What a "teachable moment" as participants eagerly learned to prepare for what was to come in the months ahead. As a follow-up to that event, Extension FCS and horticulture teamed up with Pasco County Emergency Operations Center to provide three displays in the West Pasco Government Center lobby on Hurricanes: Before and After the Storm. These displays will remain in place for Pasco county employees and other local residents to view August-September, our two most active months for hurricane activity. [Contact: Betsy Crisp or BJ Jarvis]

**When It Rains, It Pours—Time to Make a Rain Barrel!** Consumers ask, "With all this rain, why should I conserve water?" especially at this time of year with all the summer rains we are currently experiencing. FCS and FY&N teamed up to tell

the whole story about the cyclical nature of weather and reasons why conservation was needed year-round. Over 60 residents turned out on a Saturday morning at the Home Depot in Port Richey to learn about the three environmental issues of recycling, indoor and outdoor water conservation. Participants then made a rain barrel to take home and catch the afternoon showers following the event. Media coverage helped spread the word and create interest and a waiting list for more workshops in the near future.

[Contact: Betsy Crisp or BJ Jarvis]

### **Pasco County “Blown Away” by Hurricane**

**Exhibit** During the months of August and September, visitors to the Pasco County Government Center in New Port Richey learned ways to cope with the challenges of hurricanes, before and after. An estimated 4,000 residents visited the booth during the two months, taking home 6,107 handouts for additional information about indoor and outdoor preparations. Pasco citizens gained knowledge on how to recover after a storm, as well. Ideas on how to prepare indoors before the storm included various ways to protect windows, how to protect doors/openings with sandbags, and how to make various survival kits. Kits included: 1) food/water/ice supplies; 2) tools including a SAME weather radio (Signal Area Message Encoding); 3) household cleaning supplies; 4) important family documents; 5) pet supplies; and 6) toys/activities for children. Outdoor preparedness materials ranged from pruning for protection before and after the storm to caring for flooded lawns and treating landscape trees following a hurricane. Participating residents learned how to be prepared to take action once the storm has passed. In this way, residents are better able to reduce their fear, anxiety, and stress during a storm because of their preparedness; they should experience less damage to trees and potentially physical structures during a storm, allowing them to recover more quickly after a storm. [Contact: Betsy Crisp and BJ Jarvis]

### **Let’s Talk Trash! - We All Make It and We Should All Pick Up After Ourselves, Right?**

Evidently that is not the case as 1,250 volunteers turned out for the annual Coastal Cleanup in Pasco county (part of an international effort). Working with the recycling coordinator for the county’s utilities department, FCS agent helped recruit, train, and coordinate local volunteers to pitch in and remove a total of 15.25 tons of trash county-wide (coastline as well as local roads, lakes and waterways). Local businesses also stepped-up to help reward volunteers with almost \$10,000 in combined donations of food, drink, shelter, souvenir T-shirts and door prizes. We don’t “sugar-coat” it. This is tough work in hot weather, but still the majority of volunteers have come back year after year for the past 17 years because they find it so rewarding...and they bring their friends! They end the day knowing that they did their part to help keep Pasco beautiful.

[Contact: Betsy Crisp]

**Healthy Eating Not Just for Kids!** Approximately 70 child-care providers gathered to learn good nutrition for themselves and to help set good examples for children in their care. FCS agent was invited to address two groups of home-based, child-care workers as part of a required two-hour USDA child-care food program workshop. After the lecture about MyPyramid (including basic nutrition and the importance of physical activity), questions about fad diets, food safety issues, new food products and packaging trends were also answered. Participants were pleased to learn how to read labels for nutrition and save money by shopping store brands, information that they can use at home and in their business. Program coordinator followed with a review of proper forms to complete and submit for reimbursement from the program. [Contact: Betsy Crisp]

### **Little Organ Annie and Andy Have Been**

**Adopted by Pasco County!** Thanks to a grant from the Kellogg Foundation, Annie and Andy and all their friends, “Organ Wise Guys,” have found homes in Pasco County. The grant provided

agent training, 4 large dolls with removable body parts (plush character toys representing heart, lungs, kidneys, etc.), and 3,520 educational materials/activity books with a total value of **\$28,000**. This information covers nutrition, health, physical activity, coping with disasters and other tragedies. These Emotions Kits were featured at the Pasco County District School Board's Community Networking Event in October, which 200 teachers and 100 school VIPs attended (including school guidance counselors, social workers and nurses). So far, 17 schools are piloting the materials in Pasco and reports with success stories are just starting to come in. [Contact: Betsy Crisp]

**Family Nutrition Program (FNP) Increases Extension Nutrition Impact by Adding Seven New Positions** FNP is the Florida component of national USDA Food Stamp Nutrition Education program. In Florida, Department of Children and Families and the UF/IFAS Extension work together at the state level. The Pasco FNP program is made possible by a strong partnership between Pasco County Extension and the Pasco County Health Department as well as an extensive collaboration of many local agencies and organizations (including the District School Board of Pasco County). The **2007-2008 total \$574,000** grant is made up of \$287,000 federal dollars plus the same amount in "match" of local in-kind (space and services) making Pasco one of the largest FNP programs in the state. An agent/nutrition consultant and 6 program assistants are being hired in December/January to educate Pasco residents. The proposal included plans to increase the program by **\$70,000** the second year to hire 2 additional program assistants and expand into **Hernando County 2008-2009**. **The grant proposal was approved for 3 years (October 2007-September 2010)**. [Contact: Betsy Crisp]

**Follow-up on Medicare Part D Success**  
Opportunity to provide education to elderly residents and ease the selection of a Medicare Part D drug plan first materialized in April 2006. Original grant from pharmaceutical company, Astra Zenica, provided laptop computers, laser printers, and wireless Internet service to access [mymedicare.gov](http://mymedicare.gov) website and assist elderly residents in several Florida counties. Two \$10,000 grants were awarded to Pasco from AARP to provide a bilingual program assistant to serve Hispanic residents in Pasco and Hillsborough counties. A third \$13,000 grant opportunity from AARP was approved to continue local efforts through new enrollment period that ends December 31, 2006. Pasco/Hillsborough's success has been credited as the model for the nation as an additional 3 million dollar plus grant proposal is being considered. **IMPACT: Based on Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) estimate of a lifetime savings for Low Income Subsidy (LIS) individuals, our local efforts, so far (April through September 2006) in Pasco/Hillsborough have saved approximately \$4,000 each person = \$1,024,000! (Grant ended in June 2007.)** [Contact: Betsy Crisp]



**Extension Family & Consumer Sciences provides information to help YOU raise kids, eat right, spend smart, and live well!**

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