

# Living Well

# In Florida

## Help Available

Newcomers and visitors to Florida often come unprepared for the challenges of living in a tropical and sub-tropical climate with high population density and many demands on natural resources.

The Florida Extension Service and its team of professional educators can help to provide practical, research-based information to help visitors and newcomers quickly learn about and better adapt to their new environment. To make your stay safer and more enjoyable, visit or call the Extension Service in your area.

(See page two)

## In This Issue

<b>Help Available</b>	1
<b>The Truth About Bottled Water</b>	1
<b>Local Weather Warning Radios</b>	2
<b>To Wash or Not to Wash Produce?</b>	2
<b>Contact Information</b>	2

## The Truth About Bottled Water

Temperatures are rising—summer is here! Looking for a way to keep cool? Water is still the #1 choice of drink to keep hydrated. Drinking eight, 8-ounce glasses a day is essential for our daily body functions and survival!

Many people believe that bottled water is cleaner, safer and healthier. Water that comes into your home from a public water supply must be tested regularly and meet certain state and federal public drinking water standards (chemicals, bacteria, mineral and inorganic compounds). Bottled water sources are also inspected but can be contaminated just as easily in some step of the process.

Florida water is very hard and some areas have iron and sulfur which also affect the taste. These substances leave residue and stains on fixtures and appliances but gen-

erally do not create a health issue. Bottled water is lower in minerals and salt but in blind taste-tests does not always win against common tap water. One thing for sure is that it is expensive, averaging \$1 per bottle in vending machines and up to \$5 in fancy restaurants.

Look closely at the label. In most cases, bottled “drinking water” is just reprocessed tap water.

Bottled water sales increased 81% over the past five years, making it the 5<sup>th</sup> best-selling beverage in the U.S. It is a 10 billion dollar business with over 60 companies in Florida.

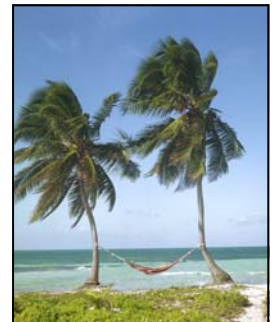
The truth is, if you are buying bottled water because you think it is better, safer, or healthier, you have probably been misled by the all those expensive ads—the biggest difference is just cost!

## Welcome to Florida

Brought to you by your University of Florida IFAS Extension Service Family and Consumer Sciences Team



“Solutions for Your Life”



## Local Weather Warning Radios

June 1—November 30 is hurricane season here in Florida. If you are new to the state, you may not be familiar with many aspects of hurricane preparation.

There are many contingencies you need to prepare for such as high winds, heavy rain, flooding, tornadoes, and the resulting power outages that usually accompany such occurrences.

When preparing your disaster kit, the top two things on your list should be food and water. However, high on your list of hurricane supplies should be a weather warning radio. These handy tools alert you when severe weather threatens

your area so that you can prepare and safeguard your family accordingly.

There are two basic types—desktop and portable. Desktop models are larger and usually run on electricity; portable models are smaller and are battery-powered. The portable types are the most useful *during and after* a storm since loss of electricity is a strong possibility.

Staying apprised of the most up-to-date weather developments before, during, and after a major storm can help you better plan, prepare, and cope with any disaster.

Investing in a weather radio may save your life.

## To Wash or Not to Wash Produce?

With recent concerns about bacteria on fresh produce, many people are wondering what produce they should wash, and how to do it.

Food safety specialists agree that pre-washed, ready-to-eat salad does not need to be washed again. Washing it is not likely to remove any more bacteria.

Loose salad greens and other produce that does

not say "pre-washed" or "ready-to-eat" should be washed. Melons of all kinds should be washed before they are cut.

Produce should be washed only with cool running tap water and spun or patted dry. Bleach and detergent do not help, and might cause problems on food. Be sure to wash your hands, cutting boards and all utensils that touch fresh produce.

## There's an Extension Office Near You!

**Charlotte County**—25550 Harbor View Rd, Unit 3, Port Charlotte, FL | (941) 764-4340  
<http://www.ifas.ufl.edu/charlotte/>

**Collier County**—14700 Immokalee Rd., Naples, FL  
(239) 353-4244 | <http://collier.ifas.ufl.edu>

**Desoto County**—2150 NE Roan Ave, Arcadia, FL  
(863) 993-4846 | <http://desoto.ifas.ufl.edu/>

**Hardee County**—507 Civic Center Dr., Wauchula, FL  
(863) 773-2164

**Hillsborough County**—5339 S. CR 579, Seffner, FL  
(813) 744-5519 | <http://hillsborough.extension.ufl.edu/>

**Lee County**—3406 Palm Beach Blvd, Ft. Myers, FL  
(239) 461-7500 | <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/>

**Manatee County**—1303 17th St. West, Palmetto, FL  
(941) 722-4524 | <http://manatee.ifas.ufl.edu/>

**Pasco County**—36702 SR 52, Dade City, FL  
(352) 521-4288 | <http://pasco.ifas.ufl.edu/>

**Pinellas County**—12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, FL  
(727) 582-2100 | <http://www.pinellascounty.org/extension>

**Polk County**—1702 Hwy 17-98 S, Bartow, FL  
(863) 519-8677 | <http://polk.ifas.ufl.edu/>

**Sarasota County**—6700 Clark Road Twin Lakes Park, Sarasota, FL | (941) 861-5000  
<http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu>

**Contact your local county Extension office today!**