

FARMERS COOPERATIVE

FARMING NEWS

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Greenhouse Conditions Ideal

Cut Flowers, Tomatoes Compete

By Pauline Fletcher Cogdill

Belinda Cheney enjoys watching plants grow. In 1990 she semi-retired from the retail grocery business to grow hydroponic tomatoes, beginning with one greenhouse. By the year 2000 she expanded her operation to a second greenhouse, and in 2003 Belinda decided to convert one of the greenhouses into a cut flower business.

IN THE SPRING, Belinda brought a vase of her beautiful cut flowers to our sales associate, Kelli Hall, and we got to see first hand some of the beautiful flowers Mrs. Cheney grows. She readily admits, she enjoys her work.

In Belinda's flower greenhouse you will see: sunflowers, zinnia, snapdragons, celosia, dianthus, stock, bells of Ireland, calla lillies, queen anne's lace, craspedia, trachelium and gomphrena. Combined these beautiful array of flowers make a bouquet of bright colors to complete an arrangement that will put a smile on anyone's face.

Belinda's other greenhouse is still used for growing hydroponic tomatoes as well as cucumbers, peppers, okra, lettuce and greens. For the most part, Belinda is the owner, operator and laborer with her vegetables and flowers. However, during

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Bob Hochmuth, Multi County Extension Agent for North Florida REC-Suwannee Valley; Belinda Cheney; and Wanda Laughlin, Sr. Agricultural Assistant at North Florida REC-Suwannee Valley admire some of Belinda's beautiful flowers.

Cut Flowers Grow Well In Greenhouse

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the peak season her husband, Doug, will help when he is not working or taking care of his cows or she may hire an additional worker.

THERE ARE A LOT of advantages to growing flowers and vegetables in greenhouses. First you eliminate too much rain, and the strong wind, which will not be conducive to growing the flowers with straight stems, and cuts down on the insects except if you try eggplants (that was a good lesson learned).

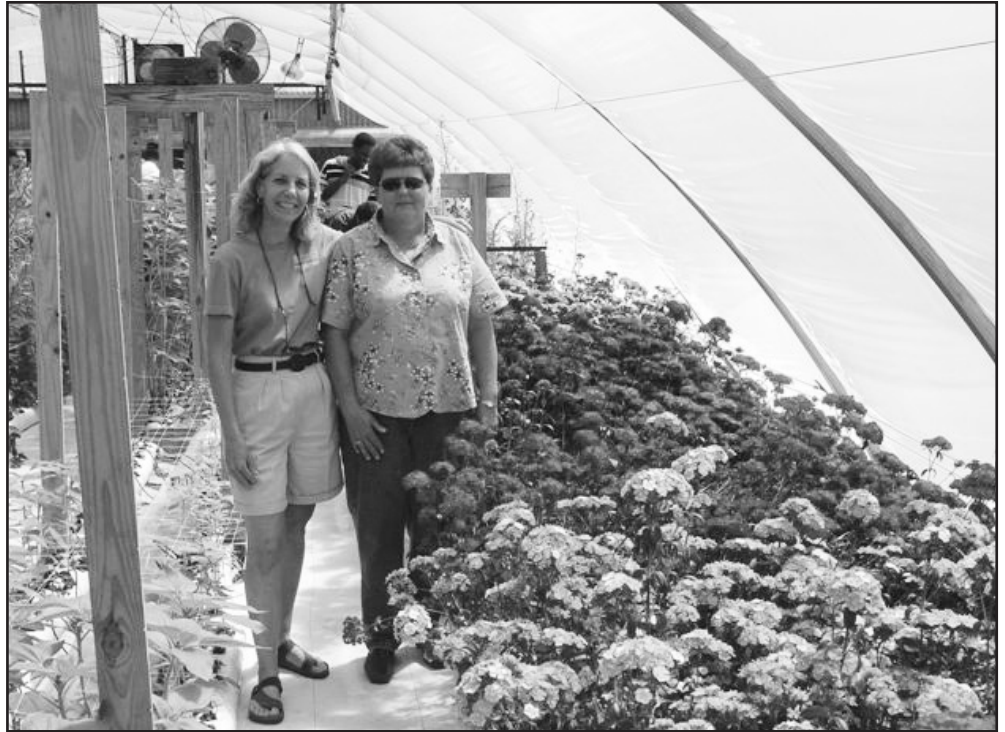
Owning your own business is always a learning process and it's good to work with the helpful people at IFAS North-Florida Research & Education Center - Suwannee Valley. Bob Hochmuth and Linda Landrum have been very helpful in teaching innovative methods of cutting cost to growing a better product to tailoring your product to meet your individual needs.

On August 2, 2009, Mrs. Cheney spoke at the Small Farmers Conference in Kissimmee, Florida, with emphasis on alternative types of farming for the future. Attending the conference was very beneficial for Belinda in giving her new insights in improving her farming operation.

IF YOU WANT fresh cut flowers or healthy vegetables, go by and see The Cheney's in O'Brien. Mrs. Cheney usually shuts down her operation in the summer not only because it's a slow time for her business, but she needs some extra time for her grandson, Bryson.



One of Belinda's prized sunflowers.



Linda Landrum, Regional Specialized Agent North Florida REC-Suwannee Valley (left) poses with Belinda Cheney in Belinda's greenhouse.

Cold Weather Is Coming

Check Your Heater

With cooler weather at hand, it's time to call our LP Gas Department and have a technician check your heater.

WHETHER YOU use central or space heating, you should have your heating source checked by a qualified service person, for both safety and efficiency.

We have qualified service technicians ready to check and service your gas heating unit, but please call early so that

we can have your unit ready before the cold weather arrives.

OUR SPECIALTY is gas heating appliances; however, regardless of what kind of heat you have, please for your safety and peace of mind, have someone qualified check your heater before you use it.

We look forward to serving you; your safety is our priority.

Saturday, Oct. 3

Annual Meeting

It's time for our Annual Meeting. Our 63rd Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, October 3, 2009 at Live Oak Church of God, Live Oak, Florida at 10:00 a.m.

The Annual Meeting gives a brief review of the financial condition of the

cooperative. Following the business session, door prizes will be drawn and awarded to members present.

Make a point in marking your calendars and plan to attend your Annual Meeting on October 3, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.

Big Buck Rules: 2nd Annual Co-op Contest

Florida and Georgia hunters are gearing up for the beginning of the 2009-2010 deer-hunting season. Farmers Cooperative wants to add a little more excitement to your deer-hunting season with our Big Buck contest.

To be eligible for the contest hunters need to sign up at Farmers Cooperative in Live Oak or Madison, Florida no later than November 28, 2009. Any native Florida or Georgia whitetail buck legally killed in the 2009-2010 season, under Ethical fair chase conditions within 75 miles of either the Live Oak or Madison Farmers Cooperative store will be eligible for the Big Buck contest.

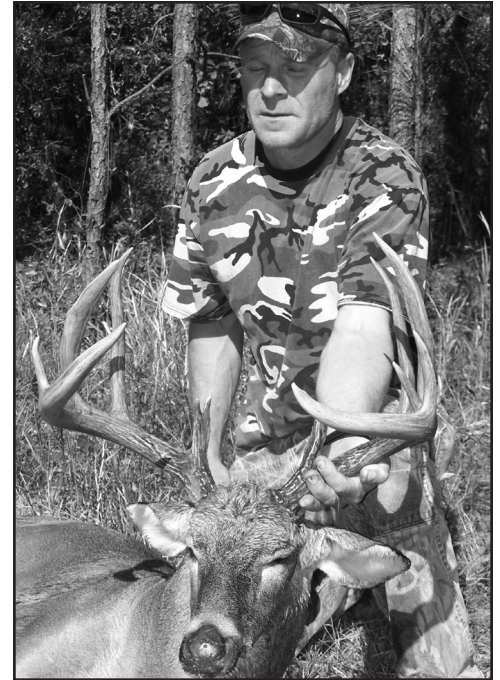
BUCKS THAT are killed on for-profit private deer farms, game preserves or any other high fenced or pay-to-hunt property are NOT eligible regardless of size or acreage.

Bucks will be scored by using the Boone & Crockett scoring system, typical

or non-typical. Bucks will be measured to determine a net score. Bucks with non-typical antlers will have to exceed typical scores by 25 inches to be considered bigger.

Under this rule, for example, a typical buck scoring 130 inches would be considered bigger than a non-typical buck scoring 154 inches. In the event of a tie the buck with the highest gross score would be the winner. Final scoring of antlers will be scored by an F.W.C. wildlife officer/biologist at a given specific time.

A \$500 FARMERS Coop gift certificate will be awarded to the highest scoring buck, \$200 gift certificate to the 2nd place and \$100 to the 3rd place buck that is entered in the contest. Division and distribution of the Prizes will be the sole discretion of Farmers Cooperative. Promotional rights of the winner belong to Farmers Cooperative Inc. Winners will be announced at the 2010 Spring Banquet of the National Wild Turkey Federation.



Billy Whittington was the \$500 Grand Prize winner in 2008-09.

For the Past Quarter

NEW CO-OP MEMBERS

LIVE OAK STORE

Larry Braden, Live Oak
Loretta Wagner, White Springs
Cindy Hett, Live Oak
Gail Chesnut, O'Brien
Allen Humble, Live Oak
Joe Turman, Lulu
Hilda Hancock, Live Oak
Shirley Belcon, McAlpin
James Glavey, Live Oak
Jerry R. Robinson, Live Oak
Scott Calhoun, Moore Haven
Yovanny Perez, Lee
Linda Sanderson, Live Oak
Michael Driver, O'Brien
Tom & Barbara Perry, Mayo
James Saffles, Live Oak
Kathy Pharr, Live Oak
Annette Griffin, Live Oak
Cathy Smith, Lake City
Connie Sabates, Delray Beach
David Burnham, Jennings
Kristie Harrison, Live Oak
Faye Parsons, Live Oak
Jimmy Knight, Jasper
Lesly Maldonado, Live Oak
Lucille S. Turner, McAlpin
Robert Hancock, Live Oak
Robert C Porter, McAlpin

Tabitha A Binney, Lake City
Bruce B Harris, Live Oak
Emma & James Menezes, Live Oak
Elder S O'steen, Brooker
Nicole E Echelberger, Wellborn
Edith Hancock, Live Oak
A+ Trailers & Fabr., Inc, Mayo
Shirley Reaves, Live Oak
Malcom G Skipper, Live Oak
Cynthia Bunnell, Eustis
W Sells Edwards, Micanopy
Senobio Perez, Live Oak
Robert Gerlach, Live Oak
Carlos I R. Torres, Lake City
Bryan Smithey, Lake City
Diane & Bruce Hill, Lake City
Nancy Duprey, Lake City
Thomas E Smith, Live Oak
Patterson B Wall, O'Brien
Phil Oxendine, Live Oak
Agri Pindo Palms, Lake City
Edwin Calder, Wellborn
Barry Dunlap, Live Oak
Janie Philpot, Live Oak
Megan B. Roberts, O'Brien
Keith Maloney, Live Oak
Jay K Davidson, McAlpin
Norm Kolar, Live Oak
Valentin V. Lay, Live Oak

Greg Thompson, Greenville
Deb Redner, Lee
Richard A Rice, O'Brien
Kevin Douglas, Ft. White
Tammie C. Williams, Live Oak
Sean Davis, Live Oak
Earl J. Sweeting, Live Oak
Rick Sweeting, Live Oak
Otis Ponds, Dowling Park
Susan Rodriguez, Live Oak
Elwyn Carver, Okeechobee
Gloria N. Salman, Live Oak
Teresa Taylor Cobb, Ft. White
Bobby V Lightfoot, Lee
Paul Jones, Lake City
John Graves, Port Charlotte
D Snider, Mayo
Patricia Williams, Live Oak
Kyle Sabourin, O'Brien
Llani Wood, McAlpin
Ted Salmons, Perry
Gift Majaura, Tampa
Marilyn Hillengas, Seminole
Silvio Nardiello, Plantation
Robert J. Jordan, Sr., O'Brien
Ken Knight, Bell
Yvette Lukemire, Day
Lawrence Plympton, Lake Worth
Robert G Nobles, Wellborn

MADISON STORE

Leon Bell, Lee
Mary Miller, Madison
Ruth Walker, Pinetta
Gregory Stapleton, Lake City
Lavonne Wynn, Greenville
Burton J. Sealey, Lee
Kevin L. Murphy, Jennings
Michael D. Scott, Madison
Jim Benolt, Greenville
Kaysona Jones, Greenville
W.E. Watson, Quitman, GA
Cole Robbins, Moultrie, GA
Tommy Frake, Madison
Katie & Brian French, Lee
Rebekah E. Edwards, Lee
Gary D. Horton, Greenville
Barbara Fitch, Lee
John & Deborah Bearry, Greenville
Timmy Dyke, Madison
Tom Shannon, Pinetta
Fowler Groves Limited Partnership, Winter Garden
Mary Lou Reid, Jennings
Jason J. Givens, Madison
Dannie Pettaway, Madison
Fred Sareyka, Madison
Adalberto Reyna, Jr., Madison
Christy Grass, Madison

Share Decisions, Reap Rewards

By Todd Lawrence

As a Farmers Cooperative member, one receives many benefits. However, many customers usually say one of the most enticing points of Farmers Cooperative is the fact that it is a cooperative. What does this mean? It means customers own Farmers Cooperative, share in making key business decisions, and reap the rewards of Farmers Cooperative's success. More than anything, it creates strong, trusting relationships between the Cooperative and its members because in the end, we are all working together for the good of our organization.

The Florida Council of Cooperatives is an organization made up of cooperatives, which provide services to those in rural America. Farm Supply cooperatives like Farmers Cooperative join cooperatives dealing with citrus production and marketing, milk production and marketing, financial services, electrical distribution, and many more to work together to better educate the cooperative's members on the meaning and



William Carte and Todd Lawrence, GM

value of cooperatives.

This year, the Florida Council of Cooperatives held its 30th Annual Education and Leadership Conference in Sarasota. Folks from all areas of the state attended the weekend conference and were involved in interactive discussions and panels to grow their cooperative knowledge. Agricultural industry leaders such as Robert Coker (U.S. Sugar), Jim Handley (Florida Cattlemen's Association), Mike Sparks (Florida Citrus Mutual), Ken Spearman (AgFirst Farm Credit Bank), and Joe Wright (Southeast Milk) spoke to the group on the importance of political involvement and its direct effect on the Ag industry.

The 2009 Cooperator of the Year award went to Don Rice, CEO of Farm Credit of South Florida, and the Cooperative of the Year was awarded to Farm Credit of Southwest Florida. William Carte of Live Oak was recognized as the 2009 Outstanding Participant of the Conference.

Local Suwannee County farmer William Carte and his wife Sarah attended as first year participants on behalf of Farmers Cooperative. "The conference provided an opportunity to see and learn about all the different cooperatives that operate in the state of Florida, from citrus and milk marketing cooperatives, to credit, electric and farm sup-

ply cooperatives. It gave both of us a better understanding about how cooperatives are formed, governed, operate and the benefits of being a member of a cooperative. I am honored to be chosen as the 2009 Outstanding Participant by the other participants and I am glad to have been able to represent Farmers Cooperative at this conference. I want to thank Farmers Cooperative for the opportunity for Sarah and I to attend this educational experience," Carte said.



William Carte of Live Oak (pictured here with his wife, Sarah) was recognized as the 2009 Outstanding Participant of the Conference.

FFA Support

Farmers Cooperative sponsored the Middle School Agriscience Fair Awards this Year at the 81st Annual State FFA Convention.

This year's convention theme, "A New Era with New Possibilities" symbolized all the ways students can open doors to new opportunities in agriculture, leadership and success. More than 3,000 FFA members, guests and supporters attended the 81st State Convention at the Caribe Royale Orlando. During this event, several thousand awards and scholarships were presented to FFA members.

Students were inspired and motivated through powerful workshops, impacting sessions and career development events. Approximately 1,500 students received awards, scholarships and recognitions funded through special projects of the Florida FFA Foundation.

Farmers Cooperative is always pleased to support Future Farmers of America.

Recipe

This Chicken Creole recipe is a favorite of Farmers Cooperative employee, Heather Kelley. After her grandmother died, Heather found the recipe, hand-written on a Winn-Dixie prescription bag. It's a fitting tribute to her grandmother, Gladys "Pet" Kelley.

Chicken Creole

4 med. boneless skinless chicken breasts cut into 1-inch strips
1 14 oz can diced tomatoes
1 cup chili sauce
1/2 cup chopped celery
1 1/2 cup chopped green pepper
1/4 cup chopped onion
2 cloves garlic minced
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon dried parsley
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1/4 teaspoon salt

Spray deep skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Preheat pan over high heat. Cook chicken in hot skillet stirring for 3-5 minutes or until no longer pink. Reduce heat, add all other ingredients. Bring to boiling reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Serve over hot cooked rice.

Farming News

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