Farm Smart Newsletter

What's Growing On
at the UC Desert Research and Extension Center

Your Support Matters
Support from individuals and organizations is essential for Farm Smart’s work at the University of California Desert Research and Extension Center. You help us continue our mission to promote a better understanding of agriculture, the source of our food, fiber, and energy, and its impact on our economy and daily lives, as well as protecting natural resources and cultivating healthy people and communities. With the donations received through Giving Tuesday and the continued financial support from Farm Smart Donors- Imperial Irrigation District, Imperial County Farm Bureau, and Farm Credit West- Farm Smart, UC CalFresh Healthy Living and the UC Youth, Families and Communities Program were able to produce the 2021 Farm to Preschool Festival in a Bag. This project also received financial support from First 5 Imperial and D.O.V.E.S.

Although we are sad to not be able to offer our in-person Farm to Preschool Festival this year, Farm Smart and UC Cooperative Extension of Imperial County came together as a resourceful, hardworking team to create and assemble the 2021 Farm to Preschool Festival in Bag. The Farm-to-
Preschool Festival was created in 2018 to engage young children and their families in activities that will help them learn about healthy eating and understand where food comes from. With Covid-19 restrictions still in place throughout Imperial Valley, we shifted the traditional in-person event to a Farm to Preschool Festival Kit. 300 kits were distributed to children ages 0-5 enrolled in RCOE Migrant Head Start programs in Calexico, El Centro, and Brawley. The Festival Kit included hands-on activities educating about healthy eating, physical activity, and learning where our food comes from. Each kit contained a variety of age-appropriate books about food, child-size garden tools, transplants for home gardening, arts & crafts, music and games all related to fruits and vegetables. Additional fun resources from Imperial Irrigation District and Farm Credit West were added.

We are confident that as Festival Bags were opened, preschoolers all over Imperial County were engaged in activities that used seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and feeling, all to celebrate a Farm to Preschool Festival experience.

In addition to Farm Smart funding, this effort was made possible through support from First 5 Imperial, D.O.V.E.S, El Centro Regional Medical Center, UC Desert Research and Extension Center staff, University of California Cooperative Extension - Imperial County staff, and our volunteer from El Centro FFA, Sebastian.

We will continue to keep you updated about how your support matters and the positive, long lasting impacts it has on our communities.
Visit our Farm To Preschool Website for more information.

Celebrating Women in Agriculture
Each year, Americans observe National Women's History Month in March to commemorate and celebrate the vital role of women in American history. Women scientists have been part of the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR) for over 100 years. At Desert REC, we are very proud of the women who conduct agriculture research and extension. In this issue of the Farm Smart newsletter, we celebrate Jaspreet Sidhu, who serves as the Vegetable Crops Advisor for UC Cooperative Extension in Kern County. Jaspreet conducts applied research and extension programs directed towards growers, pest control advisors, and other industries related to the 74,000 acres of vegetable crops production in Kern County. The overall goal of her program is to develop, evaluate and implement pest management practices in vegetable crops which can enhance the profitability and sustainability of vegetable production in Kern County and across California.

At the Desert REC, Dr. Phil Simon and I are leading a collaborative research project “Carrot breeding to develop and introduce improved cultivars for California producers”. The project has a major focus on selection of carrot germplasm with improved resistance towards different biotic and abiotic stresses while retaining superior horticultural qualities for California growers. The project aims to provide commercial carrot breeding companies with new and better carrot breeding lines with improved pest resistance, enhanced nutritional value, color, flavor, and appearance.

Imperial County
Youth Ag Summit

Farm Smart partnered with the Imperial Valley Regional Occupation Program (IVROP) to offer the 4th annual Youth Ag Summit this winter. This summit is typically offered in person to local high school students through field tours and motivational talks from keynote speakers, and works to provide students a chance to get out of the classroom and get hands-on experience in the industry, as well as network with industry members. With all classrooms still learning virtually, Farm Smart worked to bring the agriculture industry to the students through virtual farm tours and an industry panel Q&A. These virtual tours and Industry Panel Q&A helped students make a personal connection to agriculture from the comfort of their home. And of course, since it was live, students had the opportunity to ask questions and share comments about what they were learning.

View the full Youth Ag Summit Playlist on YouTube

Youth Ag Summit Sessions

Industry Panel Q&A:
Panelists:
- Daren Van Dyke: Five Crowns Marketing: Sales Manager; Brawley, CA
- Sarah Abatti: Hi-Pro Feed: Dealer and Ranch Nutrition Support; Friona, TX
- Daniel Hawk: Horizon Farms LLC and Hawk Brothers Farms LLC: Grower; Holtville, CA
Moderator:
Brea Mohamed, Imperial County Farm Bureau, Executive Director.

Industry Tour: Rubin Seeds: Rubin Seed was started in 2006 as a full-service seed company
in Brawley, CA that services customers locally and throughout the United States. They also export to markets in Australia, Europe, Japan, China and the Middle East. They specialize in cleaning, sales, and custom seed production and handle a multitude of seed products, including alfalfa, bermudagrass, Sudan grass, wheat and various kinds of grass and vegetable seed.

**Industry Tour: Doc’s Organics:** Doc’s Organics is a family business with a rich heritage in agriculture. The Dockstaders have been farming since 1995. They are proud to introduce its fully certified Organic Only Packing Facility using the most modern methods of washing, sorting, sizing and packing to ensure consistent quality and organic integrity of the product. Uncle Pat Dockstader has been farming in the Imperial Valley since 1995. Since then, nephew Dusty Dockstader and his wife, Gina Dockstader have teamed up to nourish and grow quality organic fruit. Gina’s family has been farming in the Imperial Valley for four generations. Doc’s Organics is proud to grow, pack and transport all organic citrus.
The Familia Garden-to-Go Kits were created in the Fall 2020 as way to bring a little bit of the Farm Smart garden directly to students. The kit includes everything students need to grow a plant at home: container, soil, seeds, instructions and activities for grades K-3. In collaboration with the UC CalFresh Healthy Living team, we were able to create, assemble and deliver 500 kits in the Fall. Thanks to the support of Americorps, 325 more kits were assembled and distributed in the Winter 2021.
Check out Farm Smart in the most recent issue of Valley Agribusiness.

View the full article at http://www.valleyagribiz.com/ (click on View 2021 Edition)

Recipe of the Month

Roasted Rainbow Carrots with Lemon-Thyme Butter

Beautiful rainbow carrots in a tangy butter sauce is a vibrant spring side-dish that's as gorgeous as it is delicious. Roasting the carrots brings out their natural sweetness and adds a depth of flavor.

Ingredients:
Did You Know?

- During the Middle Ages, French women used carrot leaves to decorate hair and hats.
- Carrots contain beta-carotene, which helps build healthy hair and nails and keeps eyes healthy.
- The first carrots were white, purple, and yellow. In the 1600s, the Dutch developed the orange carrot we eat today.
- In the Middle Ages, carrot juice was used to make butter a more appealing color.

Directions

- 2 lb rainbow carrots (check the organic section)
- 3 tbsp butter
- Juice of 1 lemon
- ½ tsp thyme
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
- Scrub carrots with a wet dishcloth. Do not peel.
- Place clean carrots on a lightly greased roasting pan or baking sheet with edges.
- Melt butter in microwave in a microwave safe dish.
- Add lemon, thyme, salt and pepper to butter.
- Pour over carrots.
- Roast in oven for 20 minutes.

Make sure to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for fun AGtivities, recipes, and updates from the farm. As always, you can contact us at (760)356-3067 or scwills@ucanr.edu with any questions you may have.
Click below to make a gift and designate Farm Smart as the recipient to help us continue teaching learners of all ages where their food comes from.

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