THE SENTINEL
NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA STATE AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE TEAM

Rescuers in St. Johns County aid a fallen horse near St. Augustine, Florida on February 18, 2016.

St. Johns County Fire Rescue Successfully Rescues Fallen Horse

On February 18th, St. Johns County Fire Rescue firefighters trained in large animal rescue techniques successfully freed a horse that had become stuck in a muddy ditch on U.S. 1 North in St. Augustine, Florida.

The horse, who was reportedly part of a long distance, multi-state ride, was trying for a drink of water when it slid into the ditch next to Florida East Coast Railway tracks.

Crews trained in urban search and rescue used a large sled, harness, and other equipment specifically designed for large animals to haul the horse out of the mud.

The team utilized a mechanical advantage system to extricate the horse safely from the ditch.

Just last year, SJCFR received a grant to train and equip crews for incidents like the one they encountered today. The animal was taken to a local emergency vet following the incident for additional care and evaluation.

According to officials, emergency veterinarians were on scene and evaluated the animal during all phases of the operation.

Additionally they transported the animal for further treatment and evaluation in coordination with the owner after the rescue was completed.

(See *Horse Rescue*, page 2)

Special Features of this Issue:

"As a result of the hard work and close coordination of federal, state, and local officials and industry partners, we were able to contain this [Oriental Fruit Fly] outbreak to a relatively small 99-square mile area and eliminate it in fewer than 6 months,"

Osama El-Lissy,
Deputy Administrator for
USDA's Animal and Plant
Health Inspection Service

Horse Rescue (continued)

Large animal technical rescue is an issue Florida has a great deal of experience in handling. According to the University of Florida's College of Veterinary Medicine, there are 10 rescue teams strategically located throughout the state.

The UF College of Veterinary Medicine VETS team is capable of assisting with high and low angle rescue from holes, gorges, mud, water, etc., and it is equipped with ropes, slings, rigging equipment, rescue glides (large animal stretcher), etc. Its team members are trained in a variety of animal technical rescue courses, human technical rescue, confined space and swift-water rescue.

For more information about the St. John's rescue, please visit their story on Facebook at:
https://www.facebook.com/sjcfirerescue

For additional information about UF VETS, please visit:
http://www.vetmed.ufl.edu/about-the-college/administration/directors-office/about-vets/large-animal-emergencies/

On February 18th, St. Johns County Fire Rescue firefighters trained in large animal rescue techniques successfully freed a horse that had become stuck in a muddy ditch in St. Augustine.

FDA Seeks $5.1 Billion Total for FY 2017, Including Funds to Implement Food Safety Law, Improve Medical Product Safety and Quality

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is requesting a total budget of $5.1 billion to protect and promote the public health as part of the President's fiscal year (FY) 2017 budget – an eight percent increase over the enacted budget for FY 2016. The overall request includes a net increase of $14.6 million in budget authority and $268.7 million in user fees for initiatives tied to several key areas, including the implementation of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FMSA) and efforts to improve medical product safety and quality. The agency is also seeking $75 million in new mandatory funding to support the National Cancer Moonshot initiative being led by the Vice President.

"The FDA continues to work to obtain the most public health value for the federal dollar as we address expanded regulatory responsibilities and scientific challenges," said FDA Acting Commissioner Stephen Ostroff, M.D. "The agency remains fully committed to meeting the needs and high expectations of the American people regarding the products we regulate, as well as advancing the prevention, screening, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer."

For more information, please visit
http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm485144.htm?source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

FDA Investigates Multistate Outbreak of Salmonella Muenchen Linked to Alfalfa Sprouts Produced by Sweetwater Farms

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local officials are investigating a multi-state outbreak of Salmonella Muenchen infections.

What is the Problem and What is Being Done About It?
The FDA, CDC, state and local officials are investigating a multi-state outbreak of *Salmonella* Muenchen illnesses linked to alfalfa sprouts produced by Sweetwater Farms LLC, Inman, Kansas.

The CDC reports that 13 people were infected with the outbreak strains of *Salmonella* Muenchen in four states: Kansas (5), Missouri (3), Oklahoma (3), and Pennsylvania (2). Five people have been hospitalized. Reported illness onset dates range from December 1, 2015 through January 21, 2016.

Collaborative investigation efforts of the FDA, CDC, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Department of Agriculture, and Oklahoma Department of Health indicate that sprouts produced by Sweetwater Farms LLC are the likely source of this outbreak. Irrigation water and alfalfa sprout samples collected by the FDA from Sweetwater Farms LLC tested positive for *Salmonella*. Testing to identify the specific strain of *Salmonella* is ongoing.

On February 19, 2016, after discussions with the FDA and other federal, state, and local agencies, Sweetwater Farms LLC voluntarily recalled alfalfa sprouts from lot 042016. On February 26, 2016, Sweetwater Farms informed the FDA that it would recall all of its sprout products from the market. The FDA is working with the company and Kansas officials to facilitate this action. This investigation is ongoing. The FDA will continue to provide updates on the investigation as they become available.

What are the Symptoms of *Salmonella*?
Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps. The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most people recover without treatment.

How Soon do Symptoms Appear After Exposure?
Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12 to 72 hours after infection.

What are the Complications of *Salmonella* Infections?
In some people, the diarrhea may be so severe that they need to be hospitalized. In these patients, the *Salmonella* infection may spread from the intestines to the blood stream, and then to other body sites and can cause death unless the person is treated promptly with antibiotics.

Who is at Risk?
Children are the most likely to get salmonellosis. The rate of diagnosed infections in children less than five years old is higher than the rate in all other people. Children younger than five, the elderly, and those people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have severe infections. It is estimated that approximately 400 persons in the United States die each year with acute salmonellosis. Children, the elderly, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems should avoid eating raw sprouts of any kind.

(See *FDA Investigation*, page 6)

Enrollment Open: Multiple Levels for Small Animal Emergency Sheltering

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition has upcoming opportunities for their *Awareness Level and Operations Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering.*

When disaster strikes, the team of trained volunteer responders will be there to shelter and protect Florida's companion animals.

This Awareness Level class gives students the knowledge necessary to work in an emergency animal shelter. This class provides expertise and practical experience required to become a professional disaster animal responder. The Awareness Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering class is certified by the Florida Department of Emergency Management and is required to respond in Florida to help companion animals during a disaster.

The Operations Level course will give you many new job options, in addition to leadership skills and team lead opportunities. This course expands upon information covered in FL-003-RESP and ICS-100 courses. These earlier courses are prerequisites for FL-607-RESP.

Course topics include: Personal Preparedness, Overview of the Incident Command System, Deployment Preparedness, Assisting in Shelter Set Up, Daily Care and Feeding, Proper Cage Cleaning and Disinfection, Animal Behavior, Stress Management, Zoonotic Diseases, and Personal Safety.

For more information about the courses, and to register, please visit: http://flsarc.org/Training.html

March 5-6 Course – Savannah, GA (Operations Level)

When: Saturday March 5, 2016 -to- Sunday March 6, 2016
Where: Please contact andyb@flsarc.org for more details

April 16 Course – Sarasota, FL (Awareness Level)

When: Saturday April 16, 2016 from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM EDT
Where: Cat Depot Education Resource Center, 2542 17th Street, Sarasota, FL 34234

April 23-24 Course – Panama City, FL (Operations Level)

When: Saturday April 23, 2016 at 8:00 AM CDT -to- Sunday April 24, 2016 at 6:00 PM CDT
Where: Bay County Emergency Operations Center, 700 Highway 2300, Panama City, FL 32409

May 14-15 Course – Sarasota, FL (Operations Level)

When: Saturday May 14, 2016 at 8:00 AM EDT -to- Sunday May 15, 2016 at 6:00 PM EDT
Where: Cat Depot Education Resource Center, 2542 17th Street, Sarasota, FL 34234

Stay up-to-date of all Florida State Agricultural Response Team news and information at www.FLSART.org!

FDACS Announces Successful Oriental Fruit Fly Eradication in Miami-Dade County

On February 12th, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam announced that the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have successfully eradicated the Oriental Fruit Fly in Miami-Dade County.

The Oriental Fruit Fly is one of the most devastating threats to agriculture, as it attacks more than 430 different commodities, and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services first found it in Miami-Dade County in August 2015.

"I thank all of our partners, including Miami-Dade County's community members, who worked diligently to protect not only Miami-Dade County's $1.6 billion agriculture industry, but also Florida's entire $120 billion agriculture industry from the Oriental Fruit Fly. I also thank the U.S. Department of Agriculture for working with us on our collaborative eradication efforts," stated Commissioner Putnam. "Unfortunately, battling invasive pests has become all too common in Florida with our numerous ports and robust trade industry, and we must address the root cause."

"As a result of the hard work and close coordination of federal, state, and local officials and industry partners, we were able to contain this outbreak to a relatively small 99-square mile area and eliminate it in fewer than 6 months," said Osama El-Lissy, Deputy Administrator for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "The key to success is our ability to rapidly detect and respond to new outbreaks before they can spread."

With the conclusion of the eradication efforts, which occurs at 12 a.m. on Feb. 13, the Miami-Dade County agriculture industry that had been affected by the quarantine can now move products freely, and all compliance agreements pursuant to the Oriental Fruit Fly eradication program are now null and void.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture will continue to monitor the more 56,000 traps throughout Florida to quickly identify any future economically damaging fruit flies that may enter the state.

FDA Investigation (continued)

What Do Restaurants and Retailers Need To Do? Restaurants and retailers should not sell or utilize any sprouts from Sweetwater Farms, LLC. Restaurants and retailers should dispose of any alfalfa sprouts from Sweetwater Farms LLC. Restaurants and retailers should also be aware that produce may be a source of pathogens and should control the potential for cross-contamination of food processing equipment and the food processing environment. They should follow the steps below:

- Wash and sanitize display cases and refrigerators where potentially contaminated products were stored.
- Wash and sanitize cutting boards, surfaces, and utensils used to prepare, serve, or store potentially contaminated products.
- Wash hands with hot water and soap following the cleaning and sanitation process.
- Retailers, restaurants, and other food service operators who have processed and packaged any potentially contaminated products need to be concerned about cross contamination of cutting surfaces and utensils through contact with the potentially contaminated products.
- Regular frequent cleaning and sanitizing of food contact surfaces and utensils used in food preparation may help to minimize the likelihood of cross-contamination

For more information, please visit http://www.fda.gov/Food/RecallsOutbreaksEmergencies/Outbreaks/ucm487329.htm

What Do Consumers Need To Do?
People who think they might have become ill from eating possibly contaminated alfalfa sprouts should talk to their health care providers. Like any fresh produce that is consumed raw or lightly cooked, sprouts that are served on salads, wraps, sandwiches, and other foods may contain bacteria that can cause foodborne illness. Unlike other fresh produce, the warm and humid conditions used for sprouting are also ideal for the growth of bacteria, including *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, and *E. coli*. Any bacteria present can multiply dramatically during the sprouting process. (Organic or locally-grown sprouts are not necessarily less risky, and neither are sprouts grown at home.) Washing sprouts may reduce risk, but will not eliminate it. Consumers should always practice safe food handling and preparation measures. Wash hands, utensils, and surfaces with hot, soapy water before and after handling food.

For refrigerators and other food preparation surfaces and food cutting utensils that may have come in contact with the potentially contaminated sprouts, it is very important that the consumers thoroughly clean these areas and items.

Consumers should follow these simple steps:

- Wash the inside walls and shelves of the refrigerator, cutting boards and countertops; then sanitize them with a solution of one tablespoon of chlorine bleach to one gallon of hot water; dry with a clean cloth or paper towel that has not been previously used.
- Wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food.
- Wipe up spills in the refrigerator immediately and clean the refrigerator regularly.
- Always wash hands with warm water and soap following the cleaning and sanitization process.
- Children, the elderly, pregnant women, and persons with weakened immune systems should avoid eating raw sprouts of any kind.
- Cooking sprouts thoroughly will kill any bacteria present and reduce the risk of illness.
- Persons who think they might have become ill from eating potentially contaminated sprouts should consult their health care provider.
- Consumers can request that raw sprouts not be added to food. If you purchase a sandwich or salad at a restaurant or delicatessen, and want to avoid sprouts, check to make sure that raw sprouts have not been added.

Training: Achieving Data Quality and Integrity in Maximum Containment Laboratories

The FDA and the University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston National Laboratory (UTMB - GNL) collaborate to provide an annual week-long training course on how to meet Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) requirements in high and maximum biocontainment security level (BSL)-4 laboratory facilities.

Invitees include participants from government, industry, and academia. The course will be held **April 25-29, 2016** at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

There are no registration fees for this course, however, seats are limited and course attendees are invited based upon diversity of roles, responsibilities, and organization.

For more information, and to register, please visit http://www.utmb.edu/orncs/FDA_Partnership/registration.asp?source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

An instructor assists a participant into a BSL-4 protective suit before conducting simulated BSL-4 lab exercises during the 2015 data quality course.

Please login and update your membership information online at:
http://flsart.org

About The SART Sentinel

The **SART Sentinel** is an e-mail newsletter prepared monthly by the members of the **Florida State Agricultural Response Team**. Past issues of the Sentinel are archived on the Florida SART Web Site, www.flsart.org.

If you have a story or photo that you would like to have considered for publication in the **SART Sentinel**, please contact the editors.

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