

## Workers sharpen skills critical in grove and landscape operations.

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**M**ore than 550 grove and landscape workers attended the 7th annual Ag Worker Training event held in January at the St. Lucie County Fairgrounds. Each of the program break-out sessions were offered in English and Spanish, covering 12 safety and best management practices (BMPs) topics.

Training program organizers and presenters' goals were to inform workers about safety procedures to protect lives and the environment, lower the number of industry submitted insurance claims, and increase employers' bottom lines.

A full day of presentations and hands-on audience demonstrations included: fertilizer and pesticide BMPs; mixing and loading pesticides; tractor and equipment safety; use and care of personal protection equipment; worker protection standards;




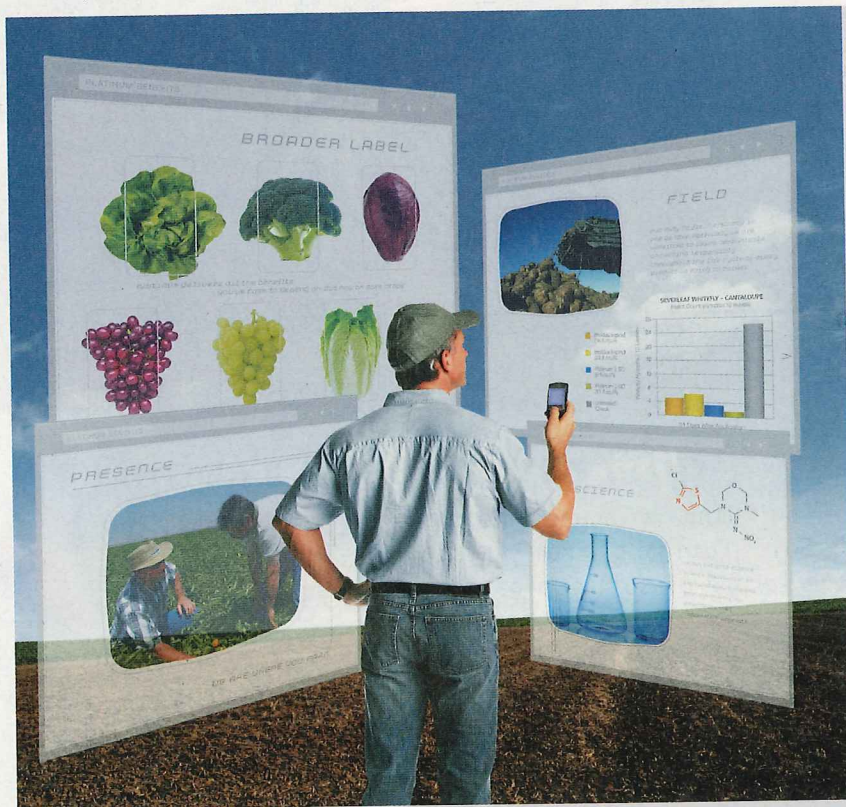
Read more details about this event at [FloridaGrower.net](http://FloridaGrower.net).

fire-safety techniques; first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); hazardous materials spill control and cleanup; integrated pest management; protection from venomous snakes; spiders and Africanized honey bees; citrus greening and canker identification; and personal hygiene and food safety.

### Let The Games Begin

One of the highlights of the event is a competition including a tractor rodeo, landscaper mower rodeo, and citrus canker and greening identification. Competitors represented grower organizations from Indian River, St. Lucie, Highlands, Okeechobee, and Martin counties.

José Maldonado Jr., equipment operator for Quality Caretaking, won the tractor rodeo with the fastest time through the obstacle course. Maria Liefkort, a worker with IMG Citrus, placed first in the canker and greening identification competition. Kristina Wright, St. Lucie County Parks and Recreation, won the landscape mower rodeo competition. 



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