

# Florida citrus represented on the national mall

By Jamie Burrow and Jackie Burns

In 1862, Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Act into law. This act granted federal land to each state, establishing what is known as the “land-grant university system,” making higher education more accessible in our country, and promoting agriculture and the mechanical arts. This landmark legislation, together with the Hatch Act (1867) and Smith-Lever Act (1914), established the core mission of land-grant universities: education, research and Extension. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the Morrill Act and is a year-



long celebration for the University of Florida, one of the two Florida land-grant colleges. Celebration activities are taking place throughout Florida and the United States.

The 46th Annual Smithsonian Folk Life Festival held on the national mall in Washington, D.C. this summer showcased several land-grant institutions, including the University of Florida, to commemorate the anniversary. The overall theme for UF’s exhibit was sustainability, and water

conservation and protection in program areas such as recreational water use, clam farming, invasive plants and animals, and citrus.

The citrus display highlighted the development of irrigation methods over the last 50 years from flood to drip irrigation. The water efficiency with these methods has improved from 50 percent to 95 percent; this means that an 8-ounce glass of orange juice now takes about half the volume of water to produce than it did 50 years ago. During times of water shortages and increased concern about water levels, these statistics of the citrus industry’s efforts to improve water efficiency were impressive to the general public.

Visitors could also take the “Citrus Challenge” and test their knowledge about Florida citrus. Although no one received a perfect score, it was an opportunity for Extension personnel to answer common citrus questions, settle myths people had about Florida citrus, and to highlight the ingenuity of the Florida citrus industry.

From Sept. 27 to Jan. 2, you may visit the entire water display at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville. Take a moment to visit the display and celebrate the 150th anniversary of land-grant institutions with the University of Florida.

Visit [landgrant.ufl.edu](http://landgrant.ufl.edu) for more information about Florida’s land-grant university.

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