

Coming soon: Certificate of Farm Labor Management classes

By Fritz Roka and Carlene Thissen

The University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) Farm Labor Supervisor training program has been in place since 2011. Since that time, over 1,400 people have attended at least one of the classes. Fifty percent of the attendees were crew leaders or contractors, just under one quarter were farm office staff (human resources and payroll), and the rest were farm supervisors or owners. The breakdown of attendees by crop was more than half fruit trees (mostly citrus), approximately 30 percent vegetables and the remainder, berries and nurseries.

In 2014, UF/IFAS introduced the Certificate of Farm Labor Management (CFLM). To earn the CFLM, attendees have to take eight classes and pass a test in each class. Three classes are required: Wage & Hour, Human Resource Compliance and one class in worker safety. Five additional classes can be

selected from other offerings. All classes are taught concurrently in English and Spanish. It is still possible to attend only one or a few classes at a time.

“Joint employment” is one of the topics in the Wage & Hour class. In many circumstances, growers and farm labor contractors are jointly responsible for laws and regulations affecting farm workers. The CFLM will, at a minimum, ensure that contractors and their crew leaders have been exposed to correct procedures and learned enough to pass a test at the end of each class. This does not guarantee that mistakes won’t be made, but if mistakes have been made out of ignorance, the training program should help both the grower and contractor avoid future violations.

Paul Meador, president of Everglades Harvesting & Hauling, has employees who earned the CFLM and several others who will complete the certificate this fall. “Education is an important part

of the responsibilities and success of anyone in labor management,” he says. “I think these classes do a great job of addressing the things my supervisors need to know.”

The following is a summary of the scheduled classes being offered during the fall of 2015 at four locations: Belle Glade, Sebring, Lake Alfred and Immokalee.

2015 CFLM CLASSES

Wage & Hour: This class covers basics of the Department of Labor (DOL)-enforced Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act and Fair Labor Standards Act regulations related to paying workers fairly. It includes information workers are required to know before and during their employment, importance of correctly recording compensable hours and minimum wage, when to start and stop the clock each day, in-class

Schedule for Certificate of Farm Labor Management classes

Classes	Location			
	Belle Glade	Lake Alfred	Sebring	Immokalee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules for Bus/Van Drivers Safe Driving 	Tuesday 11/3/15	Wednesday 10/14/15	Thursday 10/22/15	Tuesday 11/10/15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resource Compliance Management Communications 	Tuesday 10/20/15	Wednesday 10/7/15	Thursday 10/8/15	Tuesday 11/17/15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid CPR/AED 	Tuesday 10/13/15	Wednesday 10/21/15	Thursday 10/29/15	Tuesday 11/3/15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wage & Hour Farm Labor Contractor Basics 	Tuesday 10/27/15	Wednesday 10/28/15	Thursday 10/15/15	Tuesday 11/24/15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture Equipment Safety Pesticide Safety 	Thursday 11/5/15	Tuesday 11/24/15	Thursday 11/12/15	Thursday 11/19/15



Florida citrus industry members who have earned the Certificate of Farm Labor Management include Audelia Bustamonte and Susan Gonzalez of Everglades Harvesting & Hauling (right) and April Russo of Southern Gardens Citrus (left).

exercises for calculating pay, and the concept of joint employment. Length: 2 hours (required for CFLM).

Farm Labor Contractor Basics: Details of legal registrations required by the DOL and the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) for farm labor contractors are discussed. Each portion of the process of becoming registered is covered, starting with general eligibility requirements and testing, then leading into authorizations (driving, transporting and housing) and everything that is needed to support each authorization. The class covers timing, supporting documents and helpful hints for the registration process. The latter part of the class reviews how to survive an inspection from all the various agencies

that oversee the activities of farm labor contractors. Length: 2 hours.

Human Resource Compliance: Topics covered include Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regulations regarding discrimination, harassment, protected classes, reasonable accommodation, retaliation and mediation. A special focus is placed on sexual harassment. This class is based mostly on real-life case studies that are analyzed in class. Each year, four different case studies are used. A mediation service that can help avoid expensive court cases is discussed. The class also includes a brief overview of child labor laws and signs of human trafficking. Length: 2 hours (required for CFLM).

Management Communications, Part 1: This is the first of a three-part course on management communication skills for supervisors of farm workers. Part 1 includes the effect of non-verbal communication; importance of body language, facial expressions and tone; cultural awareness and stereotyping that affects communication; a management style test; and management skills, including the difference between effective encouragement and praise and between threats and consequences. The class ends with a discussion of how supervisors perceive respect compared with the way workers perceive it. Length: 2 hours.

Rules for Bus/Van Drivers: This class is designed for drivers, mechanics and office staff and includes Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations for vehicle inspections and driver preparedness. Wage and Hour Division/DOL and DBPR regulations are also covered, and a discussion of “When is a carpool not a carpool?” is included. In vehicle preparedness, details are reviewed of what needs to be inspected on farm labor vehicles, what paperwork is required and who is responsible for related tasks. Driver preparedness includes the DOT medical examination, alcohol and drug testing from the viewpoint of the drivers, and how drivers track hours of service. Tracey McQuilken, retired sergeant investigator with the Florida DOT/Florida Highway Patrol will share real-life headlines as examples of what can happen if these regulations are *not* followed, which should make everyone a believer. Length: 2 hours.

Safe Driving: This class begins with an overview of the details and importance of vehicle and driver preparation. The rest of the class focuses on defensive driving principles (space, anticipation, adjustments and distractions) and concludes with information on major distractions of drug and alcohol use, cell phones and texting. Length: 2 hours.

Agriculture Equipment Safety: This class covers regulatory and best-practice protections related to most types of agricultural equipment used in fields and groves, including work safety practices that prevent injuries and fatalities. Length: 2 hours.

Pesticide Safety: The pesticide safety class presents an overview of best practices on how to comply with the worker protection standards (WPS). This class also includes pesticide handler training, which earns attendees a WPS Pesticide Handler training verification card or certificate. Under current regulations, a person trained as a pesticide handler is authorized

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to conduct the WPS training for agricultural workers. Length: 2 hours.

CPR/AED (cardiopulmonary resuscitation/automated external defibrillator): Often, the key to saving someone's life is the action and reaction of the people close by when the situation first occurs. This class will enable you to perform CPR and use a defibrillator to resuscitate someone with cardiac arrest. In addition, you will learn how to perform the Heimlich maneuver to save someone who is choking. The class includes certification by the American Heart Association and is taught by Southwest Florida Safety Consultants, Inc. Length: 3.5 hours.

First Aid: This comprehensive American Safety & Health Institute class includes legal considerations and personal safety of administering first aid; assessing the patient; the difference between soft tissue, muscle, bone and facial injuries; burns; sudden illnesses; poisonings; bites and stings; and environmental emergencies related to heat and cold. It is taught by Southwest Florida Safety Consultants, Inc. Length: 3.5 hours.

REGISTRATION AND MORE INFORMATION

If there is sufficient interest (at least 10 people), individual classes or combinations of classes can be arranged at times and locations convenient for the participants. A registration fee for each class will be charged. Training at grower locations that incorporates grower-specific policies and procedures can be provided.

For more information, contact Carlene Thissen (239-658-3449, carlene@ufl.edu) or Primo Garza (239-658-3463, pgarza08@ufl.edu). Visit www.imok.ufl.edu/programs/economics/fls.php to register for classes. 🍊

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