

## Farmer Spotlight: Mike Tice of Columbia County



*Mike Tice working on his farm.*

MIKE TICE and his family grow a variety of crops on their farm in Columbia County. Mike also is a full-time deputy with the Columbia County Sheriff's office, so he has his hands full keeping the candle burning at both ends. Mike still finds time to support his county Farm Bureau with an annual trip to Washington, D.C. to promote agriculture and provide outreach to the general public who want to increase their knowledge of agriculture and it's doing to protect the environment and natural resources of Florida.

Mike has been participating in the Partnership's programs since 2004—but he and his family were implementing best management practices (BMPs) long before that. His daughter Jesse not only assists him in the day to day farm operations but

also maintains computerized farm records to track fertilizer and irrigation water applications. Historically the farm grew a lot of tobacco but has transitioned into other commodities. Beef cattle, hay and other forages, grain corn and peanuts are now produced on the family farm, which consists of about 500 acres located over the top of the Ichetucknee Trace, which provides groundwater for the Ichetucknee River and its associated springs. Implementation of BMPs in this area is important to protect the pristine nature of the "Jewel of Florida Springs."

Over the last couple of years, Mike has been working with the City of Lake City and Suwannee River Water Management District with a water reuse project to help *continued on page 3*

## SRWMD Addresses Water Supply through the Year 2030

THE SUWANNEE RIVER Water Management District (SRWMD) is currently evaluating future water needs for the next 20 years. Development of the district's first regional water supply plan is well underway and a district-wide water supply assessment is nearing completion.

The assessment evaluates projected water uses over a 20-year period and determines whether groundwater sources are sufficient to meet demands without causing harm to water resources and natural systems. The district will subsequently develop regional water supply plans for areas where sources are unable to meet demands.

The SRWMD and the St. Johns River Water Management District are coordinating on the development of their individual water supply plans to make sure each plan reflects the regional nature of groundwater withdrawals.

A regional water supply plan for the

**The assessment evaluates projected water uses over a 20-year period and determines whether groundwater sources are sufficient to meet demands without causing harm to water resources and natural systems.**

Upper Santa Fe River Basin (USFRB) is under development and scheduled for completion in 2011. The USFRB plan will affect portions of Baker, Columbia, Bradford, Union and Alachua counties.

Conservation will play an important role in meeting future water needs. The SRWMD will work with water users to assure conservation is implemented to extend our existing groundwater supplies. The district has already established limits on lawn and landscape irrigation for homeowners and businesses and is working with all permitted users to develop water conservation plans as a condition of their permits.

*continued on page 3*

### What's Inside

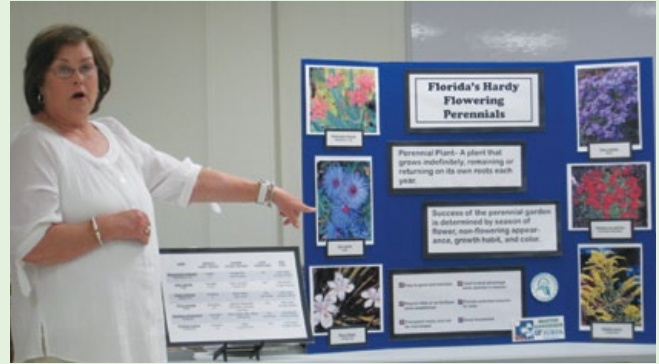
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# Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Practices in the Suwannee River Basin

THE SUWANNEE RIVER Partnership has made a commitment to engage residents in Best Management Practices for their yards and business landscapes in the Suwannee River Basin. Funding has been provided to UF/IFAS in Suwannee County to implement educational activities concerning water conservation and the appropriate use of fertilizer. Early outreach efforts in 2008 were focused in Suwannee and Columbia counties. The following year Taylor, Gilchrist, Levy and Dixie County extension staff held Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ programs. In 2010, the program expanded to Lafayette and Madison counties.

UF/IFAS Master Gardener volunteers are trained in the nine principles of Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ so they can share the information with their family, friends and community members. The nine principles include: right plant-right place, water efficiently, fertilize appropriately,

mulch, recycle, proper pest management, provide wildlife, stormwater runoff reduction and waterfront protection. Outreach activities include teaching presentations/demonstrations; writing newsletter articles; serving on landscape committees; staffing local fairs, festivals or events; creating displays and even building parade floats that depict Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ practices. Along the way, UF/IFAS Master Gardener volunteers develop partnerships with other agencies, civic and environmental groups, schools and businesses. Several thousand hours of volunteer time is devoted to teaching good landscape stewardship practices. Master Gardener volunteers are



Master Gardener presents info for hardy flowering perennials for North Florida.

a valuable asset to extending the Suwannee River Partnership's mission to provide research-based solutions that protect and conserve the water resources within the Suwannee River Water Management District by emphasizing the implementation of voluntary or incentive-based programs.



Composting display developed by Master Gardener volunteers.



Float built by Master Gardener volunteers for 4th of July parade.

Float for Blueberry festival in Wellborn, FL.



## Farmer Spotlight *continued from page 1*

reduce pumping of groundwater in the Ichetucknee Basin. The city was in need of a location to discharge wastewater from their treatment plant and, rather than pump it onto a spray field, Mike offered to utilize the water to offset his irrigation requirements for the crops that he produces. Mike hopes by this fall that the system will be operational and he will begin receiving the reclaimed water. With water resources in the Upper Santa Fe Basin being stretched, conservation of groundwater is critical and this operation should help.

Mike also feels that it is important for



*Mike Tice explains Best Management Practices used on his farm.*

farmers to share what they are doing to implement BMPs, so he hosted a field trip in May 2010 for the Ichetucknee Springs Working Group to tour his farm and see first-hand what farmers are doing to protect natural resources. Mike displayed his nurse tank and fertilizer injection system while Jesse showed the group their chemical sprayer and fertilizer applicator equipped with a GPS system. Using newer technology, fertilizer, herbicides, and insecticides can be applied more efficiently and only in those areas that need the treatments.

The Partnership appreciates the work that Mike and his family are doing and we hope that the use of BMPs enable him to sustain the family farm for years to come.

## SRWMD Addresses Water Supply *continued from page 1*

“Many farmers in our district are already taking steps toward conservation, which means they will have a head start when it comes time to implement the water supply plan,” said Carlos Herd, the SRWMD’s water supply project manager.

A draft of the 2010 district-wide water supply assessment is scheduled

for completion this year. The public will have opportunity to comment on the assessment before it is adopted by the district’s governing board.

For more information contact Carlos Herd at 386.362.1001.

## Dates to Remember

- Oct. 22, 2010 Forest Stewardship Workshop and In-service Training: Pine Straw Production**  
Live Oak, FL. To register, contact Karen Hancock at (386) 362-1725 ext. 101 or [khancock@ufl.edu](mailto:khancock@ufl.edu).
- Oct. 22, 2010 Florida-Georgia Game Management Update Series: Vegetation Management for Upland Wildlife**  
Baker County, FL. For more information, contact Tim Wilson at the Bradford County Extension Office at (904) 966-6224.
- Oct. 26, 2010 Small Farms Outreach Series: Session 4, Televised at your local County Extension Office. Session 4 Topic: The Art of Selling**  
For more information, contact your local Extension Agent, or contact Les Harrison at (850) 606-5202 or [harrisong@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:harrisong@leoncountyfl.gov)
- Oct. 2010 - Aug. 2011 Orchard Management Series**  
Live Oak, FL. For more information, contact Lydia Von Borstel at (386) 362-1725 or [lvonborstel@ufl.edu](mailto:lvonborstel@ufl.edu)
- Nov. 4-6, 2010 The 18th National Small Farm Trade Show & Conference™**  
Columbia, Missouri. Boone County Fairgrounds. For more information, call (800) 633-2535.
- Nov. 12, 2010 Advanced Topics in Hydroponics**  
Live Oak, FL. For more information, contact Lydia Von Borstel at (386) 362-1725 or [lvonborstel@ufl.edu](mailto:lvonborstel@ufl.edu)
- Nov. 16-18, 2010 25th Annual Tomato Disease Workshop**  
Balm, FL. For more information about the meeting, call for speakers, invitation to sponsor, lodging, travel, and to register online, please visit <http://gcrec.ifas.ufl.edu> and click on the “Details” link in the announcement section on the right.
- Dec. 9-10, 2010 Tractor Driving for Women**  
Live Oak, FL. For more information, contact Lydia Von Borstel at (386) 362-1725 or [lvonborstel@ufl.edu](mailto:lvonborstel@ufl.edu).
- Dec. 16-17, 2010 Drip Irrigation School**  
Live Oak, FL. For more information, contact Lydia Von Borstel at (386) 362-1725 or [lvonborstel@ufl.edu](mailto:lvonborstel@ufl.edu)



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districts:  
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Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison,  
Santa Fe, Suwannee  
The following county commissions:  
Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie,  
Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette,  
Levy, Madison, Suwannee, Taylor, Union  
The following cities and towns:  
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