

SW FL Small Farmers Network

May 11, 2009

Hello everyone! Roy Beckford, ag extension agent for Lee County, is extending you this invitation to attend the next meeting of the SW FL Small Farmers Network (SWFSFN). On the heels of our very informative and successful March 2nd meeting at Debbie and Jon Butts' Ecofarm in Plant City, we are now being hosted by another of our sustainable, local small farmers and SWFSFM members, Denise Muir.

Denise's farm, 'Rabbit Run Farm', is a hydroponics operation growing strawberries, vegetables and herbs. Before Denise Muir started Rabbit Run in the fall of 2008, she attended Small Farm Network meetings to gather information and interact with many people who will be visiting her farm on May 11th. How did she do it? How did she finance it? How is she dealing with the challenges? Where and how does she market? Denise will answer all these questions and more on what promises to be a good day at Rabbit Run Farm.

I am sure that you will not want to miss this opportunity for another very worthwhile event for you and your farming operations and plans. It's also another opportunity for social networking with your fellow small farmers in SW Florida. Come meet your colleagues who are making our local food systems a reality. Remember too to bring seeds to share for our Seed Swap activity!

For your reference, here's our agenda:

Date: Monday, May 11, 2009

Time: 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Place: Rabbit Run Farm
5150 Neal Road
Fort Myers, FL 33905
Phone:239-292-0564

URL: <http://rabbitrunfarmllc.com/>

Directions: I-75 to Fort Myers Exit 138 (MLK Boulevard SR 82); East to Buckingham Road, North (left) to Neal Road. Neal Road is on the Left after the Lee County Waste Recycling Center

Map: (zoom out to view I-75) http://www.trulia.com/nearby/sold/Florida/Fort_Myers/z-15/t-G_MAP_TYPE/26.670029,-81.753914/22725026-5150-Neal-Rd-Fort-Myers-FL-33905

Cost: NONE (please, bring a folding chair for your use)

Agenda:

9:30 to 10:00 am - registration and lunch setup

10:00 am to 12:00 pm - welcome and farm tour

12:00 to 1:00 pm - pot luck lunch

- a) please, bring a food item featuring one of your crops, if possible, for the lunch
- b) seed swap - bring seeds of proven cvs under local conditions to share with your fellow small farmers

1:00 to 2:00 pm - growers meeting facilitated by the SWFSFN leadership group

2:00 to 3:00 pm - UF/IFAS presentations on topics for diversified small farming (approx. 15 min):

- a) food safety
- b) report from the past Mar 16-18, 2009 Hydroponics short course at NFREC Live Oak
- c) Update on Aug 1-2, 2009 FL Small Farm & Alternative Enterprise Conference

Thanks, and please, RSVP your attendance. Also continue to help me reach more small farmers in our region by forwarding this announcement to them.

Robert A. Kluson, Ph.D.

Agriculture/Natural Resources Extension Agent II

UF/IFAS - Sarasota County Extension, 6700 Clark Road, Sarasota, FL 34241

(941) 232-3090; FAX (941) 861-9886

<http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu/AG/ag>.