



*Have You*  
**HERD**

UF/IFAS DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SCIENCES  
NEWSLETTER VOL. 12 | FALL 2024

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UF/IFAS  
DEPARTMENT OF  
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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear alumni, friends and supporters,

I am pleased to present the Fall 2024 edition of our Have You HERD newsletter. This seasonal time of reflection and renewal provides an opportunity to share the progress we’ve made in research, teaching, and extension.

In this issue, we review our \$22 million endowment portfolio, which has been a top priority since I became Department Chair. Our portfolio includes endowed professorships, graduate fellowships, undergraduate scholarships, program support, and specialty giving.

Moving forward, we turn our attention to research, highlighting the work of Dr. John Bromfield. His USDA-funded project on how heat stress affects cattle reproductive health is a prime example of the important research taking place in our department. We also recap our annual Internship Seminar, a key event where students, industry partners, and employers come together to share experiences and explore internship opportunities, strengthening connections between academia and industry.

We’re proud to feature a UF Quest 2 course, “Reproduction: A User’s Manual,” taught by Justin Callaham. This course, which has been taken by students across 39 majors, is highly regarded for its practical value. We recap our 2024 Graduate Student Symposium, where our graduate students enjoyed a weekend of presentations, competitions, and a special lecture by Dr. Alison Van Eenennaam, a global leader in animal sciences.

Fall semester means football season, and we had the pleasure of hosting the Regional & State Championship 4-H Tailgating Contest, where youth 4-H members showcased their grilling skills. We also highlight this year’s Little International, or “Little I,” Block and Bridle’s annual livestock show and initiation event, where new members demonstrated their showmanship with swine, beef cattle, equine, and sheep.

In collaboration with UF Veterinary Medicine, we hosted our third annual Small Ruminant Short Course. This three-day event provided valuable education for producers, extension specialists, researchers, students, and industry professionals on best practices in sheep and goat production, further enhancing our department’s role as a leader in agricultural education.

Please enjoy our latest newsletter which follows. Thank you for all you have done and continue to do to move the ANS mission forward. We could not do what we do without our alumni, friends and stakeholders who generously support our efforts in so many ways. Whether you are giving through financial support, your time to speak to our students, or providing jobs and internships, we cannot say thank you enough. If you are interested in giving, please visit <https://give.ifas.ufl.edu/animal-sciences-giving/> to learn about various giving opportunities, or feel free to reach out to me directly.

Sincerely,

John Arthington  
Professor and Chair



**John Arthington**  
PROFESSOR & CHAIR

# DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SCIENCES ENDOWMENT AND CHARITABLE GIVING UPDATE

By Dr. John Arthington

A defining characteristic of outstanding departments of Animal Sciences is the size and scope of their endowment portfolios. I believe that future Animal Sciences programs will be distinguished by those with and without charitable support from the stakeholders they serve. Those without will be increasingly marginalized in their ability to provide impact on the students and industries they aim to serve.

The University of Florida's Department of Animal Sciences is fortunate to benefit from generations of charitable giving. When I became Department Chair in 2019, I committed myself to the stewardship of this critical resource. In recent years, we have added numerous new endowments and rekindled relationships to enhance the impact of existing gifts.

Endowments are a unique tool that connect a donor's philanthropic goals to a perpetual impact on an intended purpose or goal. I often say, "Charitable giving is entirely donor driven." Yes, we have prioritized needs, but endowments are created based on the desires of the donor. Our department hosts endowments ranging from \$35,000 to over \$5 million, addressing donor interests across research, teaching, and extension in areas such as dairy and beef cattle, horses, small ruminants, and poultry. Some of our gifts are part of a deferred gift agreement, which will support future faculty and students, just as we benefit today from the charitable gifts established by donors decades ago. Endowments are sometimes less about "today's impact" and more on making an enduring investment in our future.

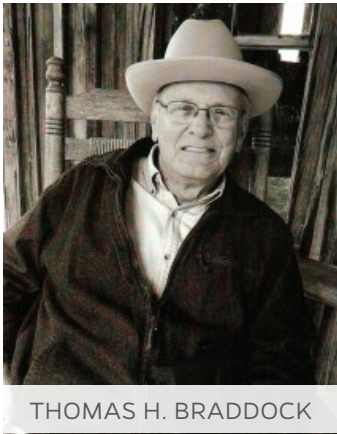
In this article, I want to introduce you to some of our department's endowments, which now total over \$22 million, and highlight the positive impacts they are having on our mission and the people we serve.

## ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIPS

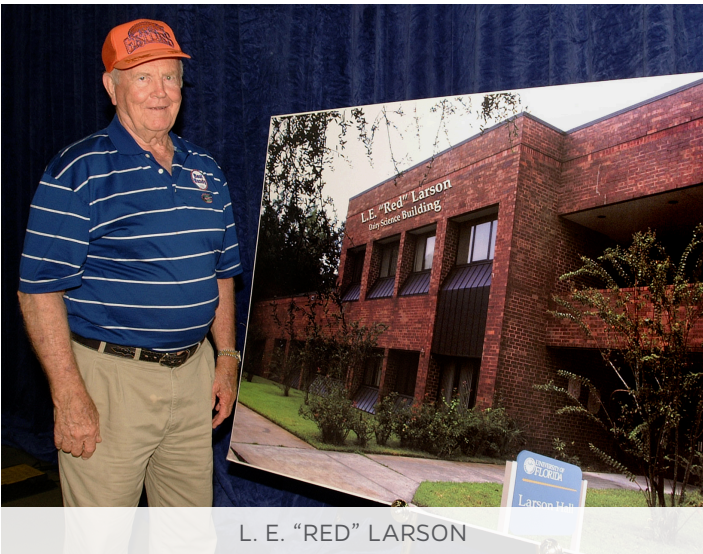
Endowed Professorships are growing in number across the nation's leading Animal Sciences departments. I recognized the lack of Endowed Professorships in our department as a major gap in our gift portfolio. In 2019, we had just one Endowed Professorship — the L. E. "Red" Larson Endowed Professor. Since then, three new Endowed Professorships have been established: 1) Jim Handley Endowed Professor of Beef Science, 2) Braddock Endowed Professor, and 3) Hargrove Endowed Professor, which is currently part of a deferred gift.



JIM & CAREY HANDLEY



THOMAS H. BRADDOCK



L. E. "RED" LARSON

Endowed Professorships offer a distinct opportunity to recognize faculty members who make exemplary contributions to our mission and goals. They are invaluable tools for recruiting and retaining outstanding faculty. As we continue to strengthen our department's diverse faculty programs, I hope that more Endowed Professorships will be established in the future.

## GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

Graduate student training continues to be one of our department's flagship programs. We host one of the nation's largest graduate programs, offering a wide range of disciplines and research areas. Faculty members consistently rank graduate training as one of the department's most important investments. However, this comes at a cost — a typical graduate stipend with tuition totals nearly \$50,000 annually.

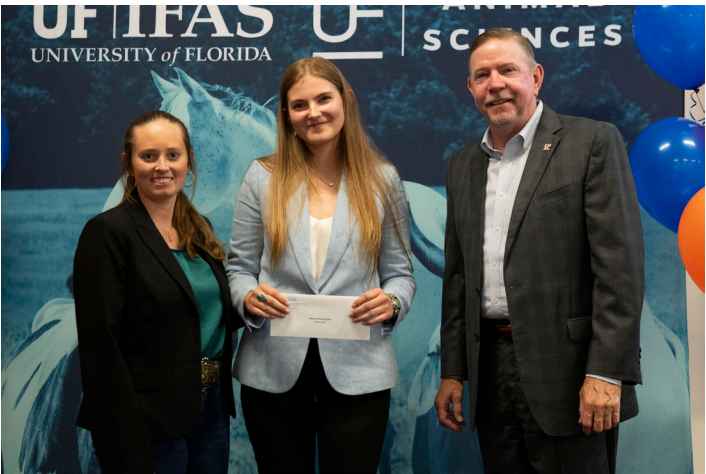
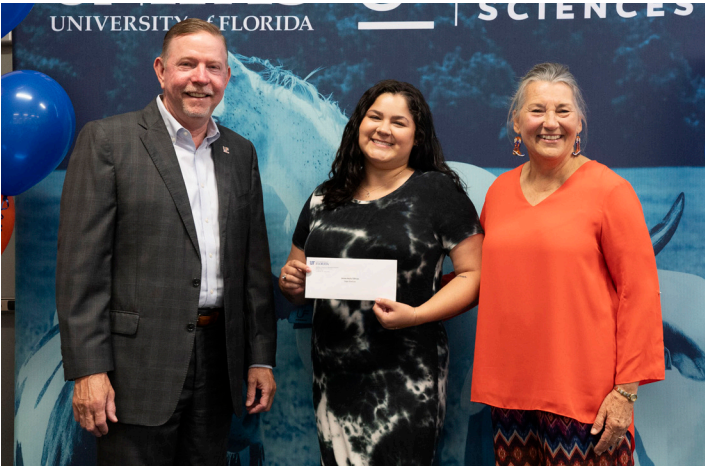


LAÍS LIMA,  
GRADUATE FELLOW



EMILY LINDNER,  
GRADUATE FELLOW

Our endowment portfolio plays a crucial role in supporting stipends, tuition, and professional development. Four endowments (Red Larson Graduate Fellowship, Melda Bassett Endowment, Elroy Decker Endowment, and the Burnsed Endowment) together provide over \$115,000 annually in support of graduate training. More recently, the Rowland/Fehr family established a new endowment soon to exceed \$1 million for annual support of graduate students pursuing research in Poultry Science.



## UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

The department awards undergraduate scholarships annually from 14 endowed funds, with a total principal balance of \$1.5 million. These scholarships, directed by donors, recognize both student achievement and individual need. These, in addition to individual annual scholarship donations, make an impressive and lasting impact on the undergraduate students in our department.

Scholarships:

- |                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Cecil Webb            | • C. W. Reaves          |
| • Don Wakeman           | • Jo Ann Smith          |
| • Susan Brown           | • Tony Cunha            |
| • R. B. Becker          | • Ralph S. Wilhelm, Jr. |
| • Floyd 'Sonny' Tillman | • A. C. Asbury          |
| • Dewey & Lynn Burnsed  | • Anita Lee Childs      |
| • American Agrivest     | • Drs. Koger-Warnick    |

PROGRAM SUPPORT

Program-specific endowments provide flexible funding within defined programs. For example, the Weeks Bovine Endowment supports bovine research, teaching, and extension programs, while the Larson Dairy Endowment provides operational support for dairy research. Other endowments have been established to support specific farm units, such as the Boston Family Endowment for our Santa Fe River Ranch and the Postley Endowment for our Small Ruminant Farm. Our largest endowment, the Folke H. Peterson Endowment (exceeding \$5 million), offers flexible spending to support research, teaching, and extension across all nine of our departmental farms. This endowment has been particularly instrumental in providing matching funds for capital improvements. Many of our department's new spaces were partially funded by this endowment. Without this bridging support, some projects may never have been completed.



MEAT PROCESSING CENTER



HORSE TEACHING UNIT



SWINE UNIT



BEEF TEACHING UNIT (SOUTH)

SPECIALTY GIVING

Two endowments support a lecture series named after former UF Animal Sciences professors — the Thatcher Lecture Series and the Staples Lecture Series. These endowments fund visits from internationally recognized animal science leaders who engage with our faculty and students.



WILLIAM THATCHER



CHARLES STAPLES



BRAHMAN CALVES AT THE UF/IFAS BEEF TEACHING UNIT



JOYCE HAYEN



BRAHMAN SHOW TEAM

Several endowments support specific programs or research areas. In the past year, the Bennink and Postley funds have provided over \$300,000 in support of dairy and sheep research projects, respectively. The Beef Teaching Unit facility receives annual support from the Beef Teaching Endowment and the Sam Tripson Memorial Endowment. Graduate students also receive funding for professional development from the Hayen-Hissem and Harms Endowments. The newly established Equine Sciences Endowment is part of an ongoing campaign to provide lasting operational support for our equine program, while the Brahman Endowment supports students involved in the department's successful Brahman Project.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you would like to learn more about giving opportunities in the UF Department of Animal Sciences. As illustrated by our current gift portfolio, there are virtually no limits to the ways you can give and the impact your contribution can have on the faculty, programs, students, and stakeholders we are privileged to serve.



# RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

## PREPARTUM HEAT STRESS IN DAIRY CATTLE

By Meg Alexander

Dr. John Bromfield joined the faculty at the University of Florida Department of Animal Sciences in 2014. A dedicated and enthusiastic Associate Professor within the department's reproductive biology team, he currently teaches Reproductive Physiology and Endocrinology in Domestic Animals, Mammalian Endocrinology, and Physiology of Reproduction. As the director of the Animal Molecular and Cellular Biology graduate program, he also coordinates the Animal Molecular and Cellular Biology seminar series.

Part of Dr. Bromfield's research is funded by the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative award from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The project, "Prepartum Heat Stress Increases Uterine Disease by Altering Tolerance and Resistance Mechanisms in Dairy Cows," kicked off in the summer of 2024 with his collaborators, Dr. Geoffrey Dahl, Dr. Kwang Cheol Jeong, and Dr. Steeve Boulant, as well as Ph.D. students Arslan Tariq and Nicholas Kertz.

The project investigates the health impacts of heat stress on dairy cattle. Primarily focusing on reproductive health, this research is testing how prepartum heat stress exposure can compromise immunity, resulting in reproductive diseases. Approximately 40% of dairy cows acquire uterine infections after calving, causing pain, infertility, and reduced milk production that costs the U.S. dairy industry \$900 million annually. To move toward solving this issue, Dr. Bromfield's research

hopes to understand how the immune system of cattle is affected by the environment after calving. Preliminary research has already shown that pathogen contamination of the reproductive tract is not affected by heat stress, which suggests that the immune system is responsible for the increased incidence of disease observed in cows raised in hotter temperatures. Further experiments conducted using cell culture techniques suggest that cells of the reproductive tract exposed to heat stress have a compromised immune function that would leave an animal vulnerable to infections.

Dr. Bromfield's studies were conducted by investigating molecules and sampling reproductive cells from 3,507 cows in north central Florida. These cells were exposed to temperatures that mimicked the environmental conditions of different calving seasons. They were then exposed to bacteria that cause uterine diseases in cows after calving, and the studies concluded that the cells exposed to cooler temperatures had a stronger immunity to the bacteria than those in warmer conditions.

Dr. Bromfield hopes this research will help the dairy industry further understand and mitigate issues caused by heat stress in livestock. This work aims to support the agriculture sector's ever-important role of ensuring animal health and welfare, while also improving food security and quality.

# 2024 INTERNSHIP SEMINAR

By Meg Alexander



The Department of Animal Sciences hosted its annual Internship Seminar on November 4, 2024, at the UF/IFAS Extension Straughn Professional Development Center. This year, 36 of our students showcased their internship experiences.

We hosted 17 employers, providing students with plenty of networking opportunities. Industry partners, faculty, and friends also attended and fellowshiped with our participants. This event allowed attendees and stakeholders to connect and discuss internship and full-time job opportunities.

We would like to thank our students, staff, faculty, employers, and stakeholders for your support, and we want to extend a very special thank you to Amie Imler for organizing this incredible event!

# COURSE SPOTLIGHT

## REPRODUCTION: A USER'S MANUAL

By Savannah Linzmaier

For the last three fall semesters, Justin Callaham has been instructing a UF Quest 2 course, titled “Reproduction: A User’s Manual.” This course is part of the university’s UF Quest project, an initiative designed to enhance the four-year experience for freshman-admitted students by offering meaningful educational experiences that ask students to use critical thinking to tackle real-world problems.

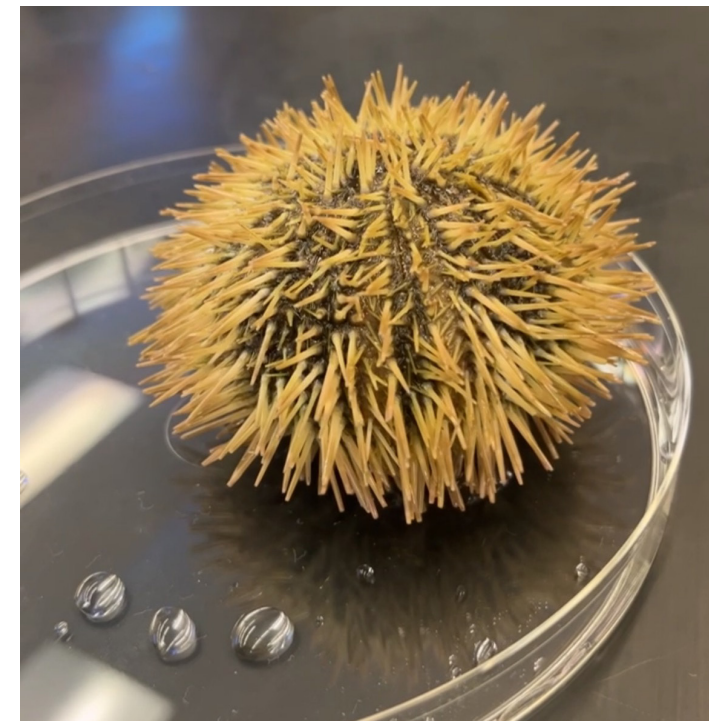
The goals of Callaham’s course include:

- Present enough science to help students better understand comparative reproductive anatomy and the underlying mechanisms that regulate human reproductive physiology.
- Examine applied livestock breeding systems and assisted reproductive technologies to help students analyze modern issues.
- Examine modern reproductive techniques using guided experiential learning activities.
- Evaluate concepts in reproductive physiology and biotechnology that influence modern policies and social constructs (i.e. sustainable food systems, species preservation/overpopulation, genetic modification, and effects of reproductive advancements on society).
- Cultivate positive group work environments that foster research collaboration and communication.
- Help students better understand their own reproductive functions and viewpoints by evaluating popular issues in modern society.



Quest courses have allowed all UF students to explore areas outside of their major, like reproductive biology! Including this semester, 74 students across eight colleges and 39 majors have gone through Callaham’s class.

Students learn through lectures and hands-on labs, including dissection of cow skulls, sheep brains, female reproductive tracts, and pregnant cow tracts; performing IVF in sea urchins; performing a vasectomy; ultrasounding; and freezing equine sperm cells. Students have described this course as eye opening, valuable, and engaging thanks to Callaham’s enthusiasm and his interactive approach to teaching.



This class has been my favorite class all semester and one of my favorite classes I’ve taken throughout my time at UF. As a political science student, the non-social sciences are usually subjects that I don’t enjoy, but this class has been a wonderful blend of useful information, fun facts, and hands-on experience. I genuinely reference information from this class nearly daily to friends and family, and that is rewarding in itself. Professor Callaham is clearly passionate about what he teaches and his connections with students, and this makes the class fun to attend.

It’s a course genuinely like no other. It was exceptional in the way it can unite many different mindsets, majors, etc., into all being engaged at all times. The course offered hands-on and once-in-a-lifetime opportunities on a bucket list I didn’t know I had. Unforgettable.

Starting this Animal Sciences journey without any prior knowledge of animals and their anatomy, I, an advertising major, found a new perspective that has genuinely sparked my curiosity. This class has not just expanded my understanding of the subject but has also made me more inclined to explore more about the fascinating world of animals. The hands-on experiences, especially the engaging trips where we interacted with animals firsthand, have easily been the highlight of my semester.

This class has opened my eyes to the world of reproduction, both of animals and humans. It’s so odd to say that discussion of our genesis is often avoided to due to the negative connotation it carries. This class really pulled back the veil and allowed for me and my classmates to truly see the story of life and how it is made, from gamete production to birth. While I learned much about the science behind things, I also learned a thing or two about life in general. It truly broadened my view of the world, which I feel is truly the goal of every Quest class.





# UF BLOCK & BRIDLE PRESENTS LITTLE INTERNATIONAL

By Hayden Hawes

PHOTO CREDIT: SYDNEY BAGONY

UF Block and Bridle’s annual “Little International” new member livestock show was held Sunday, November 3, 2024, at the UF/IFAS Horse Teaching Unit.

This event, commonly known as “Little I,” is a livestock show and initiation event for new Block and Bridle members. Initiates must work to show an animal they have little or no experience with under the guidance of experienced peer coaches. Participants are given two months to prepare the showmanship skills necessary to compete with their animals at the livestock show. This event facilitates relationship building between old and new members, allows for the development of interpersonal communication skills, and provides an opportunity for members to gain hands-on experience with multiple livestock species.

This year’s show featured 50 registered participants and functioned in two phases. In preliminary rounds, new members showcased an animal from their assigned species: beef, equine, sheep, or swine. These members were judged based on their showmanship skills and overall knowledge of their animals and respective industries. Two species winners were announced from each group. Following the preliminary rounds, the species winners advanced to the “Round Robin” show. During this final round, the species winners were randomly assigned an animal from each species to exhibit. Competitors were judged on the same criteria, with Jackson Crook winning Reserve Champion and Emma Bogue winning Grand Champion.

This event would not have been possible without the support of unit managers, team coaches, Block and Bridle advisors, officers, members, and our sponsors. Thank you to our species and awards sponsors: Springhill Equine Veterinary Clinic, Amper-sand Graphics, Lucas and Lucas CPAs, PLLC, Ten Broeck Farm, and Honor Apparel. Furthermore, we would like to thank Christopher and Heather Pogue for judging swine, Erin Jones Dasher for judging beef heifers, Rachel Brown for judging sheep, and Jenny Baker for judging equine. Finally, new members who were not able to show instead opted to complete a “scroll.” Congratulations to Top Scroll Award Grand Champion Frenchie and Reserve Champion Isabella Puga!

Block and Bridle will be hosting an array of exciting events in the Spring 2025 semester, including Ropin’ in the Swamp, and the Ray Kempher Memorial Clay Shoot. We hope to see you there!

If you would like to become involved in Block and Bridle, we are always accepting new members. Block and Bridle is a nationally recognized collegiate organization dedicated to promoting the interest and scholarship of animal sciences and agriculture. This organization provides members with opportunities for professional development through community service, educational events, and leadership activities. Members can expand their network by working closely with the University of Florida, Animal Sciences faculty and staff, the Gainesville community, and professional agricultural organizations in Florida and nationally.



# IN FIVE YEARS

By Meg Alexander

## Checking in with the UF Animal Sciences Class of 2019



**Zoe Valdes**

**Specialization:** Equine  
*Minor in Management and Sales in Agribusiness*

Zoe Valdes is the Owner and Practitioner at Perfect Touch Equine Therapy. She says her last five years have been very busy, as she has been establishing client relationships with her business while working with animals and therapy equipment daily. When asked if she thought she would be in her current position upon graduation, she explained, “Simply, no. I did not envision owning a business, and basically doing any position necessary. I have taken leadership and teamwork roles within my own company and with others. It goes to show that anything is possible and there are endless careers, chances, and places in the agriculture industry.”

As a student at UF, Zoe was a member of the Gamma Phi Beta Sorority and the Equine Sciences Program. Her favorite experience was through the foaling program within Equine Sciences, as she was able to be extensively involved and meet other students and connections. She completed two undergraduate internships, one with KESMARC Kentucky, an equine rehabilitation and therapy clinic, and the other with the Tampa Bay Lightning Hockey Team at Amalie Arena. Through these internships she was able to develop practical skills she considers important to her career, gaining practice working with equine and developing essential communication skills.



**Emily Lindner**

**Specialization:** Biology  
*Master of Science, Animal Sciences*

Emily Lindner is pursuing her Ph.D. at the University of Florida after obtaining her Master’s degree over the last five years. She believes her time with the department has provided her with many experiences and opportunities that are unique to the University of Florida, and a support system that celebrates students and their achievements. Emily says that her last five years, while challenging, have been enjoyable through the structure and support of the department throughout her higher education. She says the most beneficial part of her undergraduate experience was “the sense of community and warmth I felt between myself and the faculty. The faculty in the department always made it clear that they wanted us to succeed and were always open and willing to help us reach our goals in and out of the classroom.”

During her undergraduate studies, Emily completed research and was a member of the Dairy Science Club, Mentor GNV, People for Animal Wellness, and the Pre-Veterinary Club. She also completed a summer internship that she was awarded through IFAS Summer Research. She worked with Dr. Emily Miller-Cushon’s lab to get hands-on experience with cattle and perform research analytics, which helped her decide to continue her research and pursue graduate school.



**Sierra Hicks**

**Specialization:** Food Animal  
*Minor in Management and Sales in Agribusiness*

Sierra Hicks is a Retail Product Specialist at Morgan Farmers Co-op in Alabama. She says her experience as a student in the department offered her a plethora of resources to be successful, as well as a strong support system through faculty. She described the last five years since she graduated as surreal, as she had to learn to navigate a new business world in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. “The professional world that I jumped into changed drastically before me and I was faced with a lot of hard choices, not to mention moving nine hours away from home. Having worked for several corporate companies now, I see where my values are and what to look for in those companies to make sure it aligns. I can confidently say that once you are in the agricultural industry, you’ll always have a home and the world is a lot smaller than you think.”

Sierra was involved with the Sigma Alpha Professional Agriculture Sorority and was a member of the 2019 Meat Judging Team. She considers her experiences on the meat judging team to be the most beneficial part of her undergraduate experience, as she made valuable connections that she still maintains today. During her undergraduate experience, she also completed an internship with JBS/Pilgrims in Guntersville, AL, which led her to a management trainee employment opportunity. She hopes to remain within the Alabama Farmers Cooperative system over the next five years.

### WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR CURRENT ANIMAL SCIENCES STUDENTS?

Make the most of and try a little bit of everything. You never know who you will meet or what will impact your life the most when you least expect it. Don’t take any opportunities for granted. You can always learn something, whether it is what to do or what not to do. Be observant, because you never know what you will remember in the future.

— Zoe Valdes

There isn’t one path in life. Branch out and try different things that you never thought to do or fit the mold of what you want in life. These experiences and interactions may lead you on a different journey.

— Emily Lindner

Remember that you are young and it’s okay to make a mistake. Everyone has time to recover and build back up after the choices we make, so don’t beat yourself up over mistakes. When you find employers that take care of you, take care of them. Work ethic goes miles beyond your education every day. Use your education as a resource, not a privilege.

— Sierra Hicks



# SMALL RUMINANT SHORT COURSE

By Dr. Brittany Diehl

The third annual UF/IFAS Small Ruminant Short Course was hosted Friday, September 20 and Saturday, September 21 in Gainesville, FL. This year we added three hands-on pre-conference seminar sessions on Thursday, September 19. This event is put on in collaboration between the Department of Animal Sciences and the UF College of Veterinary Medicine. The Department of Agronomy and numerous UF county extension agent faculty are also partners in this program. Each year, the attendance has continued to grow, with 298 attendees this year — almost double the attendance of the first conference in 2022. The small ruminant industry in the southeast has demonstrated growing interest and attendance at this event, with producers joining from more than 40 counties and traveling from as far away as North Dakota.

The conference is chaired by Dr. Brittany Diehl, Clinical Assistant Professor & Small Ruminant Extension Specialist for the UF College of Veterinary Medicine, who leads coordination efforts in collaboration with Clay Whitehead, UF Small Ruminant Unit Manager. The entire committee is to be commended for their tremendous efforts and the encouraging responses from attendees.



The Small Ruminant Short Course also serves as the finale for the UF Ram & Buck Test programs. These performance tests are designed to evaluate the rams' and bucks' ability to perform in the harsh Florida climate and within a cohort for evaluation of natural parasite resistance and growth. The top performing animals are eligible for auction at the conclusion of the test. This year, the 2024 UF Ram Test Sale was also held as an online auction during the event. Our buck test completed its inaugural year with an overwhelming response by producers from 13 different states across the U.S. consigning bucks to the test. Due to the harshness of the Florida environment, only five bucks performed well enough to make sale eligibility. The producers of those five bucks elected to retain their genetics rather than sell them, and we therefore did not hold a 2024 UF Buck Test Sale. We have received very positive feedback from consigning producers, as this was a true test of the individuals' abilities to survive in one of the toughest climates. The department is excited about the continued growth and expansion of these programs. Dates for the 2025 programs will be released on the department website this winter.

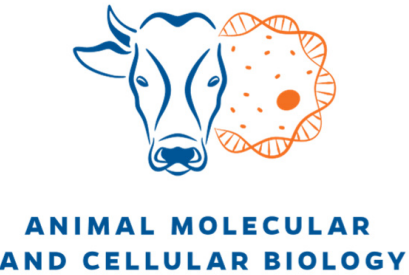


This year, The Animal Molecular and Cellular Biology (AMCB) Program hosted a photo submission contest encouraging Animal Sciences students, faculty, and staff to submit photos representative of the department and the AMCB. Everyone was then invited to vote on their favorite submissions.

Congratulations to Graduate Research Assistant **Masroor Sagheer**, who submitted the winning photo! Thank you to Dr. John Bromfield for organizing the contest!



All photo submissions can be viewed by scanning this QR code or visiting <https://go.ufl.edu/m7fq9fh>.





On October 5, 2024, the Department of Animal Sciences hosted the Regional & State Championship 4-H Tailgating Contest. The purpose of this contest is to promote the use of animal protein in the diet by teaching the art and science of safely preparing beef, pork, chicken, and shrimp in an outdoor setting. This program is for Florida 4-H members between 11 and 18 years of age.

Each contestant must provide enough fresh, uncooked animal protein for two 6-8 oz. cooked portions to serve the judges for palatability evaluations. Contestants fired up their grills at 9 a.m. to begin preparing and grilling their proteins. They grilled their choice of meat to the appropriate temperature following all food safety procedures. They were then judged on pre-cooking registration, observation of fire and food safety protocol, questions of food safety and product quality, and finally, eating and visual desirability.



Congratulations to the 2024 winners:

- **Shrimp 1<sup>st</sup> Place (\$1,500)**  
Whitney T., South, Lee County
- **Shrimp 2<sup>nd</sup> Place (\$1,000)**  
Chipper M., Northwest, Holmes County
- **Pork 1<sup>st</sup> Place (\$1,500)**  
Justin S., Northeast, Lafayette County
- **Pork 2<sup>nd</sup> Place (\$1,000)**  
Dustin D., South, Lee County
- **Beef 1<sup>st</sup> Place (\$1,500)**  
Josh W., Northwest, Washington County
- **Beef 2<sup>nd</sup> Place (\$1,000)**  
Cate B., Northwest, Okaloosa County
- **Chicken 1<sup>st</sup> Place (\$1,500)**  
Musiq W., South, Palm Beach County
- **Chicken 2<sup>nd</sup> Place (\$1,000)**  
Tucker P., Northwest, Escambia County

We would like to thank the coordinators of this event, Dr. Chad Carr, Brian Estevez, and Sonja Crawford. To learn more about the Florida 4-H Tailgating Contest please visit <https://florida4h.ifas.ufl.edu/events/healthy-living-events/tailgate-contest/>.



Dr. Chad Carr was recently featured by the Florida Gators for his grilling expertise. Check out the video here!



**By Dr. Antonio Faciola**

The UF/IFAS Animal Sciences Graduate Symposium is the crown jewel of our graduate program, and this year's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary event was a shining testament to our students' talent, drive, and passion. Held in the picturesque city of St. Augustine from October 31 to November 1, this milestone symposium attracted nearly 100 attendees and showcased 40 engaging presentations across poster, oral, and the Gator Tank, embodying the spirit of scientific excellence and collaboration.

Our symposium's highlight was the distinguished lecture by Dr. Alison Van Eenennaam, a distinguished professor at UC Davis and global leader in animal science, whose talk on effective science communication resonated with students and faculty alike. Dr. Van Eenennaam encouraged our students to think beyond the lab and consider the broader societal impacts of their research, a message that underscored the symposium's focus on professional development and community engagement.

This year's sessions celebrated student success and creativity in powerful ways. Poster and oral presentations covered an impressive range of

research areas, while our much-anticipated Gator Tank competition showcased students' talents in innovation and problem solving.

The Gator Tank, now in its second year, was a standout feature. This innovative session challenged students to pitch solutions addressing real-world issues, including feed intake regulators, anti-microbial resistance, and the development of new lab equipment, before a panel of academic and industry experts who offered invaluable insights that inspired students to think creatively and practically about their research.



This year's distinguished judges included:

- James Rohrer, CEO and Owner of RP Nutrients
- Dr. John Davis, UF/IFAS Senior Associate Dean for Research
- Dr. Alison Van Eenennaam, Distinguished Professor at UC Davis
- Dr. Fernanda Castro, Technical Services Manager for Evonik
- Dr. Clay Zimmerman, Director of Science at Balchem Corporation

The event featured a competitive lineup, with standout performances across three categories:



**POSTER COMPETITION**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Castle Cavender (Rezende Lab)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Vinicius de Souza Izquierdo (Moriel Lab)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Mikayla Johnson (Faciola Lab)



**ORAL COMPETITION**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Luana Álvares (Rezende Lab)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Maria Camila Lopez Duarte (Gonella-Diaza Lab)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Madilyn Martin (Nelson Lab)



**GATOR TANK COMPETITION**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Anissa Mansouri, Garrett Leath, Jason Decker, and Mikayla Johnson (Departments of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering and Faciola Lab)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Garrett Ellward (Czyz Lab from the Department of Microbiology and Cell Science)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Araceli Maderal & Federico Tarnonsky (DiLorenzo Lab)

This symposium was made possible through the dedication of our faculty, staff, student volunteers, and generous supporters, including CALS, IFAS, Evonik, RP Nutrients, and Balchem Corporation. Their ongoing support enriches our program, allowing our students to thrive and build invaluable networks and skills for their future careers.

As we look forward to the future, we are inspired by the achievements, potential, and growth demonstrated by our students at this year's symposium. Here's to the next generation of leaders in animal sciences and to many more years of innovation and collaboration.

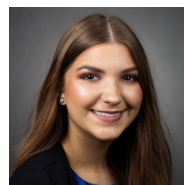
Go Gators!

# AWARDS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS



## Nicolas DiLorenzo

2024 Cattleman of the Year Award from Jackson County Cattlemen Association



## Savannah Linzmaier

IFAS Web Hero Award



## Angela Maria Gonella Diaz

FACAA Specialist of the Year, the highest recognition given to faculty (state specialists) by the Extension Agents in Florida



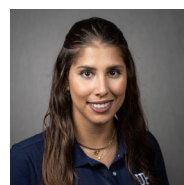
## Staci Vining

Gator Business Administrator Services Certification



## Luana Álvares

1<sup>st</sup> place in oral presentations at the 2024 ANS Graduate Symposium



## Leticia Casarotto

Chateaubriand Fellowship to study at the University of Paris-Saclay in the BREED unit of INRAe in Jouy-en-Josas, France



## Castle Cavender

1<sup>st</sup> place in poster presentations at the 2024 ANS Graduate Symposium



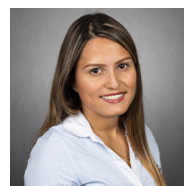
## Maria Camila López Duarte

Selected in the International Embryo Transfer Society graduate student competition and awarded travel scholarship to present research in Texas



## Mariana Nehme Marinho

CALS International Student Outstanding Achievement Award, Ph.D. student



## Daniella Cristin Heredia Castaneda

Awarded Research Abroad for Doctoral Students grant and will be traveling to Canada to conduct research at Université Laval with Dr. Marc Andre Sirard

## AMERICAN DAIRY SCIENCE ASSOCIATION AWARDS



### Chapter Awards

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Chapter Scrapbook
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Website
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Chapter Yearbook



## Brittney Davidson

2024 ADSA Midwest Scholars Award



## Lautaro Rostoll Cangiano

Graduate Student Literature Review Award: Production Division (Ph.D.)



## Sarena Lawji

Undergraduate Paper Presentation Production Division 1<sup>st</sup> Place



## Mariana Nehme Marinho

Graduate Student Poster Presentation: Dairy Production

## EASTER NATIONAL 4-H HORSE ROUNDUP CONTEST



Front row left to right: Dorothy Blair (Horse Judging and Team Illustrated Talk Coach), Layla DelVecchio, Megan Watier, Delaney Sheldon, Kaylie Michot, Beatrice Davenport, Libby Justice

Back row left to right: Cailynn Boggs, Drew Parkinson, Peyton Rook, Lindsey Dillahay

### Hippology

- The Florida team was 7<sup>th</sup> in the Written portion, 5<sup>th</sup> in Stations, 2<sup>nd</sup> in Horse Judging, 1<sup>st</sup> in Team Problems, 4<sup>th</sup> overall
- 4<sup>th</sup> in the Written portion, 8<sup>th</sup> in Horse Judging, 5<sup>th</sup> high overall individual — **Beatrice Davenport**
- 10<sup>th</sup> in Horse Judging — **Drew Parkinson**
- 11<sup>th</sup> in Stations, 14<sup>th</sup> overall individual — **Lindsey Dillahay**

### Horse Judging

- Florida's Horse Judging team placed 5<sup>th</sup> in Halter, 4<sup>th</sup> in Performance, 4<sup>th</sup> in Oral Reasons, 5<sup>th</sup> overall
- 9<sup>th</sup> high in halter judging — **Megan Watier**
- 9<sup>th</sup> in performance judging — **Layla DelVecchio**

### Team Presentation

- Finished 10<sup>th</sup> with their talk, titled "How Horses Built America" — **Kaylie Michot** and **Delaney Sheldon**

### Individual Presentation

- Three-way tie for 10<sup>th</sup> high individual with her illustrated talk, titled "Horse Coat Genetics: Color, Pattern & Texture" — **Libby Justice**

### Individual Awards

- Outstanding Service Award — **Dr. Sandra TenBroeck**



Dr. Sandra TenBroeck receives 4-H Horse Roundup Contest Outstanding Service Award

## INTERNATIONAL INTERCOLLEGIATE MEAT JUDGING CONTEST



Pictured left to right: Tyler Watson, Jordyn Brekke, Eva Griffin, Emmie Love, Sara Brady, and Chad Carr (coach)

- 7<sup>th</sup> High Team in total placing
- 9<sup>th</sup> High Team in the contest overall
- 5<sup>th</sup> Individual Nationally — **Tyler Watson**

Special thanks to **Byron Davis**, **Tommy Estevez**, and **Angel Hernandez** and their staff at the University of Florida Meat Laboratory for their special efforts in support of the judging program.

## WELCOME COURTESY PROFESSOR JIM QUIGLEY



Jim Quigley is a researcher, author, speaker, and leader who has helped improve the well-being of young calves for more than 30 years. Dr. Quigley received his B.S. from the University of New Hampshire in 1979 as well as his M.S. in 1983, and he received his Ph.D. from Virginia Tech in 1985. In the past he has been

an Associate Professor at the University of Tennessee, Vice President for Research at Diamond V Mills, and Vice President and Director of Calf Operations at APC, Inc., in Ankeny, Iowa. He is currently Technical Lead for Cargill, Inc. and provides technical support for calf and heifer topics for all Cargill's business around the world.

Dr. Quigley is a well-respected scientist and has been an author on more than 110 refereed scientific articles. He has spoken at conferences and symposia all over the world on the topics of calf immunity, health, nutrition, and management. Dr. Quigley has also consulted with several governmental agencies on topics related to calf health.



2024-2025

# ANS AMBASSADORS

ANS Ambassadors help recruit prospective students, represent the department at events, and promote goodwill within and for the Department, University, and animal agriculture industry.



Angelina Boudy



Katie Caren



Mia Cuccinello



Emma Joyal



Rebecca Lyons



Vicky Mann



Lauren Newmeyer



Emma Paliotta



Hannah Postlewait



Jillian Runyon



Savannah Waters

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## DEPARTMENT

01/18/25	UF/IFAS Florida Bull Test & Sale
02/24/25 - 02/26/25	Florida Ruminant Nutrition Symposium
03/22/25	Gator Grill Masters
03/22/25 - 03/23/25	Ropin' in the Swamp
04/19/25	Sale in the Swamp Preview
04/19/25 - 04/26/25	Sale in the Swamp Auction
04/25/25	ANS Celebration Day
05/07/25 - 05/09/25	Beef Cattle Short Course
TBD	Open Gate

## YOUTH EXTENSION

12/13/24	Southeastern 3 Livestock Judging Contest (Perry, GA)
12/14/24	4-H/FFA Horse Judging School
01/24/25 - 01/25/25	Livestock and Meats Judging Clinic
02/07/25	Florida State Fair 4-H & FFA Preliminary Livestock Judging Contest (Tampa, FL)
02/08/25	Florida State Fair Meat Judging FFA Preliminary (Tampa, FL)
04/05/25	4-H/FFA State Horse Judging Contest
04/05/25 - 04/06/25	4-H State Hippology Contest
04/12/25	4-H/FFA State Livestock Judging Contest
04/19/25	4-H/FFA State Meat Judging Contest
06/08/25 - 06/13/25	4-H Horsemanship School (Western Week)
06/15/25 - 06/20/25	4-H Horsemanship School (English Week)
06/21/25	4-H State Horse Events (demonstrations, presentations, public speaking, and quiz bowl)





GATOR GRILL MASTERS

BLOCK & BRIDLE HALLOWEEN PARTY

TAILGATOR

TAILGATOR

INTERSHIP SEMINAR

BLOCK & BRIDLE HALLOWEEN PARTY

SMALL RUMINANT SHORT COURSE

GATOR GRILL MASTERS

TAILGATOR

4-H TAILGATING CONTEST

# 2024 IN REVIEW

INTERSHIP SEMINAR

BLOCK & BRIDLE HALLOWEEN PARTY

SMALL RUMINANT SHORT COURSE

SMALL RUMINANT SHORT COURSE

INTERSHIP SEMINAR

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR WITH TENURE PROMOTION CELEBRATION — DR. DIWAKAR VYAS AND DR. JASON SCHEFFLER

TAILGATOR

4-H TAILGATING CONTEST

MEAT SCIENCE EXTENSION

## **UF/IFAS Animal Sciences Department**

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Gainesville, FL 32611-0910

352-392-1981

**animal.ifas.ufl.edu**



## **GIVING**

Your generous donation to the UF/IFAS  
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