



Florida West Coast Resource Conservation and  
Development (RC&D) Council, Inc.

[www.fwcrcd.org](http://www.fwcrcd.org)

---

---

# Annual Plan of Work

---

# 2009

Keeping Agriculture in the Community  
in Florida's West Coast

---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>APPROVED PROJECTS FOR 2009</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>MANATEE AGRICULTURAL REUSE SUPPLY (MARS) PROJECT</i>	7
<i>GERALDSON COMMUNITY FARM - IMPLEMENTATION</i>	11
<i>FLORIDA FARMLINK</i>	15
<i>GAMBLE CREEK FARM (CENTER FOR INTEGRATED AGRICULTURE)</i>	18
<i>NUEVA COSECHA</i>	23
<i>FARM BUILDING CONSULTING PROGRAM</i>	26
<b>FLORIDA WEST COAST RC&amp;D POLICY STATEMENTS</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>SIGNATURE PAGE</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>APPENDIX – 2009 ANNUAL BUDGET</b>	<b>31</b>

---

# 2009 Annual Plan of Work

## Keeping Agriculture in the Community in Florida's West Coast

### INTRODUCTION

#### Who We Are

Florida West Coast Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council, Inc. was formed in 1999 by a group of volunteers and community leaders to encourage and promote stewardship of our natural and community resources through the development and nurturing of innovative partnerships. The application for designation of the RC&D area for the "Florida West Coast RC&D Area", covering Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas, and Sarasota Counties was approved by the US Department of Agriculture in 2000.

#### Summary Information

Contact information:	Florida West Coast RC&D Council, Inc. 945 25th Drive East, Suite 11 Ellenton, Florida 34222	
	Phone:	941-723-3252
	Fax:	941-723-7519
	Website	<a href="http://www.fwcrd.org">www.fwcrd.org</a>
Counties Served	Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas, Sarasota	
Board Members	<b><u>Hillsborough County</u></b>	<b><u>Manatee County</u></b>
<i>P – President</i>		John O'Connor (P)
<i>VP – Vice President</i>		Dr. Carolyn Gregov (VP)
<i>T – Treasurer</i>		
<i>S – Secretary</i>		
	<b><u>Pinellas County</u></b>	<b><u>Sarasota County</u></b>
	Richard Carroll	Mike Sosadeeter (T/S)
	Dr. John Alleyne	
RC&D Coordinator	Laura Morton	
RC&D Full-Time Staff	Sarah Crane	Program & Development Manager
<i>(not including full-time staff assigned to farm locations)</i>	Owring Kashef	MARS Project Manager RC&D
	Jacob Leech	Project Manager
	Linda Percy	Office Manager
	Logan Beal	Project Assistant
	Jerry Buchanan	Field Ops Project Manager

## What We Do

The Florida West Coast Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to create entrepreneurial local food and agriculture economies in our four-county area.

The RC&D works with community-minded individuals, organizations, and local governments to help create and implement sustainable agriculture and community food projects that improve the quality of life in Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas and Sarasota counties. All projects adopted by the RC&D are compatible with our vision, mission areas and values.

RC&D is also a program through the US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, but the RC&D Council remains independent as a non-profit 501c(3). This unique position allows RC&D some funding through the Federal Government while focusing on local leadership and local priorities.

### *Vision and Mission*

The vision of the Florida West Coast RC&D Council is: Keeping Agriculture in the Community

The mission of Florida West Coast RC&D Council is: Create an Entrepreneurial Local Food and Agriculture Economy.

*We will be working towards keeping agriculture in the community in the following four mission area elements: land conservation, water management, community development, and environmental enhancement.*

## Our Values

Our values provide the framework for our work within the community and for our relationships with others. The RC&D has adopted the following values:

**Service to the community** - We exist to serve the community, not to further our own agendas.

**Action** - We believe that collaborative action is the route to positive change.

**Excellence** - When we strive for excellence, we contribute our best talents to the community.

**Openness/Inclusiveness** - Diverse teams, from families to ecosystems, are more resilient and high-performing. For a community, every member has the right to be welcomed and valued, to have his or her ideas and observations respected, to be involved in decisions that affect his or her life and to contribute to the community.

**Integrity** - When we act with honesty, trust and respect, we honor ourselves and others.

**Beauty/Harmony** - Beautiful surroundings and harmonious relationships inspire people to positive intentions and actions at work, at play, at home, and in our natural environment.

## ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Every year, the RC&D establishes priorities for building and maintaining a healthy organization that will have impacts in the Area for decades to come.

The application for designation of the RC&D area for the "Florida West Coast RC&D Area", covering Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas, and Sarasota Counties was approved by the US Department of Agriculture in 2000. Since 2000, the initial members of the Board have been planning and organizing their efforts to establish the foundation of the RC&D Council. In 2007, the RC&D shifted from an internally-focused organization to reaching out to the community and building a Council. The specific goals for 2009 are as follows:

<b>GOAL 1 – INCREASE THE MEMBERSHIP ON THE DEDICATED CORE BOARD TEAM</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Recruit two Board members from Hillsborough County	Board	Board Time	36 hours	September 2009
Have financial contributions from each Board member	President	Board Funds	1 hour	September 2009
Develop a Board orientation training for new members	RC&D Coordinator	Coordinator	24 hours	April 2009
Recruit a Board member from Sarasota County	Board	Board Time	36 hours	September 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 2 – EXPAND THE RC&amp;D COUNCIL</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Hold a Council membership kickoff event	Linda Percy	Staff Time and \$2500	40 hours	April 2009
Recruit two new Council members from each County	Board and Staff	Board Time	100 hours	October 2009
Hold a Council meeting in two counties	Board and Staff	Staff Time plus \$2000	80 hours	September 2009
Reviewed and/or Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

**GOAL 3 – IMPROVE THE NON-PROFIT FINANCIAL LITERACY OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Action Item	Responsible Party(ies)	Resources	Coordinator Time Required	Expected Completion
Hold a non-profit financial literacy training for Board	RC&D Coordinator	Coordinator	16 hours	April 2009
Recruit a new Board member with a financial background	Board and RC&D Coordinator	Coordinator	80 hours	September 2009
Reviewed and/or Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

**GOAL 4 – CONTINUE TO DEVELOP A BRAND AND IMAGE**

Action Item	Responsible Party(ies)	Resources	Coordinator Time Required	Expected Completion
Develop marketing messages for use in our Area	RC&D Coordinator and Program Mgr	Staff time	40 hours	April 2009
Develop an Annual Report	RC&D Coordinator	Coordinator	40 hours	April 2009
Develop an 11 x 17 poster for distribution in our Area	RC&D Coordinator and Program Mgr	Staff Time	40 hours	September 2009
Develop new RC & D marketing collateral (brochure, letterhead, business card)	RC&D Coordinator and Program Mgr	Staff Time	20 hours	April 2009
Reviewed and/or Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

**GOAL 5 – FINALIZE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS FOR STREAMLINED OPERATION**

Action Item	Responsible Party(ies)	Resources	Coordinator Time Required	Expected Completion
Develop systems to facilitate operations management	Linda Pearcy	Staff time	24 hours	February 2009
Hold training on committee structure from new by-laws	RC&D Coordinator	Coordinator	8 hours	September 2009
Review policies for additions needed	Board	Coordinator	40 hours	February 2009
Conduct a demonstration to Board of NRCS POINTS	RC&D Coordinator	Coordinator	8 hours	April 2008
Reviewed and/or Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

## ACCOUNTABILITY

### Purpose of the Annual Plan of Work

To achieve our mission, the Florida West Coast RC&D manages a proactive planning and project implementation process. Projects are the units of accomplishment toward the mission and goals in our Area Plan (strategic plan). Projects are defined by RC&D as:

- 1) Having planned action(s)
- 2) Making a contribution to accomplishing the goals and objectives in the Area Plan
- 3) Including responsibility by the Council to undertake and commit resources to the planned action
- 4) Lasting for a varying amount of time, but include planning, approval by the Council, implementation, and completion.

These four characteristics of projects imply stages of project planning and development that will be followed when developing ideas, plans, and projects.

1. Idea Development – in this stage, an inspired idea from our Area that contributes to our goals and purpose is explored. In order to graduate from this level, the project idea must pass through our filters of values, goals, and suitability for RC&D assistance.
2. Project Planning – during this stage of a project, the idea is fleshed out and contained in a defined unit that can be evaluated by the Board of Directors. By the time a project gets presented to the Board of Directors for formal approval, a project should have a draft project plan that includes goals, tasks, timelines, and a budget estimate. The role of the RC&D needs to be clearly defined, often in an agreement or contract. At the end of this stage, the Project gets adopted into the Annual Plan of Work.
3. Project Implementation – the action step where the RC&D assists in making the project happen in the agreed structure of the project plan.
4. Project Completion and Evaluation – There must be an “exit strategy” for the RC&D in the project. The estimate for the duration of the project will be made based on the gradual and eventual removal of RC&D assistance.

This document, the 2009 Annual Plan of Work, represents the following:

- The Council's 2009 priorities for their human and financial resources
- Projects that address needs identified in our Area Plan
- The primary work plan for the USDA-assigned Coordinator
- The formal agreement with our USDA sponsor, the Natural Resources Conservation Service for support for this fiscal year

## **NRCS RC&D Program Policy**

RC&D Program Policy, Section 513 of the 440 - Conservation Programs Manual has outlined the improved requirements for Annual Plans of Work. The following requirements are included in this Annual Plan of Work:

- Action Items, without reference to the Area Plan goals, Objectives and Strategies, as the Area Plan is currently in a state of complete overhaul and will be completed within this Annual Plan of Work cycle. The Annual Plan of Work for 2009 will include the new references to Goals, Objectives, and Strategies
- Responsible person or organization
- Resources required
- Time obligation estimates for the Coordinator
- A place for Review and Updates and documentation of the RC&D's ongoing operations and management in adherence to the Annual Plan of Work
- A place for Progress Documentation in each goal under the list of action items
- The Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights Statement, directly from Section 513 requirements

## **Florida West Coast RC&D Council's Approach**

Adopted in 2008, the Florida West Coast RC&D Council is using an online software approach to accountability, oversight, and operations management. This service is called BaseCamp, and staff and board members can access progress, policies, manuals, and all information related to ongoing projects and decisions. The website for this is <http://fwcrccd.updatelog.com>

The goals, action items, and budget are all posted on the site for the organization to use from any computer.

## **Approved Projects for FY2009**

The following projects have been adopted for our 2009 Annual Plan of Work at the Florida West Coast Resource Conservation and Development Council's Annual Meeting:

- Manatee Agricultural Reuse Supply (MARS) hookups
- The Center for Integrated Agriculture at Gamble Creek Farm
- Geraldson Community Farm – ongoing implementation
- Florida FarmLink
- Nueva Cosecha – Formerly known as the Latino Community Network Project
- Farm-Building Consulting Program

## APPROVED PROJECTS FOR 2009

---

### MANATEE AGRICULTURAL REUSE SUPPLY (MARS) PROJECT

---

#### Background

The RC&D is working in conjunction with Manatee County to promote the use of reclaimed water for agricultural production. Up to 80 million gallons of water per day are pumped from the Floridian Aquifer for agricultural irrigation in Manatee County and an additional 12 million gallons are pumped per day for residential use. This overuse of groundwater has created a need to find alternative sources.

Manatee County has interconnected three (3) regional wastewater treatment plants to provide a distribution system for urban and agricultural irrigation needs. RC&D's contribution to the MARS project is to assist farmers with the cost of connecting to the Manatee County reclaimed water pipeline and implement demonstration projects that address reclaimed water quality and seasonality. This will ultimately reduce the amount of water pumped from the aquifer for agricultural irrigation and implement sustainable use of reclaimed water for beneficial use in agricultural applications.

#### Project History and Accomplishments Summary

Manatee County completed the main transmission pipeline in 2006. The RC&D portion of the project began officially in 2002 through Congressional direct appropriations, which totaled \$8.3 Million. In 2003, Florida West Coast RC&D developed a Master Plan including ranking criteria for prioritizing funding, preliminary engineering designs, cost estimates, and quality assurance plans.

In 2004, a partnership was formed between Manatee County Utilities and RC&D to accomplish mutual goals. In 2005, Britton Miller led the development of the program that identified policies and procedures for implementation of the grant program, which was approved by the RC&D Board of Directors. The project manager (Owring Kashef) was hired, and a developed a detailed process for implementing the program according to the guidelines. Owring Kashef developed a concept for remote water meter readings. In 2006, the program was launched including a massive media and outreach campaign to reach all interested applicants. Of the 55 applications sent out, 8 were completed (15%) by farmers and returned to FL West Coast RC&D. RC&D Board of Directors approved 5 of the 8 applications. The remaining 3 farming operations are located some distance away from the MARS transmission pipe and will require piping of MARS pipe to their property boundaries.

Also in 2006 the RC&D used Richard Carroll's nursery as a beta testing site for the technical aspects and equipment to be used at other MARS sites. Quality assurance procedures for the MARS program were developed and approved, as well as the hiring of a full-time project assistant, Jacob Leech.

During FY2007 installation of master meters were completed at Orban's Nursery, Tree Leader Nurseries, and Geraldson Community Farm. The RC&D also received approval to use MARS funds to purchase an easement for a demonstration site. This process was completed in July with an easement on 26 acres near the town of Parrish, next to MARS transmission pipe was purchased. This project, now called the Center for Integrated Agriculture at Gamble Creek Farm has been split into a separated project area under the oversight of Jacob Leech.

## RC&D Goals for FY09

By the end of FY09, RC&D will have further developed the water supply and irrigation systems at all of the MARS projects, as well as an additional outreach to small and beginning farmers on the MARS pipeline. Also, a program will be developed for the appropriate treatment and beneficial use of reclaimed water within the demonstration area at Gamble Creek Farm.

## Project Details

Project Number:	M01-001
Planning Started:	07/01/01
Approved by Council:	07/01/01
Project Plan Completed:	10/03
Project Budget:	\$12.5 Million estimated
Funding Sources:	\$8.3 Million in Congressional appropriations through the USDA-NRCS in CTA funds
Implementation Begun:	12/02

## Project Partners

Partner	Project Role
Manatee County Utilities	Management of Manatee County Utilities MARS program and water delivery to agriculture in Manatee County, and partner to RC&D in coordinating farmer hook-ups.
NRCS	Technical assistance in providing standards and specifications
SWFWMD	Project funding and additional funding for farmers under the FARMS program
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	Leadership in developing Best Management practices that will be used in many of the MARS demonstration projects

## MARS PROJECT – DETAILS OF IMPLEMENTATION 2009

<b>GOAL 1 – ASSESS RECLAIMED WATER FOR INTEGRATION INTO GROWER’S WATER SUPPLY</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Itemize the technical and other issues that growers are facing with respect to reclaimed water use	Owrang	MARS Agreement	40 hours	May 2009
Develop a technical approach for the technology program at Gamble Creek	Owrang	MARS Agreement	40 hours	July 2009
Research and develop a low-cost (possibly low-tech) approach for small farmers with limited capital investment	Owrang	MARS Agreement	80 hours	September 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 2 – COMPLETE PLANNED IRRIGATION INSTALLATIONS AT GERALDSON COMMUNITY FARM</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Central control irrigation system & monitoring - Planning/Design	Owrang and site managers	MARS Agreement	8 hours	May 2009
Central control irrigation system installation, according to plan	Owrang	MARS Agreement	-	July 2009
Development of integrated water management conceptual plan for agricultural barn and greenhouse	Owrang and Sarah	MARS Agreement	8 hours	April 2009
Water, utilities & wastewater installation in accordance with IWRM plan, site plan, and agricultural building permit	Owrang and Sarah	MARS Agreement	16 hours	August 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 3 – COMPLETE HOOK-UP AT BUD JONES INSTALLATION</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Master Meter installation, connection to irrigation system	Owrang	MARS Agreement	-	Summer 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

<b>GOAL 4 – COMPLETE GAMBLE CREEK FARM INSTALLATIONS</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Well pumping stations engineering design including pond pumping station in accordance with AGSWM and site plan	Owring	MARS Agreement	-	September 2009
Reclaimed master meter connection hookup in accordance with AGSWM and site plan	Owring	MARS Agreement	-	September 2009
Irrigation water networking design and QA in accordance with AGSWM and site plan	Owring	MARS Agreement	-	September 2009
Potable water supply & sewer connection according to site plan	Owring	MARS Agreement	-	September 2009
Water network design and QA in accordance with AGSWM and site plan	Owring	MARS Agreement	-	September 2009
Area 1 (8 acres) irrigation design according to agricultural program goals	Owring	MARS Agreement	-	May 2009
Area 1 (8 acres) irrigation installations oversight	Owring	MARS Agreement	-	September 2009
Area 2 (6 acres) irrigation design according to agricultural program goals	Owring	MARS Agreement	-	September 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 5 – TREE LEADER NURSERY INSTALLATION</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Remote monitoring system installation	Owring	MARS Agreement	-	Summer 2009
Auto switching between reclaimed & well water design & installation	Owring	MARS Agreement	-	Summer 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

---

## GERALDSON COMMUNITY FARM - IMPLEMENTATION

---

### Background

Manatee County purchased 21 acres of land from the Geraldson Family in 2005, and the farm was named Geraldson Community Farm to honor one of Manatee County's historic farming families. On September 26, 2006, Manatee Board of County Commissioners voted to approve the Geraldson Community Farm Conceptual Management Plan that the RC&D developed in 2006. This represented the beginning of the implementation of Geraldson Community Farm, in an agreement with Manatee County approved in January 2007. That agreement has been extended through the end of September 2009 to complete site development, and a lease is being established for the long-term occupancy and operation of the farm.

### Project History and Accomplishments Summary

In 2006, the RC&D lead a working group to the completion of the Conceptual Management Plan, which was overwhelmingly approved and supported by both the community and the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners. In February 2007, the RC&D hired a Program Manager, Sarah Crane, to oversee the development and implementation of the program. 2007 was an incredibly intense year of implementation under Sarah's oversight, including everything from site planning, branding and marketing, to the hiring of a farm manager with 25 years of experience in community farming, Tim Laird. To kickoff the season, the RC&D hosted a Ground Breaking Ceremony on November 9, 2007. The first successful season was completed with 180 members, a farm apprentice, volunteers, and intensive crop planning for the following year to improve member satisfaction and share quality. Shares went on sale for Season 2, selling out within 2 weeks at 210 shares. A second growing area was created to expand the acreage in production as well as early planning efforts on perennial/fruit crop offerings, community garden area, diversification, and business planning.

### RC&D Goals for FY09

The goal of the RC&D for FY09 is to make the Geraldson Community Farm property and location be "more than just a farm" with different offerings to members as well as site development to improve the appearance and experience, as well as establish a lease on the property with Manatee County.

### Project Details

Project Number:	M04-014
Planning Started:	03/30/2005
Approved by Council:	05/19/2005

Project Plan Completed:	9/26/2006
Project Plan Revised	1/23/2007
Project Budget:	\$1,000,000
Funding Sources:	Manatee County through the Conservation Lands Management Department
Implementation Begun:	1/23/2007

## Project Partners

Partner	Project Role
Manatee County Department of Conservation Lands Management	Landowner and project overseer
Manatee County Extension/IFAS	Educational materials and classes
Palma Sola Botanical Park	Neighbor and facilities sharing
Meals on Wheels	Community food bank that collects unused shares
Our Daily Bread	Community food bank that collects unused shares
Florida A&M University	Demonstration garden planning
Manatee County Master Gardeners	Community garden planning and volunteering

## GERALDSON COMMUNITY FARM –IMPLEMENTATION 2009

<b>GOAL 1 – MOVE TOWARDS FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Sell all available shares for third CSA season	Sarah	Staff time	10 hours	October 2009
Build waiting list and recruit potential members for Fall 09 season	Sarah	Staff time	10 hours	May 2009
Develop plan for restaurant share	Sarah	Staff time	8 hours	May 2009
Continue Long-term planning for future production, perennials, and other membership offerings	Farm Staff and Sarah	Staff time	15 hours	May 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 2 – INCREASE ON-SITE PROGRAMS</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Develop plan to host classes	Sarah	Staff time	15 hours	September 2009
Host 3 tours on site	Laura and Sarah	Staff time	4 hours	September 2009
Engage Local Farmers to become producer for buying club	Sarah	Staff time	24 hours	December 2008
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 3 – CSA MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Create a program offering CSA low-income memberships/work share	Sarah	\$1,600	4 hours	December 2008
Develop partnerships with area social service nonprofits	Sarah and Laura	\$1,600	-	December 2008
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 4 – FINALIZE PLAN FOR COMMUNITY GARDENS AREA</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Finalize Operational Plan for Community Garden	Sarah, Laura, and Dave	Staff time	8 hours	September 2009
Host Community Meeting to receive input from interested individuals	Sarah, Laura and Dave	Staff time	-	December 2008

Finalize partnership with Manatee County Extension Service & Master Gardeners	Sarah and Laura	Staff time	16 hours	September 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 5 – SITE DEVELOPMENT</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Update the conceptual (agricultural) site plan	Sarah, Laura, Adam	Staff Time	16 hours	September 2009
Finish list of items to develop site according to approved plan	Sarah	MC Agreement	24 hours	March 2009
Develop plan for construction of barn	Sarah and Laura	MC Agreement	16 hours	April 2009
Obtain approval from County on parking area and landscaping	Sarah	MC Agreement	8 hours	May 2009
Finish construction of items and close out Manatee County agreement	Sarah	MC Agreement	40 hours	August 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

---

## **FLORIDA FARMLINK**

---

### **Background**

Over the past few years, the RC&D has focused efforts in the local food system and building farms. One of the biggest issues we have encountered around our area is the lack of a clearing house and communication network for the people who want to get involved, build farms, find land, find employees, and more. We are mobilizing the partnership our area to assist with these services. One of the most urgent needs is for small and beginning farmers to link up to share information on availability of land and expertise. The development pressure and price of land has become prohibitive for entry-level farmers, but we suspect there is a large population of “small acreage” landowners that might like to lease their land for low-intensity agriculture instead of selling it for development.

To address similar needs, many states around the country have developed what they call “Farm Link” or “Land Link” services. The primary goal of these programs is to assist in land-matching between farmers and willing leasers or sellers and other related services to farmers. Some of these farm links are operated as independent non-profit organizations, some are operated under the state departments of agriculture, and others are associated with universities. Florida shares many of the same issues as these other states that have farm link programs. With the development pressure and growth expected in the State of Florida, along with the opportunity of being the nation’s winter fruit basket, developing a Florida Farm Link is a high priority.

### **Project History and Accomplishments Summary**

This was a new project in 2007, with some early funding assistance in 2006 from the Sarasota Economic Development Corporation. The program began with securing web domains and branding. A logo was developed along with in-house design work on a brochure and a business-card-sized promotional piece. In house design was also done for the website. Database elements were developed along with the user-interface questions and labels. Bids were obtained and a local firm was chosen to develop the website and database functions. Grants were written and submitted for FarmAid and Florida Farm Bureau, along with meetings with various organizations regarding the project. Neither funding source could provide funds for the development of the fully-functioning website, so an internal business plan was developed to provide long-term financial sustainability for the program. A beta testing site has been operational since May of 2008 with many listings developed and almost 100 registered users. The concept has received enormous positive feedback and many adjustments and modifications to the plan have been made based on the results of the beta testing.

### **RC&D Goal for 2009**

The goal for the Florida FarmLink in FY09 is to launch Florida FarmLink II.

## Project Details

Project Number:	A06-017
Planning Started:	April 2006
Approved by Council:	May 31, 2006
Project Plan Completed:	11/3/2006
Project Budget:	\$75,000 for start-up (2007-2010)
Funding Sources:	Sarasota EDC, Hillsborough County, Florida Farm Bureau, Manatee County, and SARE Sustainable Community Grant program.
Implementation Begun:	11/06

## Project Partners

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Project Role</b>
Economic Development Corporation (EDC) of Sarasota County	Sponsor and seed money
Hillsborough County Economic Development Department, Agriculture Industry Development	Sponsor and technical advisory team member
Manatee County Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources	Technical advisory team member
Sarasota County Extension	Technical advisory team member
Hillsborough County Extension	Technical advisory team member
USDA-NRCS	Technical advisory team member
Sarasota County Farm Bureau	Endorsement and advisory role
Manatee County Farm Bureau	Endorsement and advisory role
Hillsborough County Farm Bureau	Endorsement and advisory role

## FLORIDA FARMLINK – DETAILS OF IMPLEMENTATION 2009

<b>GOAL 1 – RELEASE FLORIDAFARMLINK.ORG II</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Complete the Product Requirement Document	Sarah and Laura	Staff Time	40 hours	December 2008
Develop an RFP to deliver services and select developer	Sarah	Staff Time	40 hours	January 2009
Testing and quality control	Sarah	Staff Time	40 hours	March 2009
Release new site to public	Sarah	Staff Time	40 hours	May 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 2 – DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT STATEWIDE AND NATIONAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Develop a Statewide marketing plan	Sarah	Staff time	40 hours	April 2009
Develop short video for promotional use	Laura	SARE Grant	40 hours	April 2009
Attend statewide Small Farms conference	Laura and Sarah	Staff Time	40 hours	August 2009
Promo at National RC&D in June	Sarah	Staff Time	40 hours	June 2009
Distribute marketing materials already printed last year	Staff	Staff time	40 hours	May 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 3 – POPULATE THE DATABASE</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Achieve 500 Postings	Sarah and Laura	Staff time	80 hours	September 2009
Obtain 10 Supporters/Partners	Sarah and Laura	Staff time	80 hours	September 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

## **Background**

Agricultural producers use between 50 and 70 percent of the world's freshwater resources for agricultural irrigation and that was similar in Manatee County, where there has historically been a thriving agricultural economy. To address the need for alternative water supplies in the Southern Water Use Caution Area, Manatee County developed the award-winning MARS pipeline to provide reuse water to agriculture, to offset aquifer withdrawals. The MARS Farm Connection Grant Program, funded through direct Congressional appropriations, was developed by the Florida West Coast Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council to connect farms to the pipeline.

With the rapid population growth in Manatee County and associated urban sprawl, land for agriculture within the MARS service area is becoming scarce. The MARS program needed to adapt to provide innovative and integrated solutions in creating food security around our growing communities. The demonstration site acquired in 2007 provides an opportunity to demonstrate mainstream sustainable agriculture that is integrated with technology-based solutions in a suburban setting.

The site, called the Center for Integrated Agriculture at Gamble Creek, will allow RC&D to comprehensively demonstrate an entire resource management system (RMS) that will provide maximum benefit to the sustainability in our area.

Although the Center is still in the early planning stages, the mission in discussion will be: To demonstrate innovative integrated water resources management in a financially-viable agriculture operation.

### *Goals:*

1. Integrate various sources of water, including reclaimed water, using innovative technologies on agriculture water management
2. Operate a small-scale agricultural operation that is independently financially viable
3. Demonstrate alternative and renewable energies and a resource management system that improve economic returns for agricultural operations
4. Partner with other agencies and organizations to highlight and promote mutual goals

## **RC&D Goal for FY09**

Finalize site and program plans, as well as establish income streams for long-term viability of the site.

## Project Details

Project Number:	A08-018
Planning Started:	February 8, 2006
Approved by Council:	December 20, 2007
Project Plan Completed:	In development
Project Budget:	\$2,500,000
Funding Sources:	Congressional Appropriations from the Manatee Agricultural Reuse System (MARS) for seed money. CSREES Grant
Implementation Begun:	July 11, 2007

## Project Partners

Partner	Project Role
NRCS	Technical assistance in providing standards and specifications
Southwest Florida Water Mgmt. District	Assistance in aquifer evaluation and permitting and additional funding under FARMS Program as needed
University of South Florida	Assistance in developing alternative water supply
University of Florida-IFAS	Leadership in BMP implementation

## GAMBLE CREEK FARM –IMPLEMENTATION 2009

<b>GOAL 1 –SITE PREPARATION FOR DEMONSTRATION SITE</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Obtain Final Site Plan	Jacob	MARS Agreement	40 hours	April 2009
Completion of Driveway and Parking Area	Jacob	MARS Agreement	8 hours	July 2009
Design and construction of Barn	Jacob	MARS Agreement	8 hours	August 2009
Obtain AGSWM/ERP Exemption	Jacob	MARS Agreement	8 hours	April 2009
Complete conservation planning process	Jacob	MARS Agreement	24 hours	May 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 2 – DEVELOP THREE (3) SOURCES OF FARM INCOME</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Develop crop schedule for partial 09 season	Jacob/Eric	MARS Agreement	8 hours	December 2008
Sell 50 Memberships for partial 09 season	Jacob	MARS Agreement	-	January 2009
Create and Finalize pick-up process for first Pick-ups	Jacob	MARS Agreement	-	January 2009
Sell 100 memberships for Fall 09 CSA	Jacob	MARS Agreement	-	September 09
Develop Crop Plan and Schedule for 2009/2010 Season	Jacob/Eric	MARS Agreement	-	August 09
Install residential hydroponic unit for demonstration and promotion	Jacob/Eric	Fundraising Budget	-	March 09
Recruit 4 local restaurants as customers	Jacob/Eric	MARS Agreement	-	September 09
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

**GOAL 3 – BUILD FRAMEWORK FOR DEMONSTRATION SITE FOR INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

Action Item	Responsible Party(ies)	Resources	Coordinator Time Required	Expected Completion
Develop logo	Jacob and Sarah	MARS Agreement	2 hours	January 2009
Create brochure	Jacob and Sarah	MARS Agreement	4 hours	April 2009
Create website	Jacob and Sarah	MARS Agreement	2 hours	January 2009
Establish framework for agricultural operation	Jacob	MARS Agreement	36 hours	March 2008
Hold a ribbon cutting event	Jacob	MARS Agreement	40 hours	September 2009

Reviewed and Updated:

Documentation of Progress:

**GOAL 4-BEGIN PRE-INCUBATION GROWERS PROGRAM**

Action Item	Responsible Party(ies)	Resources	Coordinator Time Required	Expected Completion
Complete Program Development	Jacob/Sarah	MARS Agreement	40 hours	May 2009
Meet with partners to introduce the program	Jacob	MARS Agreement	40 hours	February 2009
Submit for CREES Grant	Jacob	MARS Agreement	80 hours	April 2009
Develop an option for low-cost efficient sustainable ag plots	Jacob	MARS Agreement	40 hours	September 2009
Establish Application Process	Jacob	MARS Agreement	16 hours	April 2009
Begin Recruiting applicants	Jacob	MARS Agreement	24 hours	May 2009
First 2 incubation growers begin	Jacob	MARS Agreement	-	September 2009

Reviewed and Updated:

Documentation of Progress:

<b>GOAL 4 – LONG-TERM PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Hold a site walk with partners	Jacob and Sarah	MARS Agreement	24 hours	June 2009
Hold needs assessment meetings with local partners for other incubation services	Jacob and Sarah	MARS Agreement	40 hours	September 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

---

# NUEVA COSECHA

---

## Background

One of the main goals of the RC&D program is to develop the problem-solving capacity of community leadership within the RC&D Area. Additionally, the various community leaders that the RC&D works with should reflect the diversity of the RC&D area. In the Florida West Coast RC&D Area, there are some groups of people that have been historically underserved by Federal programs, including black, Hispanic and other non-white minority groups. To meet our community's needs in developing more farms, more farmers, and reaching out to serve our entire community, the RC&D is pursuing a program called Nueva Cosecha, to encourage Latino participation in all our projects.

## Project History and Accomplishments Summary

This is a new approach to a long-standing project. Nueva Cosecha is an evolution of the Farmworker Laundry Project, formerly also known as the Diversity Project, Farmworker Apprenticeship program in Organic Agriculture. Nueva Cosecha has an initial budget of \$10,000 from the earlier grant from NRCS, which was not spent on a laundry project.

## RC&D Goal for 2009

The goal for the RC&D in FY09 is to develop a USDA-grant proposal and obtain funding for the program. If funded, the additional goal is to hire a Spanish-speaking person to help up implement the program.

## Project Details

Project Number:	M05-015 (continuation of Laundry Project)
Planning Started:	06/05
Approved by Council:	06/05
Project Plan Completed:	In development
Project Plan Revised	NA
Project Budget:	\$10,000 seed money – total budget TBD
Funding Sources:	NRCS Conservation Partnership Diversity Grant USDA grant "Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers"
Implementation Begun:	10/06, additional implementation with funding of USDA proposal, planned for Summer 2009

## **Project Partners**

### **Partner**

Latino Community Network

Florida Organic Growers

University of Florida-IFAS and more

### **Project Role**

Project Planning and Implementation

Training in Spanish if funded along with a Spanish-video training in sustainable agriculture

Assisting with educational components

## NUEVA COSECHA— IMPLEMENTATION 2009

<b>GOAL 1 – DEVELOP PROPOSAL FOR CSREES GRANT</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Develop LCN Apprenticeship concept into fundable proposal	Laura and Sarah	Coordinator	80 hours	November 2008
Obtain partnership support	Laura	Coordinator	40 hours	December 2008
Complete grant proposal	Laura	Coordinator	120 hours	December 2008
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 2 – HIRE NUEVA COSECHA COORDINATOR (PENDING GRANT FUNDING)</b>				
Advertise position	Laura	Staff time	4 hours	May 2009
Interview candidates	RC&D Ops Management Team	Staff time	16 hours	June 2009
Hire Candidate	RC&D OMT	Staff time	8 hours	July 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				
<b>GOAL 3 – MAKE MORE OF THE RC&amp;D PROGRAM OFFERINGS AVAILABLE IN SPANISH</b>				
Hire Spanish-speaking staff	RC&D Staff	Staff time	8 hours	January 2009
Advertise incubator program to Spanish-speaking community	Jacob	MARS Agreement	8 hours	May 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

---

## FARM BUILDING CONSULTING PROGRAM

---

### Background

This year is the first year the RC & D is actively pursuing consulting contracts to develop farm locations. Developers are starting to seek out the expertise of the RC & D in farm development and the RC & D has received referrals from partners for these services.

### Project History and Accomplishments Summary

This is a new project for 2009.

### RC&D Goal for 2009

The goal for the RC&D in FY09 is to develop the basic structure and staff process for a farm-building consulting service.

### Project Details

Project Number:	A09-019
Planning Started:	05/07
Approved by Council:	02/09
Project Plan Completed:	In development
Project Plan Revised	NA
Project Budget:	Staff time to develop financially-viable proposals.
Funding Sources:	Earned income, fee-for-service
Implementation Begun:	02/09

## FARM-BUILDING CONSULTING – IMPLEMENTATION 2009

<b>GOAL FOR 2009 – DEVELOP A BASIC STRUCTURE AND PROCESS FOR CONSULTING</b>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Coordinator Time Required</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Develop a basic structure for deliverables and cost structure	Sarah	Staff time	20 hours	January 2009
Develop duties and responsibilities for staff participating in this program	Laura	Staff time	24 hours	March 2009
Develop at least 2 proposals for services	Sarah	Staff time	8 hours	May 2009
Develop 1 agreement for services for farm development consulting	Sarah	Staff time	16 hours	August 2009
Reviewed and Updated:				
Documentation of Progress:				

## FLORIDA WEST COAST RC&D POLICY STATEMENTS

### **Nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy**

Florida West Coast Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. (Fla. West Coast RC&D), prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. Florida West Coast Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc. and the United States Department of Agriculture are equal opportunity providers and employers.

## SIGNATURE PAGE

### Paragraph 1

All programs and assistance of the RC&D Council are available without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### Paragraph 2

The Florida West Coast Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc. agrees that the signing of this document constitutes an agreement to comply with Federal law concerning the restrictions on lobbying, a drug-free workplace, and responsibilities for nonprocurement, suspension, and debarment, and State review.

### Paragraph 3

The Florida West Coast RC&D Council, Inc. hereby adopts this RC&D Annual Plan of Work and agrees to use effectively the assistance provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to realize the goals and objectives in the Council's Area Plan.

### Signature Block 1

Florida West Coast RC&D Council, Inc., Florida

By:

\_\_\_\_\_  
John O'Connor, Jr.  
President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Attest, Council Staff Member

This action was authorized on March 9, 2009 by the Florida West Coast Resource Conservation and Development Council.

## Signature Block 2

U.S. Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service

The State Conservationist hereby acknowledges the attached Annual Plan of Work of the Florida West Coast RC&D Council, Inc. as meeting the requirements under Public Law 97-98 to receive assistance from USDA.

Acknowledged By:

---

Carlos Suarez  
State Conservationist

---

Date

## **APPENDIX – 2009 ANNUAL BUDGET**